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I. APPLICABILITY/SCOPE

This policy applies to all Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title IA, Title IB staff, and contractors (if applicable) delivering workforce development Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and services.

II. PURPOSE

This policy establishes guidelines and criteria to be used in Rapid Response (RR) services to assist participants and employers in the event of a layoff, plan closure or natural or other disaster resulting in a mass job dislocation.

III. BACKGROUND

The purpose of Rapid Response is to promote economic recovery and vitality, while delivering crucial services to workers and businesses in transition, by developing an ongoing, comprehensive approach to identifying, planning for, and responding to layoffs and dislocations, and by preventing or minimizing the impact of such on workers, businesses, and communities described in [20 CFR§ 682.300\(b\)](#).

Rapid Response offers assistance and services to workers affected by layoffs, business closures, or job loss, due to natural or other disasters resulting in a mass job dislocations as well as proactively mitigating potential layoffs or business closures with layoff aversion strategies. while ensuring immediate access to affected workers to help them quickly re-enter the workforce.


Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) are responsible for carrying out Rapid Response activities in their Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA). LWDBs must develop policies and procedures to ensure that all Rapid Response activities are available in the LWDA.

IV. POLICY


- A. Dislocation Events to trigger Rapid Response Services and Notice: The following describes how the Rapid Response team is informed of dislocation events, or potential dislocation events, initiating Rapid Response services, as appropriate.
1. Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act: The WARN Act requires employers covered by the Act (covered employers) to provide 60 calendar days advance notice of certain events, such as plant closures or mass layoffs, to affected workers, employee representatives, the State Rapid Response Coordinator, and appropriate units of local government.

Arizona adheres to the federal WARN guidelines found in [20 CFR Part 639](#).


- a. Employers are covered by WARN if they:
 - i. Are private, for-profit or nonprofit entities, or;
 - ii. Are public or quasi-public entities that operate in a commercial context and are separate from the regular government; and

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- iii. Employ 100 or more employees, or are laying off at least 50 workers at a single site, not counting employees who:
 - a) Worked less than six months in the previous 12 months;
 - b) Work an average of less than 20 hours per week;
 - c) Retire, resign, or are terminated for cause; or
 - d) Are offered a transfer to another site of employment within a reasonable commuting distance, if:
 - 1) The closing or layoff results from a relocation or consolidation of all or part of the employer’s business;
 - 2) The transfer involves no more than a six-month break in employment; and
 - 3) The worker accepts the offer within 30 days of the offer, the closing, or the layoff, whichever is later.
- b. Employees are entitled to a WARN may be hourly or salaried workers.
- c. Employees who are not protected by WARN, and who are not entitled to a WARN Act notice, are as follows:
 - i. Workers on a labor strike or who have been locked out in a labor dispute;
 - ii. Temporary workers who clearly understand the temporary nature of the work for which they were hired;
 - iii. Business partners, consultants, or contracted employees who are paid by another employer or who are self-employed; and
 - iv. Regular federal, State, or local government employees.
- d. The employer must provide a WARN Act notice to:
 - i. The State Rapid Response Coordinator, as directed on the [DES Rapid Response – Workforce Reduction Support](#) webpage;
 - ii. The Chief Elected Official of the unit of government, which is the leader of the local government where the employment site is located;
 - iii. The chief or lead elected officer of the representative(s) or bargaining agency(ies) of affected workers, or potentially affected workers; and
 - iv. Individual workers, who are not represented by bargaining agency and who may reasonably be expected to experience an employment loss, including workers who may lose their employment due to “bumping” or displacement of other workers.
- e. The WARN must include the following information:
 - i. The business name and the address of the employment site where the plant closure or mass layoff will occur;
 - ii. The corporate or company name and address, if different from the employment site;
 - iii. The name, email address, and phone number of a company official to contact for further information;
 - iv. A statement as to whether the planned action is expected to be permanent or temporary and, if the entire plant is to be closed or a statement to that effect;
 - v. The expected date of the first separation and, if applicable, the anticipated schedule for making separations;
 - vi. The job titles of positions to be affected and the number of affected employees in each job title;


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- vii. An indication as to whether or not bumping rights exist;
 - viii. The name of each union representing affected employees and the name and address of the chief elected officer of each union, if applicable.
2. **Non-WARN Dislocations:** Employers experiencing closures or layoffs, who do not meet WARN requirements, may voluntarily choose to report such closures or layoffs to the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Rapid Response Coordinator. Rapid Response services must be offered, regardless of the employer’s size or the number of workers affected, when an employer voluntarily reports closures or layoffs to the Local Area Rapid Response Coordinator.
 3. **Disasters:** Any employer experiencing a closure or mass layoff due to natural or other disasters may seek Rapid Response services from the Local Area Rapid Response Coordinator.
 4. **Layoff Aversion Events:** Employers seeking strategies to prevent or minimize the duration of unemployment resulting from layoffs may send a request for layoff aversion assistance.
 5. **Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Dislocation Events:** The Trade Act of 1974 established the TAA Program to assist workers who have been laid off or whose jobs have been threatened by foreign trade or competition (trade-affected workers). An employer who is experiencing dislocation, for whom there has been or are plans to submit a TAA petition to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), may also contact the Local Area Rapid Response Coordinator for services.
- B. The City of Phoenix has assigned a Local Rapid Response Coordinator (LRRC) who leads the Rapid Response Event Team. The team includes representatives from the local WIOA service providers and core partners, as necessary, for dislocation events that affect workers throughout the ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix Local Area, to ensure that all appropriate enrollments for services provided to the affected workers under Title I-B are entered into the State’s system of record by the staff providing the service. The LRCC has overall responsibility for ensuring the Rapid Response team is fulfilling the obligation of effective delivery of Rapid Response assistance to affected workers. The Rapid Response team consists of the following:
1. Rapid Response Coordinator;
 2. Employment Service (Wagner-Peyser) representatives, who provide services to employers and job seekers and ensure that all appropriate Employment Service enrollments and services for affected workers are entered into the State’s system of record.
 3. Unemployment Insurance Benefits program representatives;
 4. Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Staff (if applicable);
 5. Registered Apprenticeship staff (if applicable).
 6. The ARIZONA@WORK Maricopa County’s Rapid Response team; and
 7. Other DES staff who represent programs which offer basic needs assistance, such as Nutrition Assistance and Utility Assistance (if applicable).
 8. Labor organizations representing affected workers (if applicable).
 9. Other ARIZONA@WORK partners and community partners identified by the local staff, as needed, to provide assistance for the specific event.
- C. WARN or Non-WARN dislocations are recorded in the State’s system of record when they are submitted to Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES). If an individual indicates, during job


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seeker registration in the State’s system of record that they were impacted by a WARN or non-WARN dislocation, they will be reported as having participated in Rapid Response. Services delivered to these individuals must be recorded by the appropriate staff, in the State’s system of record, within in the program enrollment for which they were delivered, and is subject to data validation requirements for the program. ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix is responsible for adhering to the records retention requirements as per the [ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix policy 100.109: General Administration: Records Management and Retention Policy](#).


- D. Required Rapid Response activities provide customer-focused services to both dislocated workers and employers and ensure immediate access to affected workers to help them re-enter the workforce more quickly and include the following
1. Layoff aversion, which may include:
 - a. Early identification of employers at risk of closures and layoffs, assessment of the needs of and options for at-risk employers, and the delivery of services to address these needs;
 - b. Continuing engagement, partnership, and relationship-building activities with businesses in the community;
 - c. Funding feasibility studies to determine if a company’s operations may be sustained through a buyout or other means to avoid or minimize layoffs;
 - d. Connecting employers and workers with Work-Based Learning (WBL), in compliance with the requirements set forth in the [WIOA Training Services Policy](#), which are as follows;
 - i. On-the-Job Training (OJT): OJT, as described in [20 CFR § 680.700](#) and [ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix Policy 600.605 Training Services: On-The-Job Training](#) is training provided under a contract with an employer who is reimbursed a percentage of the wage rate of the participant being trained while engaged in productive work in a job, and will be made available to workers affected by dislocations, as appropriate
 - ii. Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP): RAPs, as described in [WIOA Title I-B Training Services Policy](#), are an industry-driven system of employment, OJT, and related technical instruction (RTI), and will be made available to workers affected by dislocations, as appropriate.
 - iii. Incumbent Worker Training (IWT): IWT, as described in [ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix Policy 600.604 Training Services: Incumbent Worker Training](#), is designed to meet the special needs of an employer or group of employers, to retain a skilled workforce or to avert the need to lay off employees, by helping workers gain the skills needed to retain employment and by increasing the occupational competitiveness of the employee or employer. IWT will be made available to workers affected by dislocations, as appropriate.
 - iv. Customize Training (CT): CT, as described in the [ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix Policy 600.606 Training Services: Customized Training](#), is training activity:
 - a) Designed to meet the specific needs of an employer or group of employers;

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- b) Conducted with a commitment to employing and individual upon the successful completion of the program;
 - c) For which the employer agrees to pay a significant portion of the training cost; and
 - d) Made available to workers affected by dislocations, as appropriate.
 - e. Connecting companies to:
 - i. Short-term compensation or other programs designed to prevent layoffs or to quickly reemploy dislocated workers;
 - ii. Employer loan programs for employee skill upgrading; and
 - iii. Other federal, state, and local resources necessary to address business needs that cannot be funded with Rapid Response funds.
 - f. Establishing linkages with economic development activities at the federal, state, and local levels, including U.S. Department of Commerce programs and available state and local business retention and expansion activities;
 - g. Partnering or contracting with business-focused organizations to assess risks to companies, propose strategies to address those risks, implement services, and measure impacts of services delivered;
 - h. Conducting analyses of the suppliers of an affected company to assess the suppliers' risks and vulnerabilities from a potential closing or shift in production of their major customer (the affected company); and
 - i. Engaging in proactive measures to identify opportunities for potential economic transition and training needs in growing industry sectors or expanding businesses; and
2. **Immediate employer contact:** After notice of a dislocation event, the Local Area Rapid Response Coordinator will contact the employer and employee representatives (if applicable), within two business days, to:
- a. Verify the details of the closure or layoff;
 - b. Provide information to the employer about Rapid Response activities, to include information on unemployment insurance benefits and the Shared Work Program; and
 - c. Invite the employer to meet with the Rapid Response Event Team to establish a plan to carry out Rapid Response activities for the affected workers,
3. **Initial Employer Meeting:** Once the employer is engaged, an initial meeting with the Rapid Response Event Team, the employer, and the employee representatives will be held as soon as possible. The Local Area Rapid Response Coordinator will ensure that the local labor representative is included in the initial meeting. The initial contact meeting will provide information and a discussion of:
- a. Available programs, service providers, and resources in the ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix LWDA, to meet the short-term and long-term assistance needs of the affected workers including:
 - i. Unemployment Insurance, by representatives from the Unemployment Insurance Benefits Team;
 - ii. Reemployment Services, by representatives from the Employment Services team;
 - iii. Job Training, which includes Work-Based Learning, as described in Section F.1.d. of this policy, by representatives from the Title I-A team;
 - iv. TAA, by representatives from the TAA team, if the event involves an employer who is working with the TAA team;

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- v. Financial counseling, by representatives from an entity that provides this service in the ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix LWDA; and
 - vi. Federal and State emergency management agencies, if the dislocation is due to a disaster.
 - b. Rapid Response content, format, and benefits to the employer and affected workers;
 - c. An assessment of the employer’s layoff plan and schedule;
 - d. Identification of the affected workers, their current wage scale, occupations, skills levels, and length of service.
 - e. Benefits provided by the employer to the affected workers, e.g., severance pay, health insurance and other employee benefits, job development, job search activities, and relocation or reemployment opportunities;
 - f. Projected assistance needs of the affected workers;
 - g. Reemployment prospects for workers in the local community; and
 - h. The potential for averting the layoff or closure, which may be discussed in consultation with State or local economic development agencies, including local chambers of commerce.
4. Information Sessions for Affected Workers: When possible, after the initial meeting with the employer, the Rapid Response Event Team will hold information sessions with the affected employees to provide, at a minimum, information and contacts for the following services
- a. Unemployment Insurance Benefits;
 - b. Continuation of health insurance through the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), when applicable, and when information is available to the event team;
 - c. Employers currently hiring in the LWDA;
 - d. Training and supportive services available through Title I of WIOA;
 - e. TAA services, if available;
 - f. Services available for veterans, including services available through the Jobs for Veterans State Grants and the GI Bill;
 - g. Federal and state emergency management agencies, if the dislocation is due to a disaster; and
 - h. Services available to the community to meet basic needs, including:
 - i. Financial counseling;
 - ii. Emergency Rental Assistance Program;
 - iii. Utility Assistance;
 - iv. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program;
 - v. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; and
 - vi. Other Emergency Assistance.
5. **Additional Rapid Response Services to be Made Available:** The following services are to be made available by the Local Area Rapid Response team as a part of layoff aversion and dislocation events, based on the needs of the employers and affected workers.
- a. Professional Outplacement Team: A professional outplacement team is to be coordinated by the Local Area Rapid Response Coordinator, using resources from all partners, to support the reemployment efforts of affected workers, as appropriate. These services may be provided by a third-party vendor, as applicable and as determined appropriate by the Local Area Rapid Response Coordinators. The following services may be provide virtually, by phone, or in person:
 - i. Assessments to identify the transferable skills of the affected workers.


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- ii. One-on-one services between Employment Specialists and affected workers, to assist with career guidance, job match, and referral to employers in the system to meet the specific needs of the worker.
 - iii. Workshops, such as employment skills, resume writing, and job readiness.
 - iv. Referrals to partners to provide job loss/grief counseling.
 - v. Follow-up assistance for those affected and placed in new employment.
 - vi. Coordination and referral to ARIZONA@WORK partners and other resources.
 - b. Work-Based Learning: WBL, as described in 20 CFR Part 680 Subpart F and Section F.1.d of this policy, are valuable business engagement activities which are to be made available via the local ARIZONA@WORK system as a Rapid Response service for any layoff aversion and any dislocation event.
 - c. Transition Centers
 - i. Transition centers are fully equipped and staffed “mini job centers” with computers, a copier, and resource information, as needed, for preparing a job search. A transition center may be onsite at the employer’s location or in a building convenient to the affected employees.
 - ii. The Local Rapid Response Coordinator must consult with the state Rapid Response Coordinator prior to committing to set up a transition center. Many factors must be considered, such as the:
 - a) Geographic proximity of the company to an ARIZONA@WORK Job Center;
 - b) Capacity (e.g., size, staffing, capability of staff) of the existing ARIZONA@WORK Job Center in the closest proximity to the location of the dislocation;
 - c) Size and impact of the dislocation (usually 100 or more impacted);
 - d) Availability of local and state funds, and whether it is cost-effective; and
 - e) Likelihood of reemployment by the affected workers, in the same or similar occupations, with little or no need for services.
 - d. Upskilling: Upskilling is the process of identifying skills gaps, and then elevating the skills and knowledge to a new level by acquiring new soft skills, competencies, and certifications. Upskilling may be provided, through WBL activities, and using IWT for a layoff aversion activity, to meet the in-demand occupation and certification needs for employers.
 - e. Reskilling: Reskilling is the process of learning needed to engage in an entirely different job, for those affected workers who must find new careers as their jobs are no longer in-demand. Reskilling may be provided through WBL and IWT for a layoff aversion activity, to meet the in-demand occupation and certification needs for employers.
 - f. Community Transition Teams: When circumstances allow and a need is determined, community transition teams may be established to assist the impacted community in organizing support for dislocated workers and in meeting the basic needs of their families, including heat, heat relief, shelter, food, clothing, and other necessities and services that are beyond the resources and ability of the one-stop delivery system to provide.
6. Coordination with the Trade Adjustment Assistance Team: If it appears that a dislocation event is due to the employer’s inability to compete with foreign imports, or because the employer is outsourcing

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jobs to another country, the State TAA Coordinator will be notified and asked to participate as a part of the Rapid Response Event Team.

7. National Dislocated Worker Grants: As described in [TEGL 12-19, Change 1](#), National Dislocated Worker Grant Program Guidance, National Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs) temporarily expand training and employment services to dislocated workers, including military service members and dislocated military spouses, by providing additional funding when unexpected economic events or natural disaster cause significant job losses, with a purpose to reemploy laid-off workers and to enhance their employability and earnings.
 - a. Disaster Recover DWGs are time-limited grants that provide funding to create temporary employment opportunities to assist with clean-up and recovery efforts when an area impacted by a disaster is declared eligible for public assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), or from another recognized federal agency with authority or jurisdiction over federal responses to the emergency or disaster.
 - i. Only states, outlying areas, and Indian Tribal governments are eligible to receive Disaster Recovery DWGs. States may sub-grant the awards to LWDBs.
 - ii. LWDBs whose LDWA has been impacted by a disasters may submit a request to DES to apply for a Disaster Recover DWG by providing the information listed in [TEGL 12-19, Change 1](#).
 - b. Employment Recovery DWGs provide resources to respond to major economic dislocations, such as large, unexpected layoffs that cause significant job losses.
 - i. Eligible applicants include states and LWDBs.
 - ii. Pursuant to [TEGL 12-19, Change 1](#), LWDBs who apply for an Employee Recovery DWG must work collaboratively with DES, as the state workforce agency, to ensure coordination with the Rapid Response activities occurring throughout the state.
8. Other Coordination activities:
 - a. Affected workers, whose assessment indicates a need for adult or dislocated worker services, are to be assessed for eligibility determination and possible enrollment into adult and dislocated worker services for services deemed appropriate through assessment by the ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix service provider, pursuant to [ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix policy 200.204: Career Services – Eligibility Adult, Dislocated Worker, and QUEST DWG Programs](#).
 - b. The Local Area Rapid Response Coordinator identifies and coordinates with local community resources, (e.g., rental, utility, and food assistance) to provide services, as determined to be needed.
- E. Allowable Rapid Response Activities: In order to conduct layoff aversion activities, or to prepare for and respond to dislocation events, Local Area Rapid Response teams must devise strategies or conduct activities that are intended to minimize the negative impacts of dislocation on workers, businesses, and communities, and to ensure that workers impacted by dislocations are able to be reemployed as quickly as possible. The Board must establish and maintain a team to provide Rapid Response services for dislocation events. Such activities include, but are not limited to:

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1. Connecting employers and workers with short-term, customized, incumbent worker training, apprenticeships, or other training or apprenticeships, before or after layoff, to ensure appropriate skills for new employment;
2. Facilitating incumbent worker training and other work-based training for eligible workers based on state or local rules (see ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix policy 600.601 -Training Services: Training Services Eligibility);
3. Identifying heavily concentrated industries and sectors and related training needs in a geographic area;
4. Identifying proactive measures, such as business visitation or layoff forecasting programs, to recognize indicators of potential economic transition and training needs in growing industry sectors or expanding businesses;
5. Talent transfer events or reemployment boot camps that will connect employers in growing industries or sectors with available talent;
6. Effective partnerships with a wide range of organizations to support allowable strategies and activities;
7. Collection of data and intelligence related to economic transition trends within industries, communities, or at specific employers, and planning strategies for intervention;
8. Developing an early warning network and system using data and intelligence gathered; and
9. Provision of additional assistance, per 20 CFR § 682.350.

V. POLICY MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Administrative revisions to the policy may be made by the Phoenix Business and Workforce Development (PBWD) Board Executive Director, with notice to the PBWD Board’s Executive Leadership Committee. All other substantive revisions will go to the PBWD Board’s Executive Leadership Committee for review and recommendation to the PBWD Board for approval.

VI. ADDITIONAL OR MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Arizona Department of Economic Security Rapid Response policy link: [DES WIOA Rapid Response Policy Chapter 2 Section 900](#)

TEGL 19-16: Guidance on Services provided through the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service (ES), as amended by title III of WIOA, and for Implementation of the WIOA Final Rules:

http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL/TEGL_02-15.pdf

TEGL 12-19, Change 1: Change 1 to TEGL 12-19, National Dislocated Worker Grant Program Guidance: [Change 1 to TEGL 12-19, National Dislocated Worker Grant Program Guidance](#)

Training and Employment Notice (TEN) 3-10: The National Rapid Response Initiative: [TEN03-10.pdf](#)

[TEN 9-12: Layoff Aversion in Rapid Response Systems: TEN 9 12.pdf](#)