

	POLICY P09: RAPID RESPONSE AND LAYOFF ASSISTANCE
	APPROVED: 10/28/2016 – NOW
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NEW <input type="checkbox"/> REVISED

PURPOSE

Rapid Response and Layoff Assistance (LOA) are early intervention services that assist both employers and employees affected by layoffs or plant closures. These services provide access to user-friendly resources and information to help transition affected workers into reemployment. This policy defines the roles and responsibilities of those delivering rapid response services within the Northwest Workforce Area

BACKGROUND

Rapid Response services, including access to user-friendly resources and information to help transition affected workers into reemployment, are provided in collaboration with the State Rapid Response Unit following the announcement of a permanent closure, mass layoff, or natural or other disaster resulting in a mass job dislocation. Rapid Response services are typically triggered by a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) notice or Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition notification.

This policy ensures the provision of Rapid Response services to workers and employers in a coordinated and timely fashion that is tailored to the unique circumstances of each dislocation event. The policy also ensures that required information is provided to dislocated workers statewide during rapid response layoff orientations.

POLICY

Rapid Response services will be delivered 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.

NOW will coordinate the provision of Rapid Response services in the local area. NOW will:

- Establish and maintain a local rapid response team including representatives from UI Claims Centers, local WorkSource centers, labor organizations and/or Oregon State Labor Council (when the workforce is union represented), community colleges, and other stakeholders and interested parties.

- Identify a NOW staff or designated local rapid response team member to serve as the contact to coordinate with the State Rapid Response Unit. The local contact will
 - Assure that all necessary rapid response activities are coordinated with state and implemented locally.
 - Coordinate events with the local team and the State Rapid Response Unit to provide on-site (if possible) assistance to those laid off.
 - Consult with the State Rapid Response Unit, state and local economic development organizations, and other entities to avert potential layoffs.
 - Consult with appropriate labor representatives when WIOA programs will serve union members.
 - Notify the State Rapid Response coordinator when it is discovered that WARN-level layoff or closure event is imminent to begin formulating strategies for carrying out rapid response activities.
 - Initiate a rapid response per its local operational plan when a layoff or closure event that does not meet the WARN threshold or is not TAA related and inform the State Rapid Response coordinator of the rapid response event and number of attendees.
 - Notify the appropriate one-stop operator(s) when rapid response activities are near completion, and coordinate to enable local sites to assume 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.
 - Inform the team of any ongoing collective bargaining negotiations related to a plant closure or layoff event to avoid any actions that might impact those negotiations. Team members must be informed of impact that the offer of services and resources may have on the negotiation process, especially with respect to financial arrangements related to the provision of severance benefits.

Rapid Response activities will include: immediate and onsite contact with the employer, representative of the affected workers, and the local community (community-based organizations); information on unemployment insurance, WorkSource Oregon (WSO) Centers, employment and training services, and Trade Act; guidance and/or financial assistance in establishing a Transition Team; assistance to develop a coordinated response to the dislocation event; and, as needed, funds adapted to meet the particular layoff or closure. The results of all Rapid Response activities are to be clearly documented to allow for and aid in request for layoff assistance funding from the state.

NOW will apply for state funded layoff assistance resources to provide targeted, localized support of significant dislocations, as appropriate, at the discretion of the NOW Executive Director. NOW Executive Director will determine type of funding (if any) to apply for, as part of Rapid Response activities:

- **Additional Assistance Funds** awarded to temporarily expand service capacity to address the needs of a specific group of workers impacted by layoff or closure that does not meet the threshold of a National Emergency Grant (NEG) application, and for which regular Dislocated Worker formula funding is not available or sufficient.
- **Gap Fill Funds** to be used for the same purpose of a proposed NEG to provide services between the NEG application and the date that grant approval notice is issued.
- **Rapid Response Funds** to support pre-layoff services. Pre-layoff services may include the provision of worker information sessions, the establishment of a layoff transition team, hiring peer support advocates, providing on-site workshops, establishing and staffing an on-site resource room and staff time to explore layoff aversion strategies. *Pre-layoff services do not require participant enrollment in WIOA.*
- **National Emergency Grants** from the Department of Labor for projects meeting the DOL threshold for significant dislocations. Funds support staff engagement with dislocated workers to provide assistance in developing a course of action for re-employment.

Participant Eligibility and Enrollment: All participants except those receiving Rapid Response-funded pre-layoff services must be determined eligible for, enrolled in and receive a staff-assisted service funded by the WIOA Title IB Dislocated Worker Program. A participant must also meet any specific eligibility conditions of the grant and/or the approved target population.

Veteran's Priority: Veteran's Priority of Service applies to all Rapid Response activities.

Monitoring: All Rapid Response projects will be monitored in accordance with state, federal and NOW policy and procedures on monitoring.