



## **RAPID RESPONSE POLICY**

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**Policy Number:** 2070

**Effective Date:** May 1, 2017

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### **A. BACKGROUND**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Sec. 101(51) requires Local Workforce Development Boards to implement statewide Rapid Response activities, in coordination with the state, to assist employers and impacted workers as quickly as possible following the announcement of a permanent closure, mass layoff, or natural or other disaster resulting in a mass job dislocation. Rapid Response activities are generally triggered by the filing of a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) notice or Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition with the state.

This policy clarifies how Workforce Snohomish will conduct the required Rapid Response activities under WIOA and related federal regulations.

### **B. POLICY**

Workforce Snohomish will coordinate Rapid Response services to workers and employers in a timely fashion that is tailored to the unique circumstances of each dislocation event. Workforce Snohomish will ensure that required information is provided to dislocated workers during Rapid Response layoff orientations.

Rapid Response services will be provided to workers and employers prior to dislocation events, if possible, or immediately following notification of the dislocation event, provided that such actions would not adversely impact any ongoing collective bargaining negotiations related to the dislocation event. Workforce Snohomish will assure that the following Rapid Response Activities are implemented:

- Establishing and maintaining a local Rapid Response team. Members of the team may include representatives from Workforce Snohomish, UI Claims Centers, WorkSource, labor organizations and/or Washington State Labor Council (when the workforce is union represented), community and technical colleges, and other stakeholders and interested parties.
- Identifying a Rapid Response contact to coordinate with the State Rapid Response Unit. A Rapid Response contact may be a Workforce Snohomish administrative

staff or designated local Rapid Response team member.

- Planning assistance for dislocation events. Where feasible, Rapid Response assistance should be conducted on-site. Local Rapid Response teams, in conjunction with Workforce Snohomish provide Rapid Response activities. Rapid Response assistance generally includes the following activities:
  - Consulting with the State Rapid Response Unit, state and local economic development organizations, and other entities to avert potential layoffs.
  - Determining the proposed layoff schedule and what the employer(s) plans are to assist the dislocated workers, including the status of any collective bargaining negotiations affecting layoff benefits.
  - Ascertaining and providing information related to severance, separation pay, retirement incentives and voluntary layoffs, so the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Division can review and determine UI eligibility for affected workers.
  - Coordinating the delivery of Rapid Response layoff orientations for affected workers. Local Rapid Response contacts will arrange for participation by local sub-recipients, contractors and partners in these sessions, as appropriate. The following required topics will be included, at a minimum, in Rapid Response layoff orientations:
    - Unemployment Insurance
    - Training Benefits program
    - Commissioner Approved Training
    - WorkSource labor exchange services
    - WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker services
    - Community and technical college resources
    - Local WorkSource partner contact names and phone numbers
  - Assessing the needs of the impacted workers as quickly as possible through the use of surveys that determine affected workers' skills, education and potential assistance needs.
  - Maintaining an inventory of available workforce resources for on-site meetings to address the short and long term assistance needs of the impacted workers.
  - Determining the need for and promoting a voluntary labor management committee or a workforce transition committee comprised of

representatives of the employer, affected workers or their representatives, and other community entities as necessary. The committee will assist in planning and overseeing an event-specific strategy that supports the reemployment of affected workers.

- Determining the need for peer worker outreach to connect dislocated workers with services in conjunction with the labor management committee or its equivalent.
- Consulting and coordinating with appropriate labor representatives when planning Rapid Response activities for those impacted workers covered by a collective bargaining agreement.
- Ensuring procedures are in place for the timely access and referral to WorkSource Programs, services and information offered by WIOA, UI, TAA, Wagner-Peyser and other programs.

When Rapid Response activities are near completion, the Workforce Snohomish Rapid Response contact will notify and coordinate with the appropriate one-stop operator(s) to transfer the responsibility for service delivery to those dislocated by layoffs or closures who are interested in accessing career services, training services, supportive services, and other relevant services.

Local rapid response team members or partners who become aware of a WARN-level layoff or closure event, must notify the Workforce Snohomish Rapid Response contact; the contact will notify the State Rapid Response coordinator to discuss the event and begin formulating strategies for carrying out rapid response activities.

If a layoff or closure event does not meet the WARN threshold or is not TAA related, Workforce Snohomish will initiate a local rapid response and inform the State Rapid Response coordinator of the rapid response event and number of attendees.

**Definitions:**

N/A

**Reference:**

[Washington State Employment System Administration and Policy #5603](#)

**Supersedes:**

Rapid Response #08-12