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Illinois: Mandating Co-Enrollment

Blog-Post

Although co-enrollment in WIOA Dislocated Worker is now required under the TAA Final Rule, this wasn't always the case. Many states had already implemented policies embracing co-enrollment. Illinois' initial efforts on co-enrollment were implemented back in October of 2005, with co-enrollment becoming mandatory in December of 2010.

by Illinois Trade Unit

"Co-Enrollment in WIOA Dislocated is Required for TAA Participants"

Those words might strike fear, panic, thoughts of major system overhauls, additional paperwork, and the diversion of funds necessary to serve a growing number of COVID-19 impacted worker – nothing good. Once you get beyond those legitimate concerns, you'll come to see the benefits of co-enrolling Trade affected workers with other programs. There is no shortage of charts, reports and data that provide evidence that co-enrollment in other programs is effective but as a state that has been co-enrolling in WIA/WIOA since October 2005 – we know first-hand the benefits of co-enrollment.

The eventual benefits of co-enrollment can start even before a Trade affected worker is certified. Ideally, during rapid response (or before), information is gathered about the nature of the layoff and if appropriate, a Trade petition is filed. Potentially Trade affected workers can begin reemployment services and training under WIOA. This provides early intervention and reduces the length of time a worker is out of work. Once certified, and the training program is Trade approvable, costs of the training are shifted to Trade and the worker is presented with the enhanced benefits under the Trade program. This is service integration in action!

Due to our centralized structure here in Illinois, co-enrollment became mandatory in December 2010. The process of co-enrolling Trade affected workers is seamless and invisible to them. We have a dual application whereby the information required to make eligibility determinations for both programs is gathered and entered into a common Management Information System (MIS). Workers benefit from assistance with childcare, vehicle repairs, eye glasses, local travel reimbursement, parking and post Trade services case management – all vital to their successful completion of a training program and rapid reentry in the workforce.

With the change in the way transportation and subsistence are calculated and Trade reimbursing only the transportation that is outside the worker's commuting area, co-enrollment transportation payments will bridge the gap between what Trade can cover and what is needed.

Co-enrollment for all is here and our experience is that it is beneficial to Trade participants. Our Trade participants can use every advantage we can give them - now more than ever.

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