LIST OF QUALIFYING OCCUPATIONS

Policy Number: 208, Attachment 2
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I. BACKGROUND

Local Workforce Development Boards, in cooperation with the Labor Market Information Division of Employment Security, are required by law (Senate-House Bill 3077) to identify occupations and skill sets within their local areas for which demand is increasing or declining.

Once identified, these occupations will comprise the List of Qualifying Occupations (LQO) that becomes the foundation for

- Strategic planning at the Workforce Board.
- Eligibility for training benefits under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Unemployment Insurance, WorkFirst, and Commissioner-Approved Training.
- Supporting competitive grant applications by partner organizations.

II. PURPOSE

This policy sets the process by which the South Central Workforce(SCW) will develop and maintain a list of occupations and skill sets that are in demand or decline in the South Central region.

III. POLICY

A. Creation and Maintenance of the List

The Employment Security Department produces a statewide list of occupations and skill sets (Occupations in Demand/Decline) identifying those in demand, in decline and those

for which demand is balanced/neutral. This list is updated annually through the Workforce Washington website at http://www.careerbridge.wa.gov

Local Labor Market Specialist, designated by the South Central Workforce (SCW), shall maintain the local Occupations in Demand list of identifying those occupations and skill sets where demand is growing, those that are in decline and those for which demand is balanced/neutral (where supply of workers and job openings is predicted to be approximately equal). This Local Occupations in Demand list is updated annually or more often as and can be found: Learn about an occupation | Employment Security Department.

All available labor market information will be used in the development and maintenance of the Occupations in Demand list. Sources of this information include but are not limited to:

- Washington State information sources at LMPA, UI, and WILMA
- Skills gap analysis studies, such as those developed under the recent grant programs for Agriculture/Food Processing and for Metals, Woods, and Plastics.
- Input from the Employment Security Departments Regional Economist in this area.
- Input from recognized employment and training organizations that are experienced in placing job seekers in the local labor market.
- Input from local and state Employment Security offices experienced in the development of job openings and announcements
- Local offices of national employment service
- Economic Development Councils in the counties of the region
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Placement information from local training providers
- Employment information (placements and projected openings) from local businesses and labor organizations

In addition to an annual review, several kinds of events may prompt a revision to the LQO:

- WARN-level or significant layoffs or plant closures

- Plant re-openings
- A "User Alert" from LMPA notifying of a significant change in local economy
- New business openings or significant growth of an existing business.
- Requests for exceptions to the List of Qualifying Occupations that point to a possible change in demand (see below).

B. Exceptions to the List

Individuals who are seeking training for specific occupations may request exceptions to the List of Qualifying Occupations. The Local Labor Market Specialist will review such requests on an individual case-by-case basis.

Procedure for Exception Request:

- Request must come to the Local Labor Market Specialist from the requesting service provider's administrator in writing.
- Request must state the occupation in question and be accompanied by supporting documentation. All documentation must be verifiable.

Examples of criteria for approving exceptions:

- Verifiable evidence of a bona fide employment opportunity upon successful completion of training.
- Documentation of current high placement rates by a training provider
- Occupations not listed by LMPA for which employment opportunities can be documented to exist.
- An occupation for which demand is present but too small to be considered for a mid-year update to the LQO.
- The LMPA List of Qualifying Occupations will identify demand by occupational cluster. There may be individual occupations within a declining or neutral cluster that can be established to be in increasing demand.

- Other evidence to support the employability of the participant after training, such as training plan, labor market information, employer contacts, etc.

The Local Labor Market Specialist will notify the requesting agency in writing of his/her approval/disapproval. Decisions on exceptions to the list by the Local Labor Market Specialist shall be final. All exceptions will be reported to the SCWDC.

It should be noted that the South Central Workforce maintains and approves exceptions to the List of Qualifying Occupations. The Board also administers WIOA funded programs within its area. The Board does not make decisions to approve or disapprove training and training benefits for programs not under its jurisdiction.

The List of Qualifying Occupations will be posted on the Washington State Eligible Training Provider List at http://www.careerbridge.wa.gov/.