



GUIDE FOR TRAINING PROVIDERS

July 2023

A background image of a construction worker wearing a white hard hat and a high-visibility safety vest, working on a rooftop with various pipes and structural elements. The image has a blue tint.

**Workforce Training
Fund Program**
EXPRESS PROGRAM

Change happens. Express helps.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

02	Introduction
02	Key Terms
03	The Express Program
04	Course Guidelines
05	Training Pro
06	Provider Registration
09	Add a Course
10	Course Description
11	Course Approvals and Renewals
12	How to Support Clients?



Introduction

The purpose of this document is to assist existing and prospective training providers as they navigate through the Express Program of the Workforce Training Fund. From a program overview to course description guidelines, this document explores every aspect of the Express Program pertinent to training providers. This document also identifies ways in which training providers can support a client's grant application and facilitate the reimbursement process.

Key Terms

The Express Program utilizes the following key terms and definitions to distinguish between off-the-shelf training (i.e. a course), which is covered by Express, and customized services such as coaching, consulting and memberships, which are NOT covered.

Course

Educational content delivered to one or more participants in the pursuit of knowledge acquisition and skill development around technical and transferable skills. A course has a defined start and end-date, and a pre-defined set of learning objectives.

Consulting

A subject-matter expert is hired to resolve a business challenge. The consultant will diagnose a problem, and identify and assess solutions. The diagnostic process can involve research and data analysis, and the implementation of solutions can be, but is not always, included in the service.

Memberships

Access to an unlimited and/or unspecified knowledge base that is charged at a monthly or yearly rate, per person or per group.

CONTACT US



Express@commcorp.org



commcorp.org/express

Coaching

An interactive process where a guide oversees and supports skill development. A coach facilitates learning by guiding the client through root-cause analysis and discovery of best practices. The process will often imbue participants with the skills necessary to engage in continuous improvement.

Training Cost

The cost associated with the delivery of training. Additional fees for materials, printing, food, travel expenses, temporary account access, certification exams and the like are considered "miscellaneous" and NOT covered by the Express Program.

THREE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE EXPRESS PROGRAM



No. 01 — **Workforce Training Fund**

The Express Program is one of two Workforce Training Fund Programs (WTFP) in Massachusetts administered by Commonwealth Corporation. The Express Program subsidizes the cost of skills-based training via reimbursement grants for for-profit and some non-profit companies. Express is funded through a state surcharge on Unemployment Insurance.



No. 02 — **Reimbursement**

Eligible Massachusetts businesses with 100 or fewer employees will receive an Express grant to reimburse up to 100% of the cost of training. Non-eligible employees, such as, but not limited to, non-Massachusetts employees and employees that do not contribute to the Workforce Training Fund may not be included in training reimbursed by the Express Program.



No. 03 — **Yearly/Per-Person Caps**

Express Grants cover up to \$3,000 per person per course, up to \$20,000 per calendar year. On the Express application, applicants will be asked to indicate the cost of training, the cost type (per person or per group), and the number of trainees. Our team will determine the eligible reimbursement amount.

COURSE GUIDELINES

The Express Program subsidizes the cost of just-in-time, skills-based training for employees of eligible Massachusetts companies. However, the line between training, consulting, and coaching is sometimes blurred, making it difficult to define the parameters of formalized training. To help providers, the Express Program has identified the following key components that constitute off-the-shelf training in the context of incumbent worker training.

Elements of a Course	Method of Instruction (Approved)	Method of Instruction (NOT Approved)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course topic(s) • Set number of hours of instruction • Subject matter with a pre-defined set of learning objectives • Defined course capacity • Low level of customization* • Instructor-led • Course cost (per person or flat rate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synchronous and instructor led. • Live, virtual OR hybrid (blended learning) • Completed during work hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% consulting or coaching. • Memberships • 100% self-paced, asynchronous learning* • Completed outside of work hours

***Level of customization:**

Learning objectives should be pre-determined and can be adapted, emphasized or minimized, but not changed, based on the instructor's assessment of student need.

***Self-Paced Learning**

A course can contain up to 30% of self-paced work but must be at least 70% instructor-led (whether it's virtual or in person). We determine whether the threshold is met by referring to the number of hours dedicated to self-paced work and the total number of training hours

TRAININGPRO

TrainingPro (TP) is an online platform utilized by four state agencies: ITA, Section 30, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), and the Express Program. Each program has its own set of requirements, and, thus, not every question in the registration questionnaire will be applicable to every training provider.

Training providers interested in the Express Program must create an account in TrainingPro, and must follow a six-step process to submit their course(s) for consideration. Only after a course is approved and viewable in our [course directory](#), can a business submit a grant application for that course.

In order to qualify for Express, providers must meet the following set of criteria:

- You must be in full compliance with all obligations to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
- All grant funded expenses must be the direct cost of the delivery of training, must be consistent with the course as registered, and must be reasonable.
- The course must be consistent with the purpose and policy of the Workforce Training Fund.
- Businesses (i.e. client company) are not legally mandated to provide the specific training to their employees. An example is a course required by OSHA.

If you meet the criteria above, you may start the registration process by clicking [here](#).

Provider Registration

Please follow the instructions below if you're ONLY applying to the Express Program. If you wish to pursue alternative programs, please contact each respective program for directions.

Step 1

Select "Sign Up" under "First Time User"


First Time User?

Sign-Up



Step 2

Complete the registration form. You may skip the questions with a strikethrough below.

	* User ID:	<input type="text"/>
	* Password:	<input type="password"/>
	* Confirm Password:	<input type="password"/>
	*Contact Name:	<input type="text"/>
	*Organization Name:	<input type="text"/>
Sole Proprietors may	Doing Business As:	<input type="text"/>
utilize their Social	Dept./Div.:	<input type="text"/>
Security Number.	*Federal Identification Number (FEIN):	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
	Mass Vendor Code:	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
	*DUA ID:	<input type="text"/>
	*Address 1:	<input type="text"/>
If you do not have a Department of	Address 2:	<input type="text"/>
Unemployment Assistance (DUA)	*City:	<input type="text"/>
number, leave the section blank or	*State:	Massachusetts - MA <input type="text"/>
input "1111111."	*Zip Code:	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
	Annual Revenue (\$):	<input type="text"/>
	*Subsidiary of a Larger Company:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
	Name of Parent Organization:	<input type="text"/>
	Web Address:	<input type="text"/>
	CAPTCHA:	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm not a robot 

Step 3

Select "Enter Contact Information"

Enter Contact Information



Step 4

You are required to register a "primary contact" and a "signatory." If you'd like one person to serve both roles, please check off the box circled below.

*Contact Type:	Primary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Check this box if signatory contact (person responsible for signing contracts) is the same as the contact being added
*Contact Title:	--Choose One--		
*Name:	Testing Center		

Step 5

Complete the "User Information" questions and click "save record."

Step 6

You will be returned to the "Provider Information" page. Scroll to the bottom of the page and select "next." Then, select a "type of business" from the options outlined on the page.

Step 7

For "type of school or organization" select the last option to the far right, "other," and input "Training Provider."

☒ Other

Training Provider

Step 8

Select "No" for "Licensed" and skip every question without an asterisk.

For "Date Began Operation" please indicate January 2019. While our 2-year requirement was waived, the system has yet to be updated.

*Licensed:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Exempted
Accreditation / Licensing Agency:	---Choose One---
	Specify if not in list:
Training Provider/School License Number:	
Expiration Date:	
*Number of Permanent Employees:	
*Number of Contract or Temporary Employees:	
*Date Began Operation:	Jan /
*Average Student/Teacher Ratio:	/ 1
*Please provide us with a description of your organization's area of focus	

Step 9

Complete the "Service Delivery Information" section. For "Products/Services" select "Training Delivery" and click "next."

Step 10


Select your preferred "Methods/Service Delivery" and click "next."

Step 11

You make skip the entire "Industry" section. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click "next."

Step 12

Complete the top portion of the "provider information" page. Continue to the "Value Added or Support Services" section and select "none." Scroll to the bottom of the page and click "submit."



Submit

Step 13

You will be presented with the "Provider Agreement." Please select "OK" and do not be concerned with the information on the page. The note about DCS review does not apply to Express Program providers.

***You have now created a Training Provider Account.
Please complete the following 6-step process to
submit a course for consideration.***

Add a Course

On your home page, click on "add a course," select the fourth option, "Workforce Training Fund Express" and check-off the box under "MA Course Approval Requirements." Do not be concerned with the information on the page as it does not apply to Express Program providers.

1

Training Program Information

Answer the questions marked with an asterisk, including the course capacity question. Please review the "Course Description" section on the following page.

2

Contact Information

Indicate the point of contact for the course- the person that prospective students will contact to inquire about the course. We encourage you to include both an email address and a phone number.

3

Course Duration & Results

Answer the questions marked with an asterisk (you're encouraged to include a "web address" if available). For "Course Results," select "certificate" and input "certificate of completion" in the notes. Alternatively, you may indicate "N/A."

4

Course Schedule

Under "Course Schedule" select morning and/or afternoon ONLY as training may NOT be delivered outside of work hours. Do not enter a "schedule" as training dates may vary from client to client.

5

Course Cost

If the course has a flat/group rate, check-off the second box that reads "This training program...has a flat fee." If left unchecked, the cost will be considered per person. When entering cost details, select "tuition" for the "type of cost."

6

Review & Submit

Review your course entry and hit "submit." Once submitted, scroll to the bottom of the home page and copy the course "ID" indicated in the chart.

Email this ID to Express@commcorp.org and request a review.

Course Description



(750 characters or less)

A course description should capture the learning objectives, method of instruction, pedagogical practices, relevance and target audience of the course. Please ensure that your course description answers: The What, the How, the Why, and the Who.

WHAT

What are the learning objectives? What concepts or topics will be covered in the course?

HOW

How will students learn? (a) method of instruction (in person, virtual, partially self-paced*, or hybrid), (b) pedagogical practices (class lecture, group discussion, presentations), and, if relevant, (c) type of assignments or projects.

WHY

Why is taking this course important? Why are these topics important to learn? (e.g., to gain the skills necessary to optimize user experience, to develop leadership skills, to improve dashboard and reporting skills, etc.)

WHO

Who would benefit from taking this course? Who is the ideal audience for this course (e.g. sales representatives, IT professionals, nurses, etc.)?

Partially Self-Paced:

Courses must be instructor-led. If a course is partially self-paced and partially instructor-led, please specify the number of hours for self-paced education and instructor-led training.

Example

Course Title:

Enhancing Customer Experience

Description:

In this course, participants will learn how to optimize customer experience. We will cover human-centered design theory, the importance of empathy, how to streamline processes, how to create custom objects in CRMs like Salesforce, and more. Instruction will be virtual (Zoom), and the assignments consist of (a) creating a Dashboard in Salesforce, (b) working in teams of two to review a website and determine room for improvement, and (c) complete a comprehension exam. Taking this course will increase an employee's ability to analyze gaps in performance, will expand the use of Salesforce, and will improve one's emotional intelligence. The ideal audience for this course are website designers, program managers, and interested professionals.

Course Approvals and Renewals

Approved courses will appear in the [Express Course Directory](#). Please allow up to 10 business days for new courses and course updates to be reflected in the directory from the date of approval.

Moreover, a course is approved for one year from the date of submission (not the date of approval), and must be renewed at the "earliest resubmission date" to remain eligible for Express. The earliest resubmission date is located in your provider account, by accessing "my courses" and scrolling to the chart at the bottom of the page.

To submit your course for renewal, "edit" the course, update all relevant fields, and click submit. Then, email the course ID to express@commcorp.org and request a review. Please do NOT create a new course in lieu of editing as doing so will generate a new course ID.

HOW TO SUPPORT CLIENTS?

REMIND APPLICANTS THAT...

An application must be submitted at least 21 days in advance of the start of training. Exceptions will NOT be granted. Every application must contain a Certificate of Good Standing (COGS) from the Department of Revenue. The document must have been issued within the past 6 months to be valid. If an incorrect document is provided (e.g. Certificate from the Secretary of the Commonwealth), the application will be automatically rejected.

COURSE DETAILS

Course details entered into an application **MUST** match the details in our course directory. These include the course name, provider name, cost, and cost type (per person or flat rate). If a discount is offered, the client may input the discounted rate, which should not exceed the cost of training reflected in the directory.

SERVICE AGREEMENT

If an application is approved, a “service agreement” will be issued that contains a “project number” and an “award” amount. The agreement will be emailed to the point of contact indicated in the application via DocuSign, and must be reviewed and e-signed prior to the start of training.

REIMBURSEMENT

A reimbursement request should be submitted once training has been completed and paid for in full. Requests must include:

- Completed reimbursement request form.
- An invoice from the provider that reflects the exact course name registered by the provider.
- Proof of payment.
- List of trainees.



Note: Proof of payment can consist of a copy of the grantee's bank statement or a canceled check for the cost of training, depicting funds leaving the employer's bank account.