



GUIDE FOR EXPRESS PROGRAM TRAINING PROVIDERS

April 2024

A background image showing a construction worker in a white hard hat and safety vest working on a roof. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. A vertical green bar is positioned to the left of the text.

**Workforce Training
Fund Program**
EXPRESS PROGRAM

Change happens. Express helps.

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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 certification, exams, assessments, materials, printing, food, travel, temporary account access, or any other expense not directly related to the delivery of training (i.e., the instructor's time) is considered "miscellaneous" and NOT covered by the Express Program. Grantees will have to pay for these out-of-pocket.**

THREE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE EXPRESS PROGRAM



No. 1 – **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. 2 – **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 for whom the employer is not contributing to the Workforce Training Fund may not be included in training reimbursed by the Express Program.



No. 3 – **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. The yearly reimbursement amount that a company can receive can change depending on funding availability.

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 ¹ • 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;² asynchronous learning • Completed outside of work hours

1 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.

2 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

EXPRESS PROVIDER PORTAL

In the fall of 2023, Commonwealth Corporation launched the [Express Provider Portal](#), our in-house system tailored to streamline the submission, approval, and renewal of courses for the Workforce Training Fund Express Program. The Express Provider Portal replaces Express's usage of the TrainingPro platform as a course approval and management system. Please note that several other state-funded workforce development programs still utilize [TrainingPro](#), administered by the MassHire Department of Career Services.

Training providers interested in the Express Program must create an account in the Portal, and must follow a six-step process to submit their course(s) for consideration. Once a course is approved, it is immediately viewable in our [course directory](#) and accessible in our Express Grant application.

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 companies) cannot receive Express Program reimbursement for training that they are legally mandated to provide to their employees. An example is a course required by OSHA.

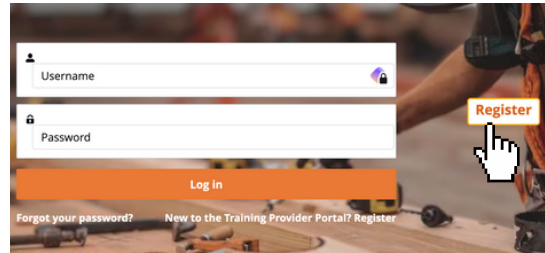
If you meet the criteria above, you may start the registration process by clicking here.

Provider Registration

Please follow the instructions below and complete the required onboarding process


Step 1

If you are directed to the "login page" via our website, please click on the "Register" button to proceed.



Step 2

Complete the registration form.

 Organization Registration

* Business Name

Doing Business As

* Entity type
Select an Option ←

* Address
* Street

* City * State

* Zip Code Country

* Phone

* Website (Please add your LinkedIn page if you don't have company website)
 ← Please ensure that the link provided is valid.

* Upload W-9 Form
 Or drop files

* Target Industries You Train
 Accommodation/Food Service/Hospitality
 Admin/Support/Waste Mgmt/Remed. Svcs
 Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting
 Arts/Entertainment/Recreation
 Clean Energy
 Construction
 Cross-Industry
 Educational Services
 Finance & Insurance ← Select all that apply.

Sole proprietors may enter either their FEIN or SSN. Please be assured that any SSNs provided are securely stored and access is strictly limited to essential personnel.

Please ensure that the link provided is valid.

Select all that apply.

- Transportation & Warehousing
 - Utilities
 - Wholesale Trade
 - Other Services (except Public Admin)
- * Number of Employees (For Entire Organization)

Select an Option ▼

* Date Operation Began 📅

*** Languages Training is Delivered In**

- English
- Spanish
- Portuguese
- Chinese (Cantonese)
- Chinese (Mandarin)
- Haitian Creole (Kreyòl)
- Vietnamese
- Cape Verdean Creole (Kriolu/Kriol)
- Other

← Not all courses you provide are required to be available in each selected language.

Business Diversity Certification

* Is your business currently certified as a diverse business by the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office (SDO)?

- Yes
- No

* Is your business currently certified as a diverse business by any other certifying organizations?

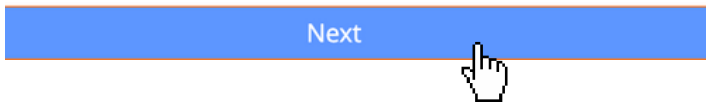
- Yes
- No

* Do you consider your organization to be a diverse business, even if it is not certified?

- Yes
- No

Step 3

Click on “Next” to continue.



Step 4

If you are registering as a new provider, please proceed directly to step 5.

If your FEIN or SSN matches an organization record in our system, you will have the ability to select and edit that existing record. This protocol is in place to prevent the creation of duplicate accounts. If you’re a new provider, please skip to step 5.

Verification

There is an existing Organization with this same FEIN/SSN
Please confirm the existing Organization details

Name	EIN	SSN	Address
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Jose- Test Account	33-1234567		Test Street Winthrop, MA 02152,US

Confirm Cancel

If the displayed organization matches yours, please select the radio button on the left and then click "Confirm."

Step 5

Please enter the primary contact for your organization. This individual will act as the main point of contact and will have the authority to add up to four additional users to your provider account.

Contact Registration

Organization Name
Tester March 2024

*FirstName

*LastName

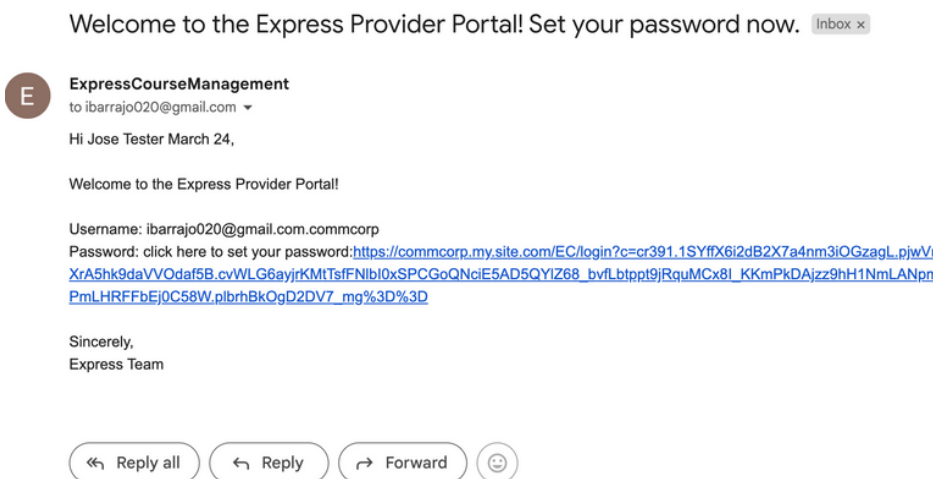
*Email

Phone

Save

Step 6

After selecting "save," please refer to the login credential in the email that was sent to you.



Please be advised that your username will be your email address followed by ".commcorp".

For example, if the email address is ibarrajo020@gmail.com, your username would be ibarrajo020@gmail.com.commcorp.



Step 7

Create a new password.

Change Your Password

Enter a new password for
ibarrajo020@gmail.com.commcorp. Make sure to
include at least:

- 8 characters
- 1 letter
- 1 number

* New Password

* Confirm New Password

Change Password

Step 8

To finalize your setup, please proceed with the onboarding process. It will guide you through various aspects, including course parameters, description criteria, course IDs, steps for renewal, common reasons for course rejections, ways to assist grant applicants, and details of the reimbursement procedure. You will be asked to acknowledge your understanding by checking a box. It's important to note that this onboarding process is mandatory for every new user added to your provider account.

COMMONWEALTH CORPORATION Home ibarrajo020@gmail.com.commcorp

ONBOARDING

- Method of Instructors
- Course Description
- Approval & Renewal
- Reasons for Denying a course
- Elements of a Course

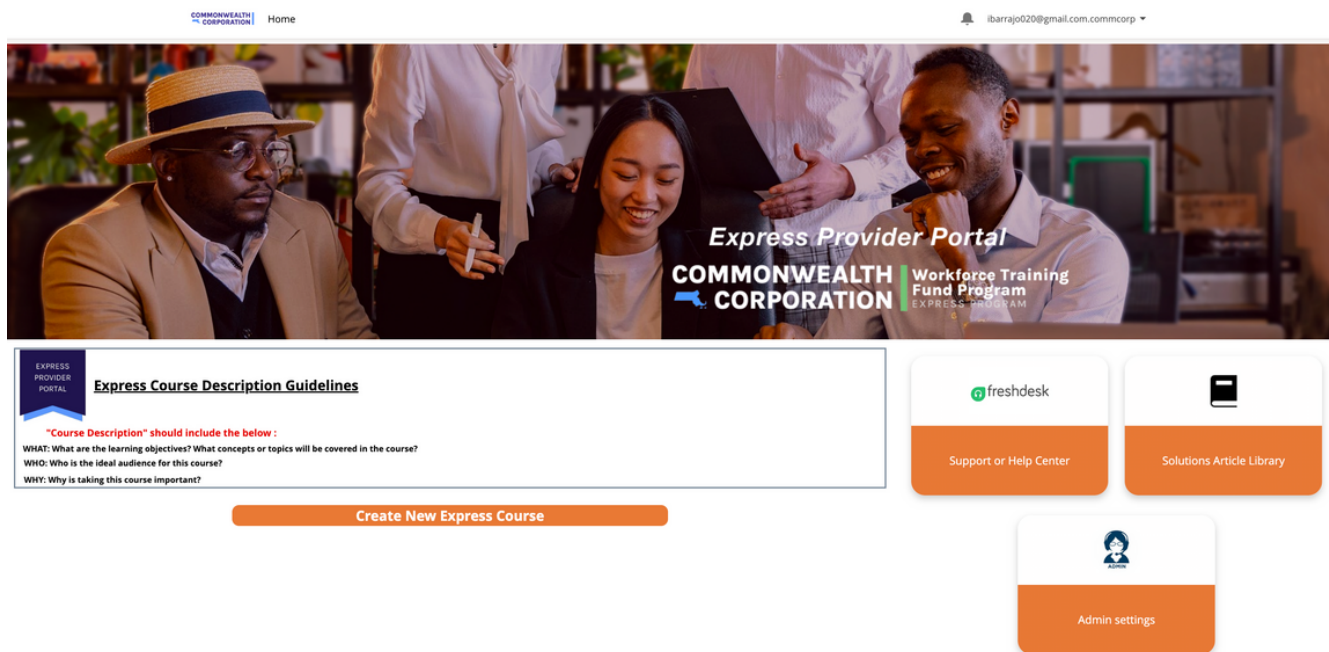
CommCorp!

Onboarding will take between 10-15 minutes.

Training Provider Account: Homepage

Upon completion of the onboarding, you'll be directed to your homepage. Here, you'll notice two key features on the right: the "Support or Help Center" and the "[Solutions Article Library](#)." The Support or Help Center enables direct communication with the Express team via your provider account by creating a "ticket" or email linked to your account's email address, which is then forwarded to Express@commcorp.org. The Solutions Article Library provides a comprehensive collection of articles and frequently asked questions tailored for training providers, offering valuable resources and guidance.

You're also encouraged to explore our [Knowledge Base](#), which offers a comprehensive array of resources tailored to the needs of both grantees and training providers.



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

Add a Course

To begin the course submission process, simply navigate to your homepage and select the "Create New Express Course" option.

1

Course Information

Input your course name and capacity, and select the Training Category and Topic for your course. Craft a description that outlines the WHAT, WHY, and WHO of your course (details on the next page). Additionally, you're encouraged to indicate key words, and if applicable, categorize your course under DEI, Climate Change, and/or ESOL tags.¹

2

Instruction Details and Duration

Indicate the format of delivery: In-Person, Virtually, Hybrid (Part in Person-Part Virtual), the language(s) the course is delivered in, and the mode of delivery (Instructor-Led, Self-Paced, OR Both). You will also be asked to indicate the number of hours per week and the number of weeks of training.

3

Cost Details

Specify the pricing structure of your course: a flat rate for groups, a per-trainee rate, or the option for both. Indicate the associated costs for your selected pricing option(s) and confirm whether any discounted rates are offered.

4

Contact Information

If your provider account has multiple contacts or users, you may select a specific individual as the designated point of contact for the course. Additionally, you are required to furnish either the course's dedicated website or the link generated at the time your provider account was created.

5

Review & Submit

Review the details of your course and select "Save and Submit Later." Doing so will place your course in a "draft" status, allowing you to finalize your submission by clicking "submit for approval." Note that your course has been assigned a C-record number, which can be found at the top of the page.

1.The Healey-Driscoll Administration prioritizes funding for topic areas such as DEI, ESOL, and Climate Change. By tagging your course appropriately, you enhance its visibility to businesses seeking training in these key areas. For more information about the significance and application of these tags, please click [HERE](#).

Course Registration Fields

The fields listed below will appear when you initiate the course registration process. Please familiarize yourself with them beforehand to understand what information will be required.

IMPORTANT

For courses migrated from Training Pro, you may notice a Training Pro ID field appear. Please be aware that we no longer use these IDs. Instead, we utilize the C-Record Number, which is assigned when you submit a course for consideration.

The screenshot shows a multi-section form for course registration. The sections are: **Course Information** (includes Training Provider, Training Category, Training Topic, Course Name, Course Capacity, Course Description, Key Words, Climate Change, DEI, ESOL checkboxes); **Instruction Details & Duration** (includes Format of Delivery, Languages Course is Delivered In, Number of hours per week, Number of weeks, Mode of Delivery); **Cost Details** (includes checkboxes for 'Course Cost per trainee doesn't apply' and 'Course Cost per group doesn't apply', both with '0.00' input fields, and a 'Do you offer discounts for this course?' field with 'No' selected); **Contact Information** (includes Who is the contact for this course?, Web Page same as Org Web Page, and Web Page for Organization). At the bottom are 'Save and Submit later' and 'Cancel' buttons.

To select an option, please click on your choice and then click the right-facing arrow. To remove a selection, click the left-facing arrow.

If you do not offer either a per-person or per-group rate, check the corresponding box. Doing so will cause the associated amount field to disappear.

Course Description



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

WHAT

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

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:

Please be advised that a course may contain no more than 30% self-paced content.

Course Title:

Example

Enhancing Customer Experience

Description:

This course focuses on enhancing customer experiences by exploring human-centered design and empathy. Participants will learn about CRM customization, like Salesforce, and streamlining processes. Assignments involve creating a Salesforce Dashboard, team-based website analysis, and a comprehension exam. Aimed at improving analytical abilities, Salesforce skills, and emotional intelligence, it's suited for website designers, program managers, and professionals seeking to elevate customer engagement.

Course Review, Approval, & Renewal



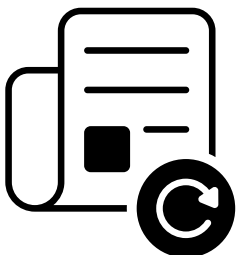
After submitting your course for review via the Express Provider Portal, it will be listed under the "Under Review" section on your homepage. Review times can extend up to 10 business days, subject to the current review queue. There's no need to email our team for a review request; you'll be notified via email once your course has been assessed. You can also monitor your course's status directly from your portal's homepage. Should our team require any modifications, your course will be moved to the "Edits Required" section. You'll need to apply the suggested changes and resubmit the course for review, which will initiate a new review cycle.



Courses that receive approval will be immediately listed in the Express Course Directory and become selectable within the Express grant application. Once approved, these courses will remain eligible for funding and retain their listing in our directory for a duration of one year from the approval date.

If your course has expired, it will no longer appear in the Express Course Directory. To renew a course, complete the following steps:

- On your homepage, select the C-Record number of the course you intend to renew.
- Verify that the course information remains accurate. If no updates are required, proceed to the bottom of the page and select "Update" → "Save & Submit Later" → "Submit for Approval".
- To update course details, choose "Update", apply the necessary modifications, then select "Save & Submit Later" followed by "Submit for Approval".



Updating Active Courses Prior to Expiration

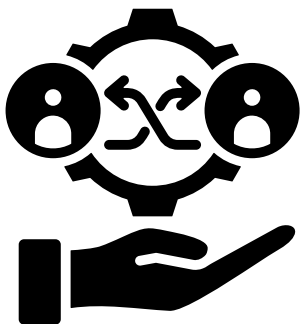
Renewing a Course Without Changes:



- Navigate to the C-Record number of the course you'd like to renew from your homepage.
- At the bottom of the course details, find and click "Update". Then, check the "Renew Course without any changes" box.
- Select "Save & Submit Later". This action will automatically renew your course, setting a new expiration date one year from the current date. If no changes are required, your course will continue to be approved in our directory and will not require further review by our team.

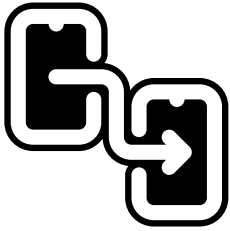
Note: The option to "Renew without any edits" is only available to courses that are still within their active period. This function cannot be used for courses that have already expired.

Updating and Renewing a Course with Changes:



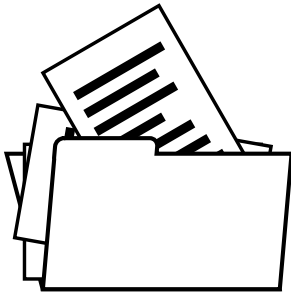
- On your homepage, locate and click the C-Record number for the course you wish to update and renew.
- To edit the course information, click "Update." Make the necessary changes, select "Save & Submit Later," and then "Submit for Approval." The course will be temporarily removed from the directory until it has been re-evaluated and reapproved by the Express Team.
- The review for re-approval can take up to 10 business days, depending on the volume of submissions. Please note, due to the high demand for reviews, the Express Program cannot prioritize last-minute submissions; courses are reviewed in the sequence that they are received.
- Once your edits are approved, the expiration date of the course will be reset to one year following the date of re-approval.

Cloning & Archiving



Each course includes a "clone" option at the bottom of the page. Utilizing this feature generates a new C-Record and auto-populates all fields with information from your original course. You can then modify this cloned course as necessary and submit it for approval.

To remove a course you're no longer offering from your active listings, the course can be archived with the following steps:

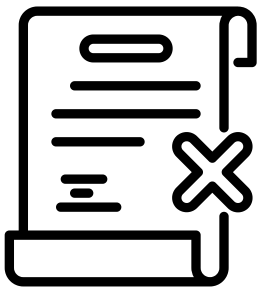


- Select the C-record number of the course you intend to archive.
- At the bottom of the course page, choose "Archive Course".
- Confirm your action with the "Are you sure?" prompt that appears.
- Confirm by clicking "Yes".

Note: Archiving permanently shifts the course to your archive section, removing it from active listings. Archived courses won't be eligible for renewal or reactivation, but their data remains accessible for viewing without options for editing or updating.

For courses you might consider reactivating in the future, opt for updating them: click "Update," make a minor change, and select "Save & Submit Later" without submitting for approval. This action reverts the course to "Draft" status, where it can stay indefinitely until you decide to reactivate it in the directory.

Denied Course



If your course is denied, it means it didn't adhere to one or more criteria outlined in our course review guidelines (pg. 3). By accessing the C-Record of your course, you'll find the specific reason(s) for denial highlighted at the top of the course record. Direct resubmission of a denied course isn't permitted. However, if you believe adjustments could address the concerns, you have the option to clone the denied course, apply necessary modifications, and resubmit it under a new C-Record for another review. Our team will then reassess the course in light of the revisions made.

HOW TO SUPPORT CLIENTS?

REMIND APPLICANTS THAT...

Applications are required to be submitted a minimum of 21 days prior to the training start date, without exceptions. Each submission must include a Certificate of Good Standing (COGS) from the Department of Revenue and an up-to-date W-9 form. The COGS must have been issued within the last 6 months to be valid. Please be advised that submitting incorrect documentation, such as a certificate from the Secretary of the Commonwealth, will result in automatic rejection of the application.

Moreover, please direct clients to utilize our Knowledge Base as a first resource for answers to frequently asked questions. For more personalized support, inquiries can be submitted directly through the Library section.

COURSE DETAILS

It's crucial to provide the correct C-Record number in the application. An incorrect number will prevent employers from being eligible for reimbursement for the course. If a discount is being applied, clients are permitted to enter the discounted amount, provided it does not surpass the listed training cost in the directory.

SERVICE AGREEMENT

If approved, a "service agreement" detailing a "project number" and an "award" amount will be generated. This agreement will be sent to the authorized signatory indicated in the application via DocuSign. Additionally, reminders will be sent to the primary contact and, if provided, to an alternative contact. It is imperative that the agreement is reviewed and e-signed by the recipient before the start of training.

REIMBURSEMENT

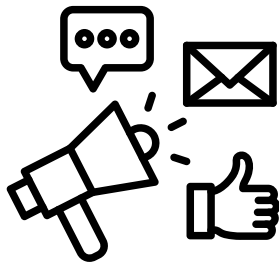
A reimbursement request should be submitted once training has been completed and paid for in full. Requests must include:

- 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 or credit card statement, a statement generated from the grantee's accounting software (e.g., QuickBooks), or a canceled check for the cost of training. Proofs of payment must show funds successfully leaving the employer's account in order to be accepted as sufficient.

MARKETING

DISCLOSURE



The Express Program proudly supports a diverse range of courses and providers, having approved thousands of courses across various subjects. As an impartial administrator of state funds, Commonwealth Corporation, and by extension, the Express Program, must maintain a neutral stance and therefore cannot officially endorse any specific Training Provider or course.

To assist providers in marketing their courses, we have compiled sample text below for use in advertising activities. Please note that this text is only meant as a guide, and providers may tailor the below text to fit their unique needs (provided our "Do's" and "Don'ts" are adhered to).

“Our courses have been pre-approved for Workforce Training Fund reimbursement! The Express Program of the Fund reimburses eligible businesses with 100 or fewer Massachusetts employees for training expenses, helping companies respond to change with fast, simple access to training grants. Learn more about program guidelines and apply in 15 minutes or less! commcorp.org/express”

Below are outlined the dos and don'ts for training providers with approved courses.

DOS

- As a provider with approved courses, you are welcome to direct your clients to the Express Program's website for more information.
- You may direct prospective applicants to the FAQ page for further information.
- You can advise clients with inquiries to reach out to express@commcorp.org for dedicated assistance.
- You may notify clients that approved courses qualify for reimbursement through an Express Grant.

DON'TS

- You cannot imply or state that your training is endorsed by the Express Program or Commonwealth Corporation.
- You cannot use the Express Program's logo in any course marketing material.
- You cannot charge clients for information about the Express Program or for assistance in the application process.

TOOLS & RESOURCES

To assist you as a Training Provider, we have curated essential websites and answers to frequently asked questions that you might find beneficial.



SUPPORT WEBSITE: HOME PAGE

A screenshot of the Commonwealth Corporation support website home page. The page features a dark blue header with the CC logo and navigation links for Home, Knowledge base, Tickets, and Submit a ticket. Below the header is a search bar with the text "Hi, how can we help you?" and "Enter the search term here....". The main content area is divided into three columns: "Browse articles" (Explore How-To's and learn best practices from our knowledge base), "View all tickets" (Track all your ticket's progress and your interaction with the support team), and "Submit a ticket" (Describe your issue by filling up the support ticket form). Below these are three knowledge base categories: "Prospective Grantee and Grantee FAQ's", "Training Provider FAQ's", and "Files and folders".

KNOWLEDGE BASE



WEBSITE

[GRANT APPLICATION](#)

[TRAINING PROVIDER PORTAL](#)

[COURSE DIRECTORY](#)

[EXPRESS PROVIDER PORTAL: WEBINAR RECORDING](#)



[FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS](#)

[HOW DO I ADD A NEW COURSE TO THE EXPRESS PROVIDER PORTAL?](#)



[HOW DO I ADD AN ADDITIONAL CONTACT TO MY PROVIDER ACCOUNT?](#)

[I FORGOT MY TRAINING PROVIDER PORTAL PASSWORD, HOW DO I RESET IT?](#)

[I SUBMITTED A COURSE FOR REVIEW AND REALIZED I MADE AN ERROR, WHAT SHOULD I DO?](#)

[I AM OFFERING THE SAME COURSE MULTIPLE TIMES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, DO I NEED TO CREATE A NEW COURSE LISTING EACH TIME THE COURSE IS RUN?](#)



Got Questions? We're Here to Help!

Contact Our Team:

Email: Express@commcorp.org

Website: CommCorp.org/Express

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