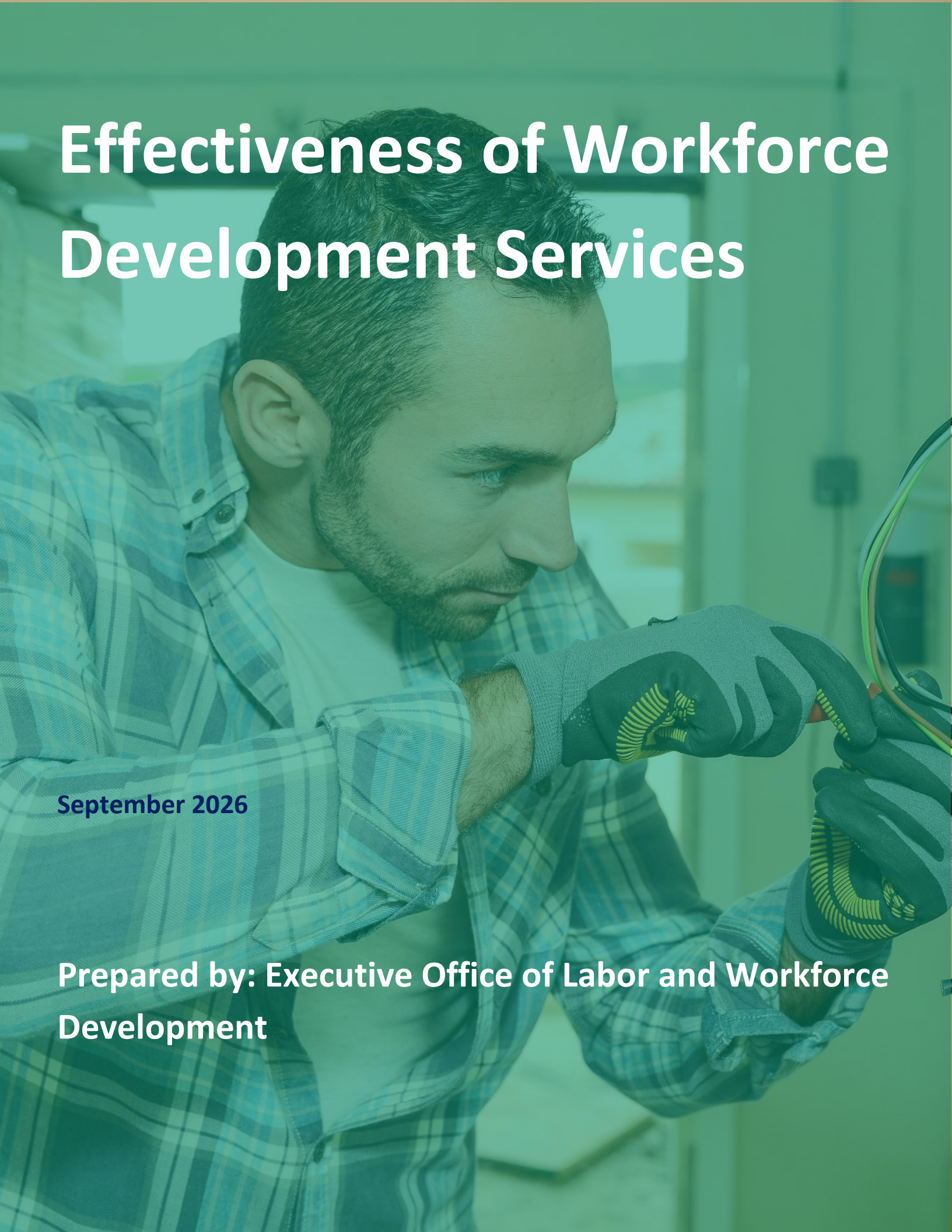


A man with a beard, wearing a blue and white plaid shirt and grey work gloves with yellow accents, is focused on working with a bundle of colorful wires. He is in a workshop or industrial setting, with a green tint overlaying the entire image.

Effectiveness of Workforce Development Services

September 2026

Prepared by: Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

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Executive summary

Objectives

This study was commissioned by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) to evaluate workforce development grant programs managed by the MassHire Department of Career Services (MDCS) and the Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp). Across Massachusetts, MDCS and CommCorp play pivotal roles in supporting the State's workforce development needs. These agencies oversee a diverse array of workforce development programs, each with their own structure, activities, and procedures. Mandated by state legislation, this evaluation examines the structure, target groups, and outcomes of key workforce initiatives across Massachusetts including intensive training programs with case management, additional career services (e.g. resume help, job search assistance), support services and job placement services.

The report reviews program operations, participant demographics, outcome metrics such as job placement rates and wage outcomes, and cost-effectiveness measures for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and the Wagner-Peyser program administered by MDCS, and the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) and Career Technical Initiative (CTI) programs administered by CommCorp. The evaluation period primarily covers FY2022 to FY2024; however, where additional data was available, the analysis includes a longer timeframe.

Key findings

The key findings highlighted in this report are as follows:

- 1. Growth in program participation:** Enrollments increased across the five MDCS and CommCorp programs during the analysis period. In FY 2024, the programs collectively enrolled 112,185 participants, representing an increase of 78% compared to FY 2022. This growth was driven largely by expanded access to virtual services for the Wagner-Peyser program and continued recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2. Employment rates and wage outcomes:** Across MDCS and CommCorp initiatives, average post-program job placement rates consistently exceed 75%, and participants who gain employment generally experience improved wage outcomes compared to their pre-program earnings. Additionally, those who successfully complete these workforce development programs tend to earn more than participants who do not complete.
- 3. Cost per participant:** The cost per participant across programs offering training ranges from \$4,000 to \$9,000. Training programs are more expensive than other career services.¹
- 4. Positive cost-effectiveness ratio across all programs:** Each program demonstrates a cost-effectiveness ratio greater than 1, indicating that they deliver positive net benefits to society beyond the gains for individual participants.

These findings are further elaborated for each program below and are detailed further in the main body of the report.

¹ Excluding the cost per participant for the Wagner-Peyser program, which is significantly lower (approximately \$150 per participant). This is due to its broader reach and less intensive service model that emphasizes career services over training.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser

\$16,840

average increase in
real annual wages for
WIOA Adult
participants

- **Growth in participation.** From 2021 to 2023, enrollment in the WIOA Adult program rose from 571 to 1,111 participants (averaging 39% growth each year), and Wagner-Peyser program enrollment grew from 60,000 to 89,000 participants (averaging 21% growth each year). The WIOA Dislocated Worker program grew more slowly, with enrollment increasing by about 3% per year.
- **Employment rates and wage outcomes.** The average post-program employment rates for all three MDCS programs ranged from 75% to 85% during the analysis period, which are substantial improvements from employment rates at program entry (17% for WIOA Adult and 5% for Wagner-Peyser). For WIOA Adult participants who secured jobs after completing the program, annual wages increased by almost \$17,000 compared to what they earned before. Additionally, those who successfully complete WIOA Adult training tend to earn on average nearly \$7,000 more than participants who start, but do not complete training. On average, participants in the WIOA Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs²—who were mostly unemployed at entry but found jobs post-program—replaced 90–92% of their pre-program wages.
- **Cost per participant.** The average cost per participant in the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs ranged from \$7,400 to \$9,600 between 2022 and 2024. In contrast, the Wagner-Peyser program averages below \$150 per participant.
- **Positive cost-effectiveness ratio.** The cost-effectiveness ratios for the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs are 1.92 and 2.91, respectively. For every \$1 invested in these programs, there is a societal benefit of \$1.92 for the Adult program and \$2.91 for the Dislocated Worker program.

Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF)

- **Growth in participation.** From 2020 to 2024, 3,982 individuals enrolled in WCTF programs. Participation in the program has increased (averaging 57% growth each year), particularly in recent years coinciding with the addition of Healthcare/Behavioral Health Workforce Hubs Initiative (HCBH Hubs) Grants and increased awards to grantees.
- **Employment rates and wage outcomes.** The average post-program employment rate for WCTF participants is 84%, higher than the 47% rate prior to program enrollment.³ Participants who find employment after completing the WCTF program earn, on average, about \$16,400

\$16,400

average increase in
real annual wages
for WCTF
participants⁴

² The WIOA Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs primarily serve individuals who are unemployed. Therefore, instead of estimating changes in wage outcomes as is done for the WIOA Adult program, the analysis focuses on the replacement rate of their wages—that is, the percentage of their previous wage they were able to receive after participating in the program.

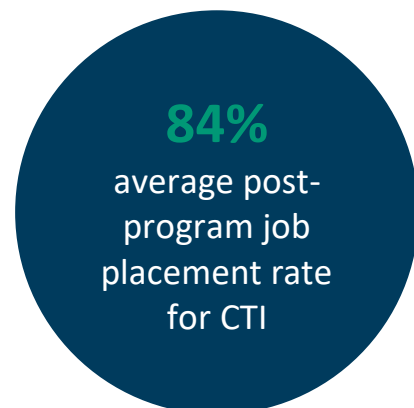
³ The reported employment rates based on the wage record match is likely understated. Unlike MDCS, CommCorp does not have access to State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) data; as such, it cannot track participants who found jobs, including those in military service, outside Massachusetts after completing their training.

more per year than they did before enrollment. Wage gains are even greater for individuals in the lower income band.⁴

- **Cost per participant.** The total cost per enrollee for grants from 2019 through 2023 is roughly \$4,300.
- **Positive cost-effectiveness ratio.** The WCTF program delivers a strong financial return for society, with a cost-effectiveness ratio of 3.39—meaning every dollar invested generates \$3.39 in societal benefits.

Career Technical Initiative (CTI)

- **Growth in participation.** While the program’s rollout was slower in the initial years reflecting the newness of the program and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2,943 individuals have enrolled in CTI programs from 2021 to 2024. Enrollment in the program has increased from 301 in 2021 to 1,841 in 2024.
- **Change in wages and employment rates.** The average post-program employment rate for CTI participants is 84%, higher than the 52% rate prior to program enrollment.⁵ Participants who find employment after completing the CTI program earn, on average, about \$15,500 more per year than they did before.⁶ Increases in wages are particularly strong for low-income individuals and workers in the early stages of their career (i.e., 18 to 24 years old). Additionally, those who successfully complete the CTI program tend to earn on average \$4,500 more than participants who do not complete the entire training.
- **Cost per participant.** The average grantee reimbursements and total cost per enrollee for grants from Rounds 3 through 5 of funding are roughly \$6,200 and \$6,800, respectively. This aligns closely with the estimate cap of \$6,600 per participant, comprising the \$6,000 available to grantees in Rounds 1 through 7 and an additional 10% for statewide administration based on grantee reimbursements.⁷
- **Positive cost-effectiveness ratio.** The CTI program shows a net gain in financial outcomes for society and a positive financial return, with a cost-effectiveness ratio of 2.18—meaning every dollar spent corresponds to \$2.18 in societal benefit. Importantly, CTI is a less mature program compared to others analyzed in this report. As a result, these estimates should be revisited as the program matures.



Recommendations

The suggested process changes described below are derived from the evaluation findings and are intended to inform future program planning and enhance data collection efforts to strengthen the rigor of future evaluations. The recommendations are first outlined separately for MDCS and CommCorp. This is followed by

⁴ Individuals who were unemployed prior to the program are excluded from the analysis due to data limitations. Please refer to Sections 4.8 and 5.8 for more information regarding the methodology for wage outcomes in the WCTF and CTI program.

⁵ See footnote 3.

⁶ See footnote 4.

⁷ As of Round 10, the maximum available to grantees is \$10,000 per participant.

overarching recommendations for EOLWD, which apply across both agencies. The rationale for these recommendations is provided in Section 6 of the report.

Recommendations

MDCS

1. Coordinate with the Massachusetts DUA and US Department of Labor to enable long-term tracking of participant outcomes beyond program exit.
2. Track hours worked in addition to total quarterly wages.
3. Collect baseline data—starting with overall household income—to accurately assess participants' economic status prior to program entry.
4. Assess the tracking of distinct service interactions to better evaluate program effectiveness.

CommCorp

1. Prioritize improving the quality of post-program outcomes data provided by grantees.
2. Coordinate with the Massachusetts DUA and US Department of Labor to enable long-term tracking of participant outcomes beyond program exit.
3. Consider the feasibility of tracking employment outcomes from grantees beyond the current 30-day benchmark.
4. Consider reevaluating the CTI program once it is more mature (e.g. when Round 10 closes).
5. Coordinate with the Massachusetts DUA to explore collecting pre-program wage data over a longer period for participants. Currently, wage information is only captured at the time of enrollment.

EOLWD

1. Within each agency, consider integrating program performance and financial data systems to enable outcome-based financial analysis. This applies to both CommCorp and MDCS. Currently, each agency has two separate teams and technologies tracking performance and financial data independently.
2. Coordinate with the Massachusetts DUA to explore collecting unemployment insurance usage data for both program participants and non-participants to develop a robust counterfactual for future evaluations. This applies to all programs managed by MDCS and CommCorp.
3. Track individuals participating across multiple workforce development programs to assess the cumulative impact of cross-program engagement.

Section 1: Introduction

This study was completed by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) as an evaluation of the workforce development grant programs administered through Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp) and the MassHire Department of Career Services (MDCS).

The Act relating to economic growth and relief for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 268 and detailed in the FY2023 Massachusetts state budget line item 1599-6086, serves as the foundation for the report by mandating a comprehensive study conducted by EOLWD.

Across Massachusetts, MDCS and CommCorp play pivotal roles in supporting the State's workforce development needs. These agencies oversee a diverse array of workforce development programs, each with their own structure, activities, and procedures. Table 1A provides a concise overview of the main programs managed by MDCS and CommCorp, including details such as the start date, lead agency, target group, application process, and available services. Section 2 offers a thorough overview of both agencies, outlining their key responsibilities, and provides an in-depth examination of the individual programs designed to strengthen the Commonwealth's workforce.

Table 1A. Summary of program details

	WIOA Adult	WIOA Dislocated Worker	Wagner-Peyser Employment Services	Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF)	Career Technical Initiative (CTI)
Program start date/date of last major program change	2014	2014	2014*	2006	2020**
Who is the lead agency?	MDCS	MDCS	MDCS	CommCorp	CommCorp
Who is the target population and are there any other eligibility requirements?	Underemployed and unemployed (with priority for Veterans and spouses)	Recently unemployed due to plant closure, economic conditions or other factors	Universal access	Underemployed, unemployed, and some incumbent workers looking to advance career	Underemployed and unemployed
Who provides funding for the program?	Federally-funded	Federally-funded	Federally-funded	Mostly state-funded	Mostly state-funded
Who is the program designed to fund?	Individual jobseekers	Individual jobseekers	Individual jobseekers	Organizations such as training providers, schools, and community-based organizations	Chapter 74 high schools
Is a grantee application required?	No – funding flows directly to regional workforce boards	No – funding flows directly to regional workforce boards	No – funding flows directly to regional workforce boards	Yes	Yes
Is an individual/job seeker application required?	No***	No***	No***	Depends on the CommCorp grantee who provides services to individuals	Depends on the CommCorp grantee who provides services to individuals
How long does the state agency have to spend allocated funds?	Typically 3 years	Typically 3 years	Typically 3 years	Up to 3 years	Up to 3 years

	WIOA Adult	WIOA Dislocated Worker	Wagner-Peyser Employment Services	Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF)	Career Technical Initiative (CTI)
Who is the service provider?	MassHire/career center operator/ 3 rd party training provider	MassHire/ career center operator / 3 rd party training provider	MassHire/ career center operator	Training providers, schools, and community-based organizations	Chapter 74 high schools
Are training services part of the program?	Sometimes	Sometimes	No	Yes	Yes
Are career services part of the program?****	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Are wraparound supports part of the program?	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

*The Wagner-Peyser Act, established in 1933, created a nationwide system of public employment offices to connect job seekers with employers. In 2014, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services underwent many changes as a result of the enactment of WIOA.

** CTI was launched in 2020 with a pay-per-performance funding model. In 2021, the program switched to a cost reimbursement funding model.

*** There is no application to receive funding under WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, or Wagner-Peyser. Enrollees receive access to services as long as they meet all eligibility requirements.

****Career services primarily help individuals explore, prepare for, and find employment, while training services focus on providing the education and skills necessary to qualify for certain employment opportunities.

Note: MassHire also manages the WIOA Youth program. This program is excluded from the report.

Source: Analysis of MDCS and CommCorp data

While not analyzed within this report, the WIOA and Wagner-Peyser programs often interact with WCTF and CTI. For example, participants who are eligible for WIOA programming are also typically eligible for WCTF programming. Further, as part of the CTI admissions process, every applicant is referred to the partnering Career Center for eligibility screening. During that screening, Career Center staff also assess whether the applicant qualifies for co-enrollment in WIOA. As a result, a number of CTI students are co-enrolled (i.e., enrolled simultaneously) in WIOA. According to MDCS staff, some career centers track CTI co-enrollments, but it is not a requirement and therefore co-enrollment data is not complete.

Following an overview of both agencies in Section 2, this report includes three additional sections. Section 3 presents descriptive information (including explanations of the grants and the corresponding application and award process, educational and eligible service providers, participation figures, and participant demographics), performance (including job placement, changes in wages, and job outcomes after training), and cost and effectiveness metrics for WIOA Title I and Wagner-Peyser programs. Section 4 presents these metrics for the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund. Finally, metrics for the Career Technical Initiative are presented in Section 5.

Evaluation Period:

The evaluation period primarily covers FY 2022 to FY 2024; however, where additional data was available, the analysis includes a longer timeframe.

MDCS programs: The analysis of the MDCS programs primarily covers FY 2022 through 2024, which spans from July 2021 through June 2024. This includes data on individuals enrolled in the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser programs who were recorded in the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) during the FY 2022 through FY 2024 reporting periods. The PIRL is a required federal data reporting format used to collect individual-level data for people who receive services through workforce development programs funded by WIOA and other Department of Labor (DOL) programs. The PIRL data for FY 2022 through 2024 includes some participants who entered and/or exited prior to FY 2022, in line with PIRL reporting requirements. For example, a participant who enters the WIOA Adult program in FY 2018 and exits in FY 2021 will be reported in the PIRL

within the FY 2022 – 2024 evaluation period. Therefore, the analysis of the various performance metrics, including employment and earnings outcomes, includes participants who exit between FY 2021 and are reported in FY2022 due to the federal filing requirements and the first quarter of FY 2024. It is important to note that participants who exited in FY 2024 have limited outcome data available due to their recent exits; therefore, only those who exited in the first quarter of FY 2024 are included in the outcome data analysis.

CommCorp programs:

- **Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF):** Although the WCTF program was revised in FY 2018 and the first awards were made in FY 2019, enrollment did not begin until FY 2020. Therefore, this study analyzes the WCTF program for the period FY 2020 through FY 2024.
- **Career Technical Initiative (CTI):** Analysis of the CTI program covers participation from FY 2021, when the program began, through FY 2024, encompassing Rounds 1 through 9 of funding.⁸ Some sections exclude Rounds 1 and 2, as well as Rounds 6 through 9. Rounds 1 and 2 operated under a pay-for-performance model rather than cost reimbursement, while Rounds 6 through 9 were not fully closed at the time this report was prepared. While Round 10 is mentioned in the report, the round has not yet finalized contracts or begun enrollment and is therefore excluded from the detailed analysis.

Data sources:

The report draws from various data sources to evaluate the workforce development grant programs.

MDCS programs: Participant-level data for the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser programs comes from a dataset built from PIRL data. This includes unique participant identifiers, demographic information, services received, participation in public assistance programs, and wages earned before and after program completion.

The analysis also incorporates expenditure and allocation data from publicly available DOL and EOLWD sources, along with additional expenditure data provided by MDCS. This includes the year funds that were allocated, the year they were spent, and a breakdown of expenditures (e.g., local employment service costs vs. state administrative costs).

In addition to data maintained by MDCS, this report incorporates insights from a recent survey conducted by EOLWD fielded from April 11, 2025 through April 25, 2025. The survey was targeted at individuals (i.e., jobseekers, employers, training providers, employers, etc.) who had interacted with MDCS (either through a MassHire Career Center or through JobQuest) 6 months prior to the survey. Respondents also had the option to share the survey with their respective networks. The survey asked questions tailored to the type of interactions respondents had with MDCS including, but not limited to, types of services received, perceptions of service quality, and possible changes MDCS could make to improve the experience of participants.

CommCorp programs: The analysis of each of the CommCorp programs draws from two primary sources. The first source is enrollee data which is maintained by CommCorp for both WCTF and CTI. Enrollee data includes unique participant identifiers, the grant under which the participant received services, demographics, participation in public assistance programs at the time of enrollment, and employment and wages earned prior to and after program completion.

⁸ Funding for CTI Implementation Grants is structured into rounds to facilitate distribution. Please refer to Section 5.3 for more information regarding funding rounds.

The report also draws from data on individual grants. Unlike the enrollee data, grant data is maintained by each CTI and WCTF in a database separate from enrollee data. In general, grant data includes information on the training provider, contract start dates, participation goals, the total amount approved, and reimbursements paid to grantees. Both the WCTF and CTI programs include to-date reimbursements paid to grantees by expense category alongside other grant information.

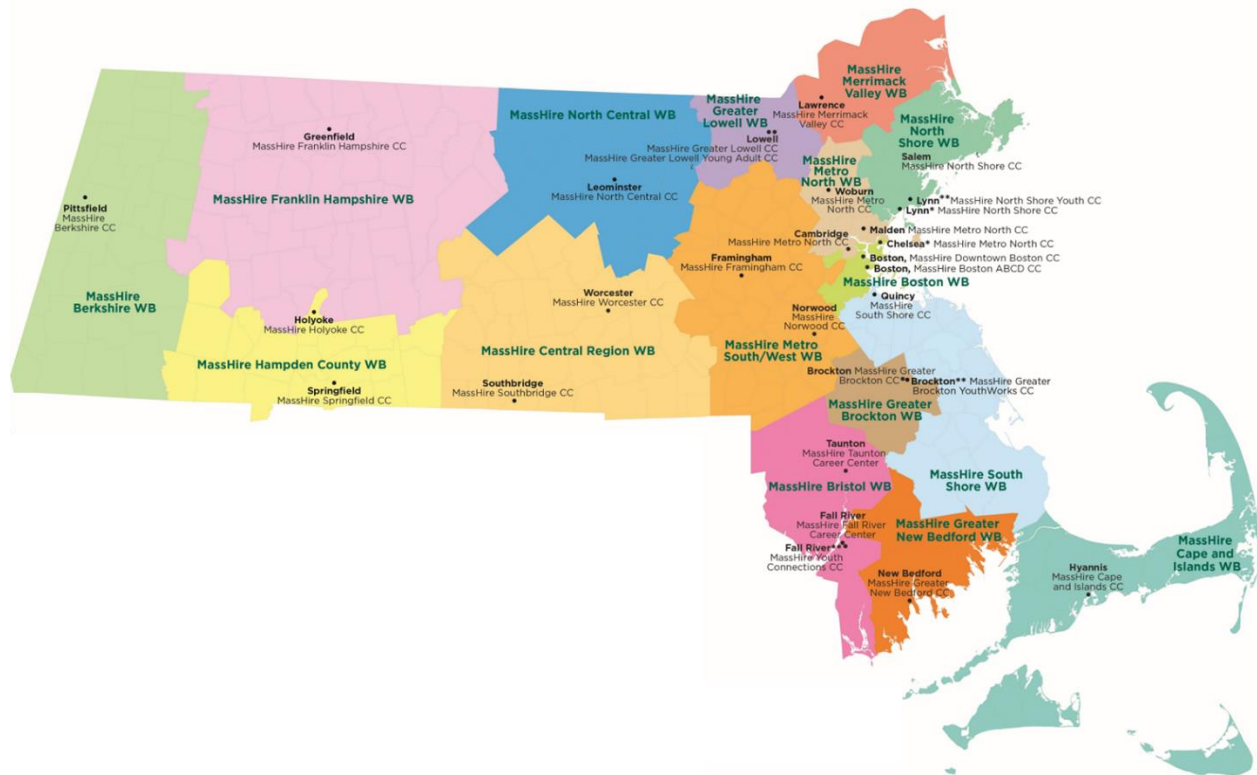
Other data: The analysis presented in this report also draws from publicly available sources including the US Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Centers of Medicare and Medicaid, US Department of Labor, and various Massachusetts state agencies including the Departments of Economic Research, Unemployment Assistance, and Revenue. In particular, the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) maintains detailed, Massachusetts-specific employment and wage records. MDCS and CommCorp requested records from DUA for each program participant included in EOLWD's analysis. MDCS also has access to the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS), a federal data-sharing system managed by the US Department of Labor that enables access to wage records from other states. CommCorp does not have access to SWIS. This is because CommCorp is ineligible to be designated as a Performance Accountability and Customer Information Agency (PACIA), which grants access to SWIS and the ability to request data from its warehouse.

Section 2: Massachusetts agencies and their programs

2.1 MassHire Department of Career Services (MDCS)

The MassHire system in Massachusetts is managed by the MassHire Department of Career Services (MDCS) and includes 16 Workforce Development Boards, 25 Career Centers, and four youth centers. Please see Figure 2A for a map of the 16 workforce development boards and the career and youth centers located within each region.

Figure 2A. MassHire Workforce Development Boards and MassHire Career Centers

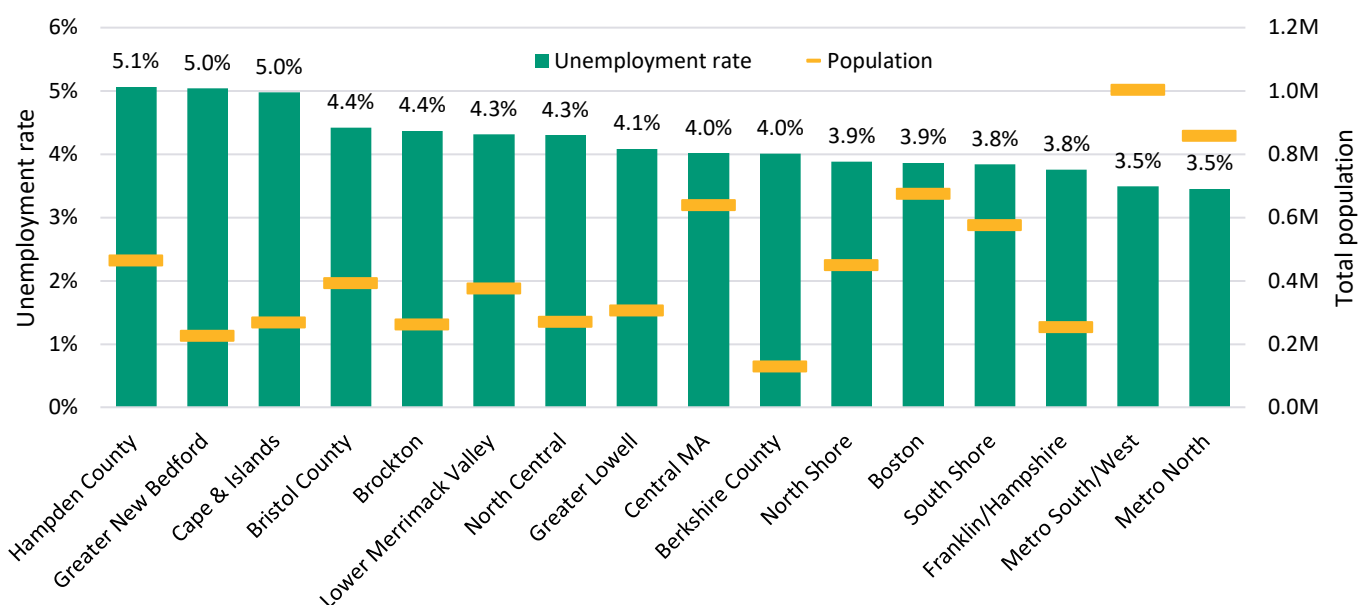


Source: MDCS

As described later in this report, metrics are utilized by the EOLWD to determine formula-based funding allocations for each of the 16 Workforce Development Boards. These metrics include the unemployment rate, population size, and regional workforce characteristics such as the number of economically disadvantaged adults, unemployment insurance claimants, and share of the Commonwealth's labor force and unemployed. The intent of this data-driven allocation is to ensure that resources are directed to areas of greatest need, supporting a balanced approach across regions with varying economic challenges and labor market dynamics.

The 2024 data show that Workforce Development Boards serving smaller populations tend to have higher unemployment rates (See Figure 2B). The Hampden County Workforce Development area reports the highest unemployment rate of 5.1%, which is 1.1 percentage points above the statewide rate of 4.0%. In contrast, six of the 16 workforce development boards have unemployment rates below the Commonwealth average, including the two largest workforce development boards by population – Metro South/West and Metro North.

Figure 2B. Population and unemployment rate by Workforce Development Board, 2024



Source: Analysis of data from Bureau of Labor Statistics Labor Force and Unemployment (LAUS) and Massachusetts Department of Economic Research

MDCS operates under a comprehensive workforce plan developed by the MassHire State Workforce Board, in compliance with the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). MDCS's vision is to provide all Massachusetts residents with a "seamless system of workforce and education services that supports career pathways for individuals and sustains a diverse labor force and thriving economy."⁹

Services offered at MassHire Career Centers for jobseekers include career assessments, job search assistance, workshops, access to language courses, and information on unemployment benefits. Business Service Representatives at these centers support employers by providing labor market information, recruiting candidates, creating job postings, and facilitating training resources. Each center may also offer unique services based on regional needs.

MDCS is the agency responsible for implementing WIOA, a federal program, within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. WIOA programs in Massachusetts include programs under Title I (Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth) as well as Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services.¹⁰ While the WIOA program dates back to 2014, programs for dislocated workers began with the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) of 1982 which was amended by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. WIA was then replaced by WIOA in 2014.¹¹ The Wagner Peyser Act of 1933 created the first nationwide system of career centers.¹²

Each year, federal funds from the US Department of Labor (DOL) are allocated to the Commonwealth's lead workforce agency, EOLWD, which then distributes the funds to Career Centers through MDCS. For the WIOA programs, a portion of the funds is retained at the state level for administrative functions and statewide

⁹ FY2022 MDSCS Report to Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. <https://massworkforce.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/2023-MassHire-Report-FINAL.pdf>.

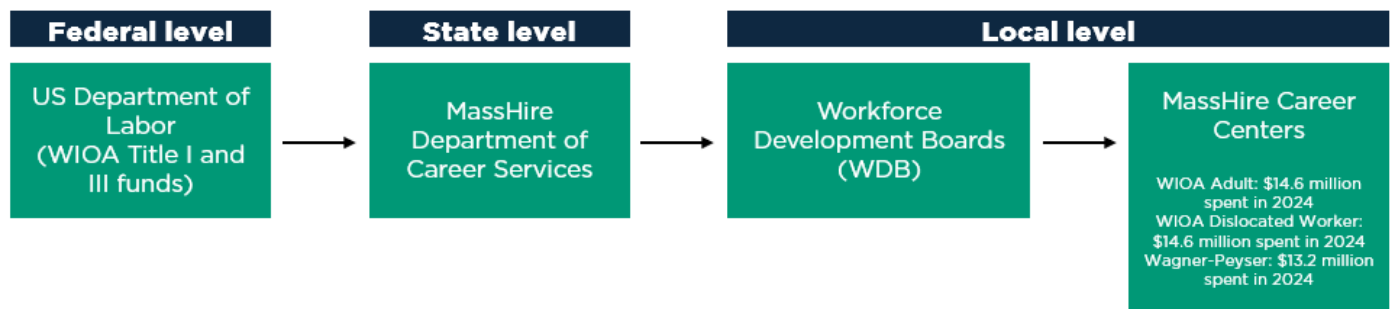
¹⁰ The WIOA Youth program is designed to provide young individuals with access to education, training, and employment opportunities. This report does not analyze the WIOA Youth program.

¹¹ <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/R44252>

¹² <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/american-job-centers/wagner-peyser>

workforce development activities, while the remainder is directed to the local workforce areas based on an allocation formula from the state. In accordance with the Wagner-Peyser Act, Wagner-Peyser funding is split such that 90% of funds support direct employment services and workforce development initiatives, while the remaining 10% is reserved for administration, including performance incentives, targeted services for special needs groups, and special services.¹³ Massachusetts generally has a three-year period to obligate and expend WIOA and Wagner-Peyser funds, while local areas are authorized to spend over a period of two years.

Figure 2C. Funding flows for WIOA and Wagner-Peyser programs



Source: Analysis of US Department of Labor and EOLWD data and procedures

In 2024, a total of \$74.7 million was allocated from DOL to the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner-Peyser programs. The distribution of this funding is as follows: 28% was designated for the Youth program, 28% for the Dislocated Worker program, 24% for the Adult program, and 20% for Wagner-Peyser. The table below outlines the allocation amounts for each program from 2022 to 2024.

Table 2A. Annual Allocation of WIOA Funds by Program (2022-2024)

Program	2022	2023	2024	Total 2022 - 2024	Compound Annual Growth Rate (2022 – 2024)
WIOA Adult	\$12.6m	\$16.5m	\$18.0m	\$47.1m	19%
WIOA Dislocated Worker	\$20.2m	\$22.7m	\$20.8m	\$63.7m	1%
WIOA Youth	\$14.7m	\$19.4m	\$21.0m	\$55.1m	20%
Wagner-Peyser Employment Services	\$15.0m	\$14.9m	\$14.8m	\$44.7m	-1%
Total (four programs)	\$62.5m	\$73.5m	\$74.7m	\$210.7m	9%
Total w/o WIOA Youth	\$47.8m	\$54.1m	\$53.6m	\$155.5m	6%

Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Source: Analysis of US Department of Labor data. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/budget/formula/state>

¹³ <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/COMPS-801/pdf/COMPS-801.pdf>

In 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into law to support the US economy's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. ARPA provided funding for a wide range of initiatives, including public health, economic recovery, education, and workforce development. Many state and local programs, including MDCS, received ARPA funds to expand services and address urgent community needs. ARPA funding and associated expenditures are excluded from the analyses for the MDCS programs in this report, and therefore the overall allocation and costs from the MDCS programs may be underestimated.

An overview of each WIOA program is provided below with the exception of the WIOA Youth program which is excluded from this analysis. The analysis of the WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser programs spans Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 to 2024.¹⁴ This covers participants who were reported in the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) between July 2021 and June 2024. PIRL is a federally required data reporting format used to collect individual-level records on people who receive services through workforce development programs funded by WIOA and other DOL programs.

2.1.1 WIOA Adult

The WIOA Adult program provides individualized career services and training services to customers. While any Massachusetts resident can access services, WIOA Adult is designed to give priority to recipients of public assistance (i.e., TANF, SNAP, SSI, SSDI, general assistance, or refugee assistance), other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Priority is ordered for training and individualized services according to the following method:

1. Veterans and eligible spouses who are also low income, recipients of public assistance, or basic skills deficient.
2. Non-veterans who are low income, recipient of public assistance, or basic skills deficient.
3. Veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups (individuals are not low income, recipients of public assistance, basic skills deficiency).
4. Priority populations established by the Local Workforce Development Board.
5. Other individuals who do not meet priority criteria.

Individuals do not need to apply to participate in the WIOA Adult program, but several steps are necessary to begin and complete registration. Upon expressing interest at a MassHire Career Center, individuals meet with staff to verify eligibility and conduct an initial assessment. Those who qualify work with a career counselor to develop a plan outlining their employment goals and available services. Once this plan is finalized, the individual is officially enrolled and can begin accessing job search support, training, or other services.

Individuals access the WIOA Adult program for a range of reasons, with unemployment and underemployment being the most common.¹⁵ In order to continue receiving unemployment insurance (UI), individuals must visit a

In 2024, the WIOA Adult program totaled **\$15.3 million in expenditures**. Of the \$15.3 million total in 2024, **\$14.6 million was spent by local Workforce Development Boards** to be used for training and career services.

¹⁴ The period of FY2022 through FY2024 is equivalent to Program Years (PY) 2021 through 2023.

¹⁵ Interviews with MDCS staff

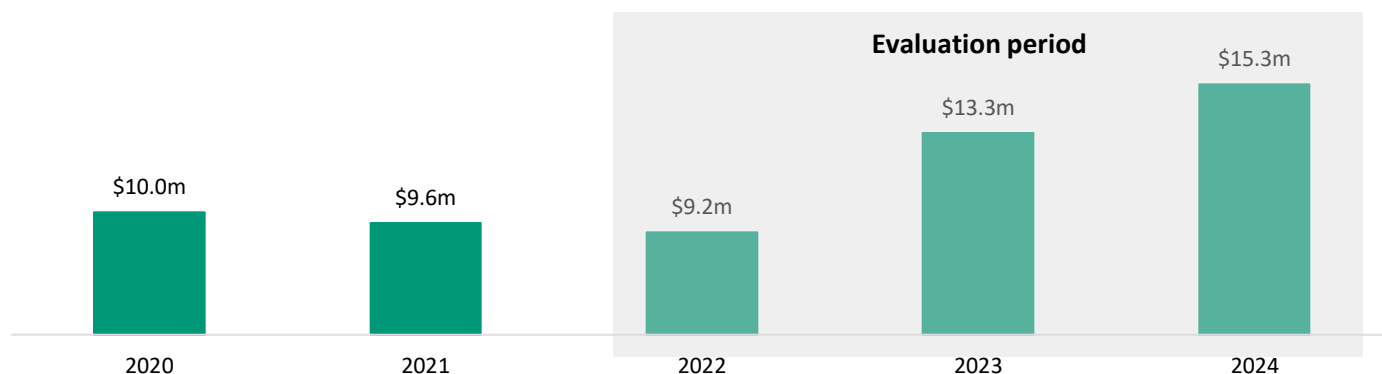
career center. If UI benefits expire for customers currently in training, they can apply for a Section 30 waiver to continue receiving benefits while going through training.¹⁶



As part of the program, customers may receive career planning services and/or training services. Career planning services include one-on-one career planning meetings, assessments, job search assistance, and labor market research, among others. Training services may include on-the-job training, in-person classes, or online courses. The exact services provided to each customer depend on their specific job-related needs. If a customer receives training from an outside vendor, the MassHire Career Center pays the vendor directly.

In 2024, Massachusetts was allocated \$18.0 million in funding for the WIOA Adult program. During the same year, the state had 1,848 active WIOA Adult participants and incurred expenditures totaling \$15.3 million for this program. These expenditures comprised a portion of the 2024 allocation, as well as allocations carried over from previous years. In 2024, \$14.6 million of the \$15.3 million total was directed by local Workforce Development Boards for training and career services; the remainder was spent at the state level for oversight and statewide initiatives. Figure 2D presents the trend of WIOA Adult program expenditures over time.

Figure 2D. Massachusetts WIOA Adult program expenditures, 2020 – 2024



Note: Expenditure data excludes costs covered by ARPA funding
Source: Analysis of MDCS data

¹⁶ Individuals can claim unemployment insurance (UI) benefits in Massachusetts for up to 30 weeks.

2.1.2 WIOA Dislocated Worker

WIOA Dislocated Worker is designed to support individuals to return to work quickly and overcome barriers to employment. It provides targeted services to those who have become dislocated due to job loss, mass layoffs, shifts in global trade dynamics, or changes within key economic sectors, helping them re-enter the workforce.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts defines a dislocated worker as an individual who has been terminated or laid off from employment, including those who have served in the military under honorable conditions and are eligible for or have exhausted unemployment compensation. This group also includes those affected by permanent closures or substantial layoffs at their workplace, as well as self-employed individuals who have become unemployed due to economic conditions or natural disasters. Additionally, it encompasses displaced homemakers and spouses of active-duty military members who have lost employment due to relocation related to their spouse's duty station change.

Like WIOA Adult, no application is required for an individual to participate in the WIOA Dislocated Worker program.¹⁷ However, all customers must meet the definition of a dislocated worker. These workers are eligible for UI benefits, and, thus, must go to a career center to continue receiving benefits. If UI benefits expire for customers currently in training, they can apply for a Section 30 waiver to continue receiving benefits while going through training.¹⁸

In 2024, the WIOA Dislocated Worker program totaled **\$22.7 million in expenditures**. Of the \$22.7 million total in 2024, **\$14.6 million was spent by local Workforce Development Boards** to be used for training and career services.

2,027
active WIOA
Dislocated Worker
participants in
2024

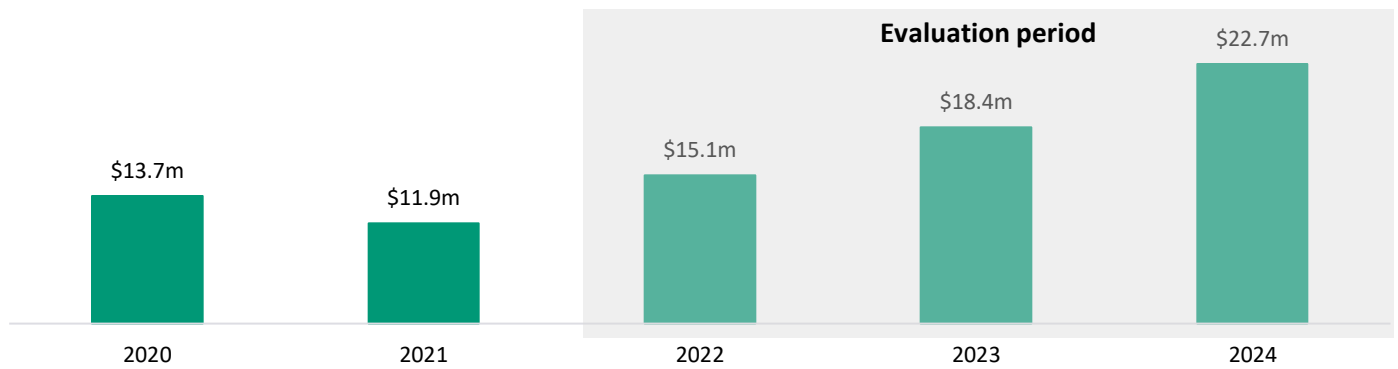
Similar to the WIOA Adult program, the WIOA Dislocated Workers program participants may receive career planning services and/or training services. Career planning services include one-on-one career planning meeting assessments, job search assistance, and labor market research, among others. Training services may include on-the-job training, in-person classes, or online courses. The exact services provided to each customer depend on their specific job-related needs.

In 2024, Massachusetts was allocated \$20.8 million in funding for the WIOA Dislocated Worker program. During the same year, the state had 2,027 active WIOA Dislocated Worker participants and incurred expenditures totaling \$22.7 million for this program. These expenditures comprised a portion of the 2024 allocation, as well as allocations carried over from previous years. Of the \$22.7 million total in 2024, \$14.6 million was spent by local Workforce Development Boards which can be used for training and career services, \$3.6 was spent by Rapid Response services, and the remainder was spent at the state level for administrative services. Please see Figure 2E which shows the trend of WIOA Dislocated Worker program expenditures over time.

Figure 2E. Massachusetts WIOA Dislocated Worker program expenditures, 2020 – 2024

¹⁷ All MDSCS customers must register themselves in the MOSES database system, the system which tracks the participation and post-program performance of all MDSCS customers, in order to receive services.

¹⁸ Individuals can claim unemployment insurance (UI) benefits in Massachusetts for up to 30 weeks.



Note: Expenditure data excludes costs covered by ARPA funding
Source: Analysis of MDSC data

2.1.3 Wagner-Peyser Employment Services

Like the WIOA Adult program, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services (Wagner-Peyser) is universally available for all work eligible individuals and no application is required. Wagner-Peyser administered through the MassHire Career Centers, where every customer is automatically considered enrolled in the Wagner-Peyser program.

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs are more training focused, while Wagner-Peyser focuses on career services. Services provided under Wagner-Peyser can generally be classified as self-directed, individualized, or intensive. Self-directed services include resume help, physical resource areas to customers to applications, and open events. Individualized services include one-on-one career planning with a career center staff. Finally, intensive services include more career planning and possible training.

In 2024, the Wagner-Peyser program totaled **\$14.5 million in expenditures**. Of the \$14.5 million total in 2024, **\$13.2 million was spent for employment-related services**.

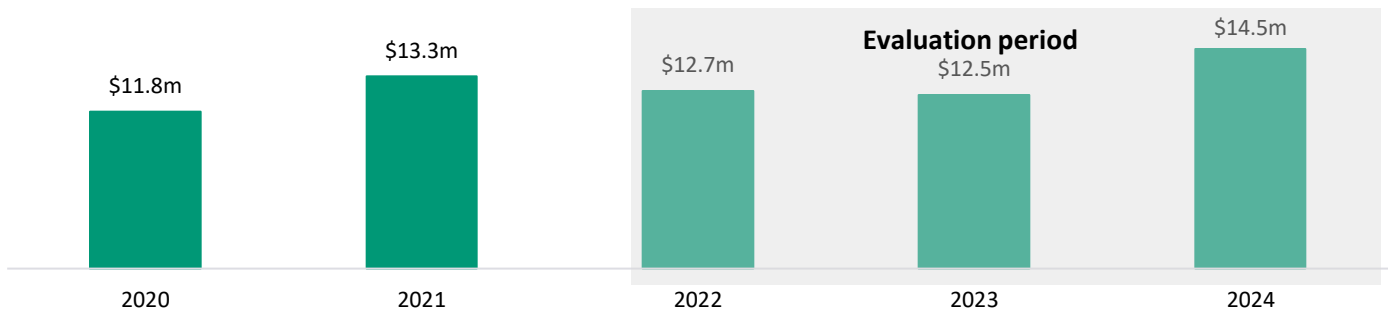
is

direct



In 2024, Massachusetts was allocated \$14.8 million in funding for the Wagner-Peyser program. During the same year, the state had 115,964 active Wagner-Peyser participants and incurred expenditures totaling \$14.5 million for this program. Of the \$14.5 million total expenditures, \$13.2 million was spent on employment-related services and the remainder was spent on administrative activities. These expenditures comprised a portion of the 2024 allocation, as well as allocations carried over from previous years. Figure 2F provides a graph of Wagner-Peyser program expenditures over time.

Figure 2F. Massachusetts Wagner-Peyser program expenditures, 2020 – 2024



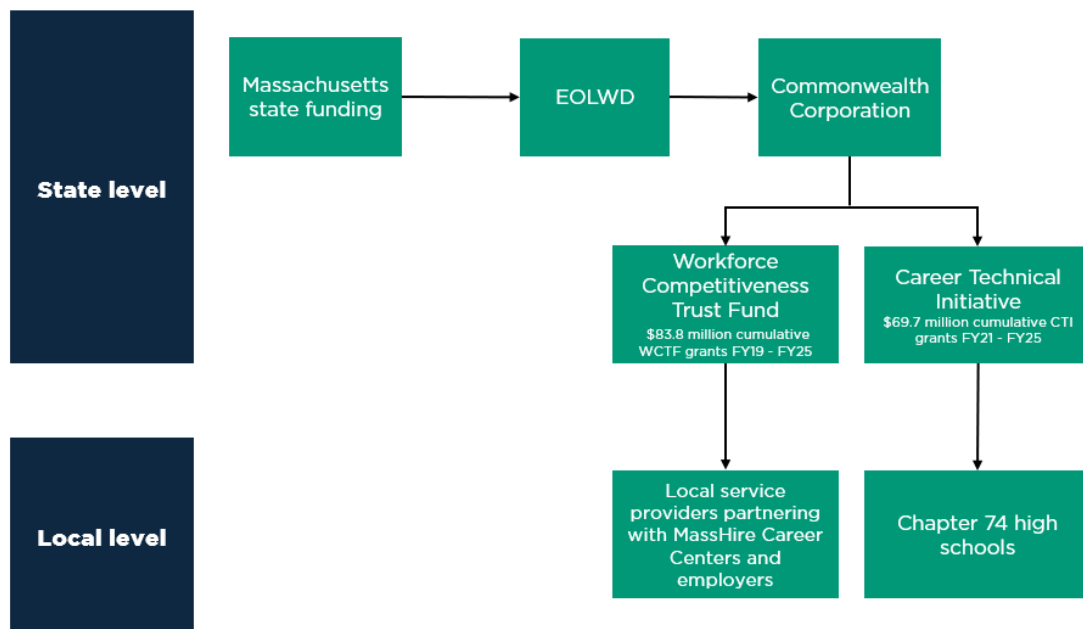
Note: Expenditure data excludes costs covered by ARPA funding
Source: Analysis of MDCS data

2.2 Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp)

Established in 1996 under EOLWD, CommCorp is a quasi-public agency responsible for serving the needs of working and job-seeking residents of the Commonwealth. Currently, CommCorp administers eight discrete, publicly funded programs for youth and adults within Massachusetts. CommCorp awards grants to businesses, training and educational organizations, non-profits, community-based organizations and other entities across the Commonwealth. Among the programs CommCorp oversees, EOLWD evaluated the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) and the Career Technical Initiative (CTI). Overviews of these programs are presented below.

CommCorp receives the majority of its funding through annual appropriations from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This funding flows through CommCorp to support various programs, including WCTF and CTI. Through WCTF, state funds are directed at local service providers, such as community-based organizations, training providers, and employer partners. CTI funding supports Chapter 74-approved vocational high schools which run training programs during evenings and weekends.

Figure 2G. Funding flows for the WCTF and CTI programs



Source: Analysis of CommCorp data and procedures

2.2.1 Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF)

First established in 2006 by the Massachusetts Legislature and later revised in 2018, the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) aims to invest in demand-driven programs that are designed by industry sector partnerships. As part of the program, local organizations, including workforce development boards, training providers, and community organizations, receive funding to conduct training, provide wraparound services, support job placement, and building networks and partnerships. WCTF programs, which had 2,117 active participants across open (1,267 participants) and closed (850 participants) grants in 2024, seek to boost the quality and competitiveness of the workforce across target industries. The WCTF program primarily targets unemployed and underemployed workers and serves a small number of incumbent workers, aiming to enhance their skills, increase their incomes, and improve their productivity and retention in the workforce.

WCTF has offered seven different grant programs since 2019. The table below provides detailed descriptions of these programs.



Table 2B. Description of WCTF programs

Program	Description
Donnelly Workforce Success Grants	These grants have historically comprised the bulk of WCTF grant making, supporting demand-driven programs developed through sector partnerships that offer training and placement opportunities for unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers.
Healthcare/Behavioral Health Workforce Hubs Initiative (HCBH Hubs)	In 2024, using pandemic-era funds from the state, CommCorp allocated grants to regional partnerships led by MassHire Workforce Boards, providing one-time, two-year implementation grants to enhance training and placement programs in healthcare and behavioral health pathways.
ESOL Continuation	These grants include a four-month planning phase and two-year implementation phase for contextualized ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) services, which is English language training provided in the context of a career or specific occupation, to better serve individuals for whom English is not their first language.
RENEW	Using supplemental pandemic-era funding from the state, CommCorp, under the direction of the Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet, piloted a grant to help individuals access high-quality training and placement programs for in-demand jobs. The concept of the grant was to invest public resources in a way that encourages employers to contribute funding back to the program. This program is no longer active.
SCALE	SCALE grants provide a three-month period of planning to operationalize partnerships through direct engagement from the business community to solve training, education, and talent needs. This program is no longer active and has been replaced by WCTF Program Design grants.
WCTF Program Design	This grant program funds planning and program design activities that lead to an implementation program for the WCTF-Donnelly Success grant. Program Design grants are the successor to the SCALE grants.
RISE	This program was introduced in April 2024 to provide specific workforce development resources to support individuals in the emergency shelter system and then updated to also serve other unemployed and underemployed workers with ESOL needs.

Source: 2024 WCTF Annual Report and interviews with CommCorp staff

Established in 2018, Donnelly Workforce Success Grants (referred to as Donnelly Grants in this report) comprises the bulk of grant making within the WCTF program. HCBH Hubs is another recently established program, building on previous healthcare/behavioral health focused grants. Section 4 of this report provides a detailed analysis of both Donnelly and HCBH Hubs Grants. The ESOL Continuation, Program Design, and RISE programs have been excluded from the analysis because they are relatively small in size.

From FY2019 through 2025, WCTF received a total of \$111.5 million in funding—\$74 million from annual state appropriations and \$37.5 million in one-time pandemic-era funds in 2022. Of this amount, approximately 90% (\$100.3 million) was allocated to program-specific costs available to grant applicants, while the remaining 10% supported costs to administer the program at CommCorp. From FY2019 to FY2025, WCTF awarded a total of \$83.8 million to grantees across all programs, primarily through Donnelly and HCBH Hub Grants, which accounted for \$82.5 million.

Table 2C. Appropriations, awards, and utilization of WCTF funds (2019–2025), \$ in millions

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total (2019- 2025)	Compound Annual Growth Rate (2019 – 2025)
State and federal appropriations	\$5.0	\$7.0	\$10.0	\$54.5*	\$17.0	\$8.0	\$10.0	\$111.5	12%
Statewide admin (10%)	\$0.6	\$0.7	\$1.0	\$5.4	\$1.7	\$0.8	\$1.0	\$11.2	9%
Available funds for grants (90%)	\$4.4	\$6.3	\$9.0	\$49.1	\$15.3	\$7.2	\$9.0	\$100.3	13%
Awarded funds (to grantees)	\$4.4	\$6.3	\$0.5	\$8.3	\$10.5	\$37.4	\$16.4	\$83.8	25%
Donnelly and HCBH Hub only	\$4.2	\$6.0	\$0.2	\$8.3	\$10.4	\$37.2	\$16.2	\$82.5	25%
Total cumulative awards as % of cumulative available funds	100%	100%	57%	28%	36%	74%	84%	84%	N/A

Note: This table includes all seven types of grants offered through the WCTF program. *2022 state and federal appropriations (\$54.5 million) include \$37.5 million supplemental funding authorized by Chapter 102 of the Acts of 2021. In 2019 the administrative rate was 12%, rather than 10%. Approx \$15 million in additional funding has been obligated or committed since 7/1/25 in FY 26.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data.

Table 2C shows the change in the proportion of cumulative awards compared to available WCTF funds from 2019 through 2025. During this period, 84% of available funds for grants were awarded (i.e., \$83.8 million of the total \$100.3 million available funds). In 2022, WCTF received a large sum of supplemental funding authorized by Chapter 102 of the Acts of 2021, which was a combination of state and federal funds. This supplemental funding allowed CommCorp to scale up grantmaking to meet demand, ultimately reaching more training organizations and participants. During this period, WCTF also experienced heightened awareness of its programming.

2.2.2 Career Technical Initiative (CTI)

Launched in 2020 by the Workforce Skills Cabinet (WSC), the Career Technical Initiative (CTI) was developed as a strategic response to the persistent demand for skilled labor within the construction, skilled trades, and manufacturing sectors. CTI leverages existing training infrastructure at Chapter 74 high schools (vocational technical high schools which have state-approved Career Technical Education programs). Chapter 74 high schools receive funding to conduct training, provide wraparound services, and support job placement. CTI programs, which had 1,653 active participants in 2024, are generally scheduled outside of regular school hours (i.e., “after dark”) when vocational technical facilities are underutilized. The CTI program targets unemployed or underemployed individuals facing credential barriers, equipping them with skills and industry credentials to improve their job market position.¹⁹



CTI offers four different types of grants — Implementation Grants, Start-Up Funds, Expansion Funds, and Planning Grants. The table below provides detailed descriptions of each CTI grant. In Section 5 of this report, the primary focus of the analysis is CTI Implementation Grants.

Table 2D. Description of CTI grants

Type	Description	Maximum funds	Included in analysis
Implementation Grants	Funding to cover all training-related expenses (e.g., instructor salaries, program supplies, credential costs, etc.) and support services for students	\$10,000 per proposed participant	Yes
Start-Up Funds	Originally standalone grants (i.e., standalone Start-Up Funds), this is now additional funding available as a component of Implementation Grants to support the school's first round of CTI programming	\$40,000	Yes, but only if included in Implementation Grants
Expansion Funds	Additional funding available as a component of Implementation Grants to support returning schools who are expanding their available pathway portfolio	\$10,000 per new proposed pathway	Yes, but only if included in Implementation Grants
Planning Grants	Provides funding to support planning activities to prepare for a future application for CTI implementation funding	\$50,000	No

Note: CTI awarded six standalone Start-Up Grants through July 2022. Beginning with subsequent funding rounds, the program discontinued issuing separate Start-Up Grants; instead, first-time grantees could request start-up funds as part of their Implementation Grant applications.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

From FY2021 through 2025, CTI received \$89 million in total funding—\$64.4 million from annual state appropriations and \$25 million supplemental funding authorized by Chapter 102 of the Acts of 2021, which was a combination of state and federal funds. Of the \$89 million, approximately 90% (\$80.4 million) was allocated to program-specific costs available to grant applicants, while the remaining 10% supports CommCorp administrative expenses to support this statewide program. During this period, CTI awarded a total of \$69.7 million in grants to 85 grantees, including \$69.3 million in Implementation Grants and \$400,000 in standalone Start-Up and Planning Grants. According to the CTI program team, the remaining \$10.7 million (= \$80.4 - \$69.7) in available funding will be awarded through an RFP scheduled for release in January 2026 or through future RFPs.

¹⁹ In the CommCorp program, an individual is considered underemployed if they earn less than 60% of the median household income for their area. For more information, see <https://www.mass.gov/doc/dcs-rc-d-acceptable-cti-eligibility-documentation-listing/download>.

Table 2E. Appropriations, awards, and utilization of CTI funds (2021–2025, all 10 rounds), \$ in millions

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total (2021- 2025)	Compound Annual Growth Rate (2021 – 2025)
State and federal appropriations	\$4.0	\$15.4	\$45.4*	\$15.1	\$9.5	\$89.4	24%
Statewide admin (10%)	\$0.4	\$1.5	\$4.5	\$1.5	\$0.9	\$8.9	22%
Available funds for grants (90%) -	\$3.6	\$13.8	\$40.8	\$13.6	\$8.5	\$80.4	24%
Awarded funds (to grantees)	\$1.7	\$3.9	\$13.4	\$13.2	\$37.4	\$69.7	117%
Cumulative awards as % of cumulative available funds	46%	32%	33%	45%	87%	87%	N/A

Note: This table includes all 10 rounds of grants including Implementation Grants, Planning Grants, Expansion Funds, and standalone Start-Up Funds. *2023 state and federal appropriations (\$45.4 million) include \$25 million supplemental funding authorized by Chapter 102 of the Acts of 2021.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data.

Table 2E shows that 87% of cumulative CTI funds were awarded to grantees from FY2021 to FY2025 (i.e., \$69.7 million of the total \$80.4 million available funds). The rollout was slower in the initial years reflecting the newness of the program and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, with relatively low percentages of available funds being awarded but by 2025, the pace of awards accelerated significantly, with 87% of cumulative available funds awarded to grantees—indicating strong program uptake. CommCorp attributes this growth to heightened awareness of their programs.

As described in detail in Section 5.3, funding for CTI Implementation Grants is structured into distinct rounds to support organized distribution. Since 2021, there have been 10 rounds of awards, including Rounds 6.5 and 9.5 as part of Rounds 6 and 9, respectively. Awards from all 10 rounds are shown in Table 2E. It is important to note that, by design, appropriations may support multiple rounds and can be carried over into the following fiscal year. This makes it challenging for evaluation purposes to directly align appropriated funds with awarded funds or to map them precisely across specific fiscal years.

2.3 Logic models

When evaluating the effectiveness of a government program, a logic model serves as a framework to clarify the connections among the program's various components. It provides a visual representation that outlines the inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts associated with the program. Key components of a logic model generally include:

- **Inputs:** Resources invested in the program (both financial and non-financial).
- **Activities:** Actions carried out using these inputs to produce specific outputs.
- **Outputs:** Immediate, measurable products resulting from program activities.
- **Outcomes:** Short- to medium-term benefits for individuals, organizations, or systems.
- **Impacts:** Long-term changes in the systems or communities served that can be attributed to the program.

At the start of the project, the evaluation team developed a logic model for each program analyzed in this study. Below, the graphical representation of the logic model for the WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, Wagner-Peyser, WCTF, and CTI programs are presented.

Figure 2H. WIOA Adult logic model

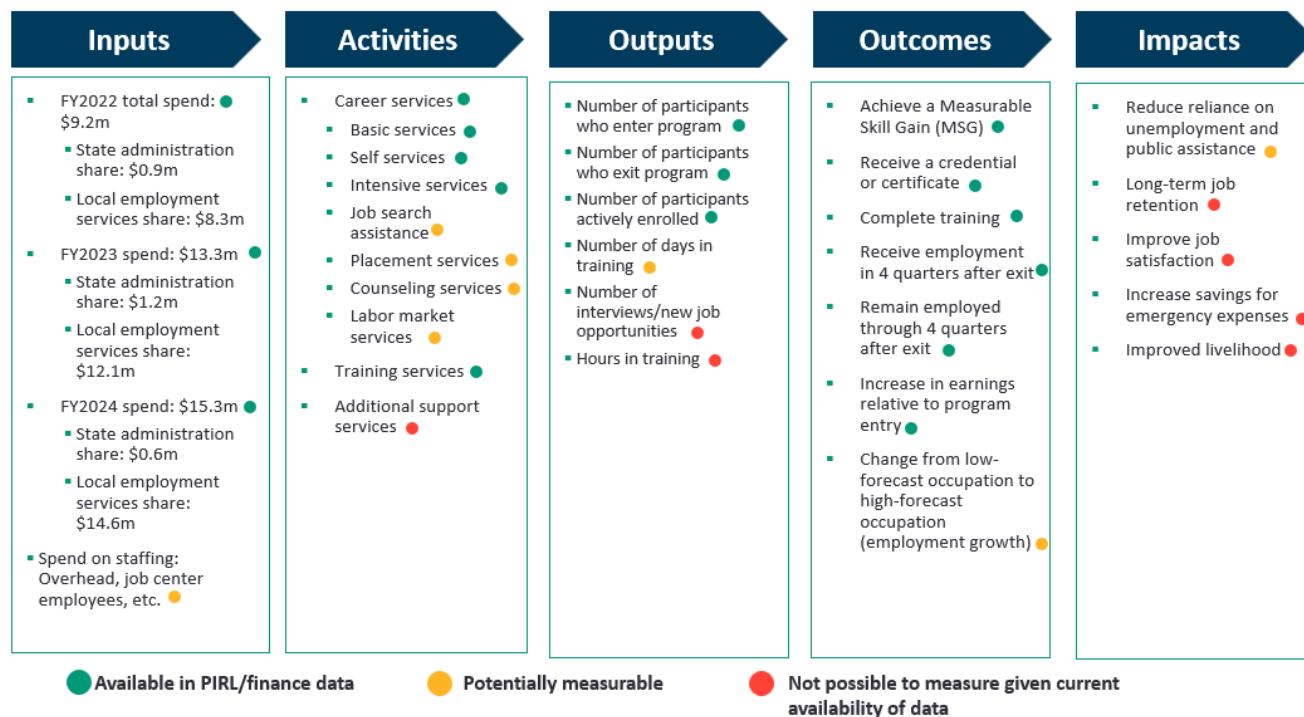


Figure 2I. WIOA Dislocated Worker logic model

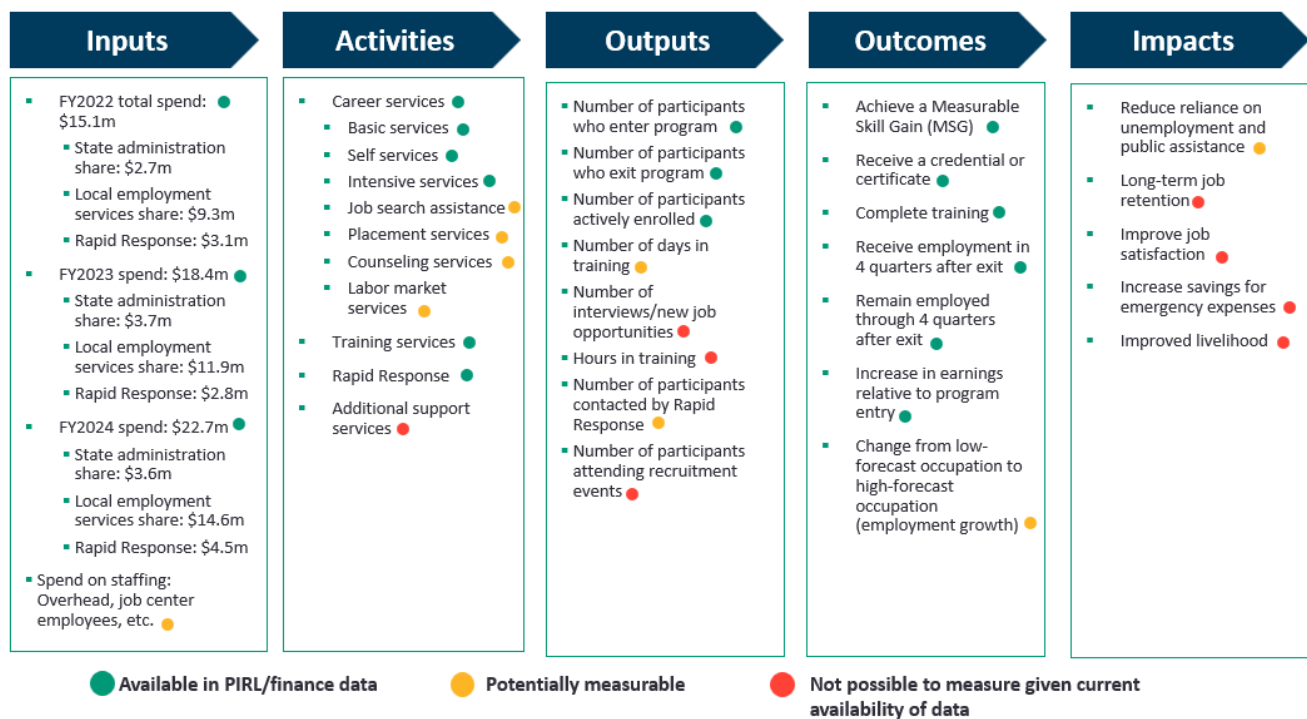


Figure 2J. Wagner-Peyser logic model

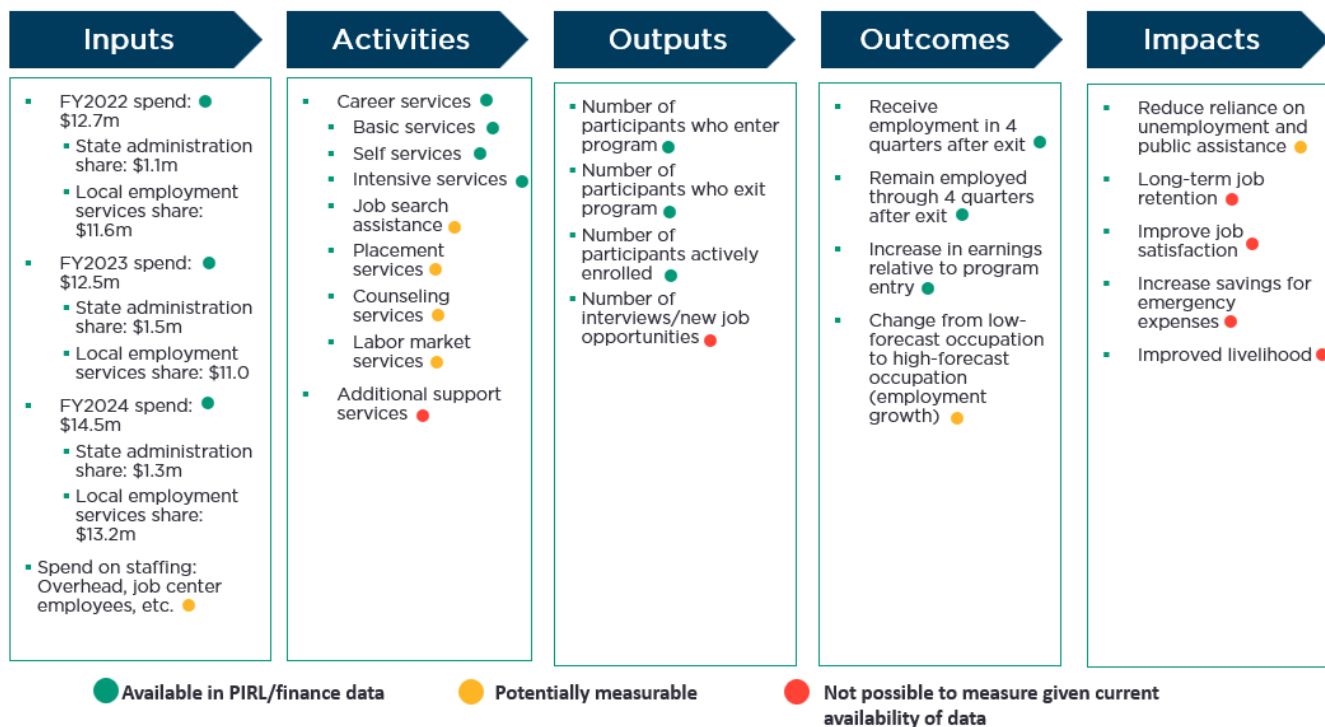


Figure 2K. WCTF program logic model

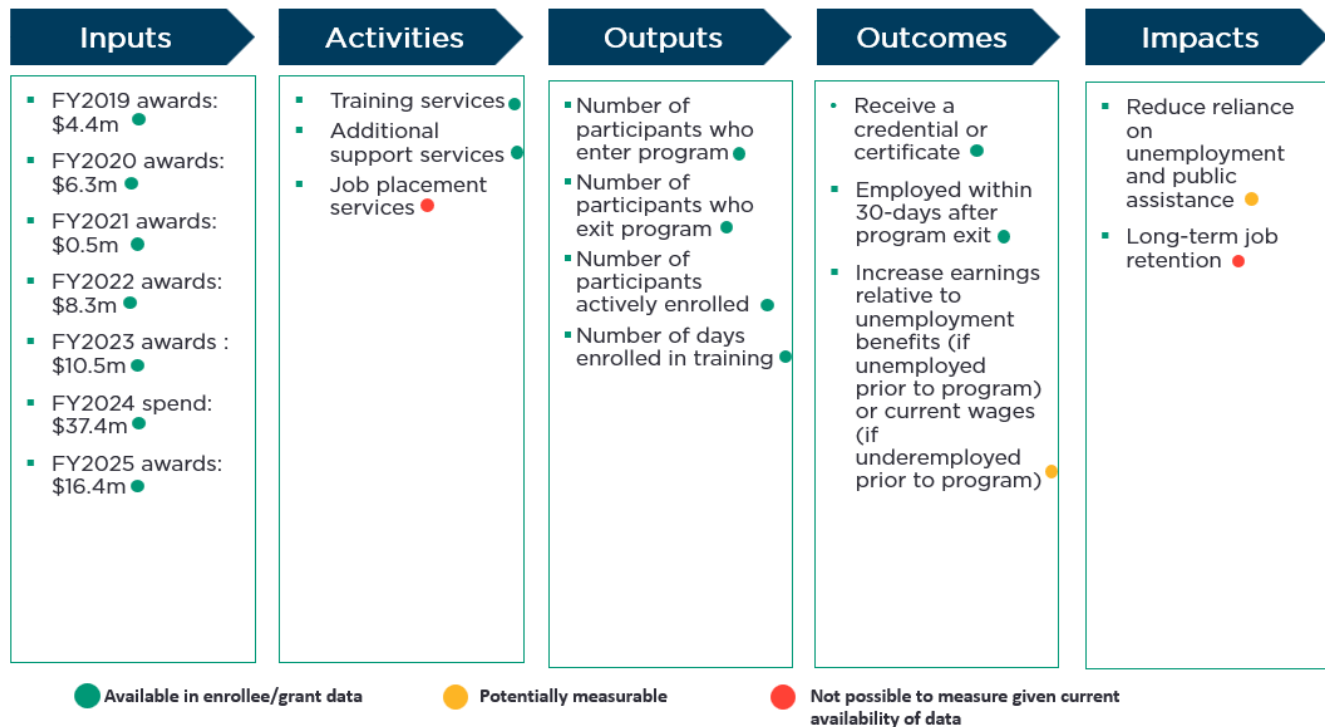
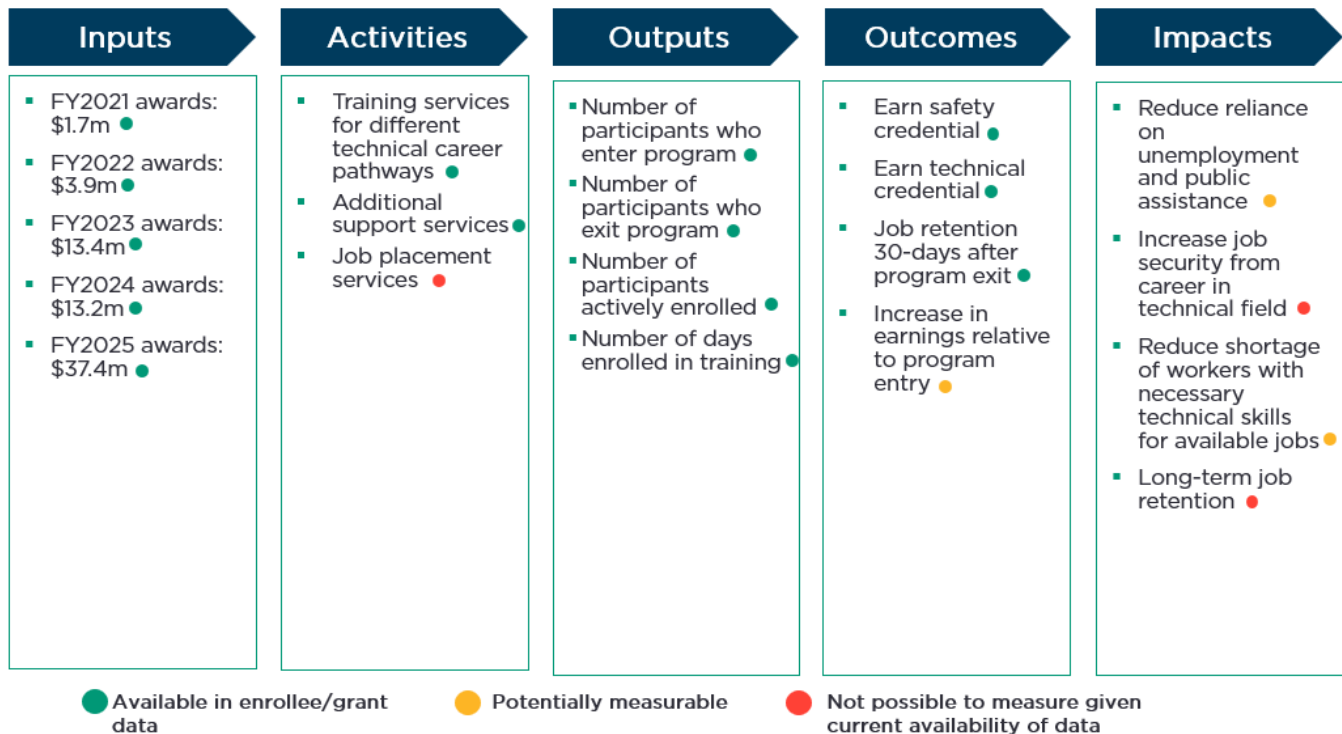


Figure 2L. CTI program logic model



The logic models are tailored to the program mechanisms, target audiences, and ultimate goals of the programs. Developing these models allowed the evaluation team to understand program nuances and determine which data are available for measurement and inclusion in the evaluation. The graphics use red, green, and yellow color schemes to clearly indicate which metrics within each component are measurable based on available data within MDCS and CommCorp versus those that are difficult to collect or measure.

Across all five programs, existing data allowed measurement of most metrics related to inputs, activities, outputs, and short-term outcomes. For example, the team was able to measure key metrics such as total funding, program participants, training delivered, skills gained, and changes in employment and wages. These details are presented in Sections 3–5.

However, the assessment of long-term outcomes was not possible for this study. To address data gaps and strengthen future workforce program evaluations, the report recommends several key enhancements: extending participant outcome tracking to cover longer periods post-exit, collecting comprehensive baseline data before program entry, improving the quality and completeness of post-program outcomes through enhanced reporting systems, integrating performance and financial data across agencies, and coordinating with state agencies to collect additional data, including unemployment insurance usage for both participants and non-participants, to support more robust and meaningful evaluation of long-term program effectiveness.

Section 3: WIOA Title I & Wagner-Peyser

This section provides a detailed analysis of the two WIOA Title I programs—Adult and Dislocated Worker—and Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services.

3.1 Grant application and award process

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

Funding for MassHire Career Centers originates primarily from the US Department of Labor (DOL) through WIOA. These federal funds are allocated to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts where EOLWD, through the MDCS, distributes these funds for the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. A portion of the funding is reserved at the state level for administrative functions, statewide workforce initiatives and other state-level projects. The remaining funds from the WIOA programs are distributed to Massachusetts' 16 local workforce areas based on a federal formula which considers factors such as unemployment rate, poverty level, and population demographics. The split between allocations set aside directly for employment services and statewide activities is set by the DOL and is shown in Table 3A. Each local workforce board is responsible for managing these funds within its region.

Table 3A. Federal workforce funding allocations for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker

	WIOA Adult	WIOA Dislocated Worker
Local employment services	85%	60%
a. Employment services	77%	54%
b. Local administration	9%	6%
Rapid response	N/A	25%
State administration	15%	15%
Total allocation	100%	100%

Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Source: MDCS

For the WIOA Adult program, 85% of the total allocation amount is set aside for local employment services, which go directly to the local workforce areas. This allocation is split into two categories: 77% for employment services and the remaining 9% for local administration. A small share, 15%, is allocated at the statewide level for statewide administration of the WIOA Adult program as well as other workforce innovation opportunity functions.

The WIOA Dislocated Worker operates similarly to the WIOA Adult program in that local employment services allocations are divided between employment services (54%) and local administration (6%). Additionally, 15% of the total allocation is reserved for state-level administrative functions and other workforce innovation functions. However, a key distinction is that 25% of the total allocation is set aside for Rapid Response services. Rapid Response is a proactive, business-oriented approach designed to address layoffs and plant closures by quickly organizing support and delivering immediate assistance to businesses and employees affected by workforce reductions.²⁰ Rapid Response teams proactively go into the field to meet with workers facing imminent layoffs, often at the worksite. These in-person sessions provide critical information on unemployment

²⁰ [Rapid Response Services | U.S. Department of Labor](#)

insurance, job search assistance, and retraining opportunities to help affected workers transition more smoothly into new employment.

Wagner-Peyser Program

Allocations for the Wagner-Peyser program also come from the DOL. Under the Wagner-Peyser Act, 90% of these allocations directly support local employment services, such as job search and placement services, while the remaining 10% is allotted towards more administrative matters and other workforce innovation functions, such as performance incentives, services for groups with special needs, and other administrative costs. Administrative allocations are not divided into separate statewide program funding the same way that the WIOA formula funds are. In FY 2025, the state distributed 62% of the 10% to local workforce areas and the remaining 38% to statewide activities.²¹ However, in the remainder of this report, these administrative allocations, statewide workforce development initiatives and their associated expenditures are grouped into the same statewide administrative category as the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

For the Wagner-Peyser Employment Services program, **90%** of allocations are directed towards local employment services and **10%** are directed towards state administration.

3.2 Description of educational and eligible service providers

MassHire Career Centers function through a structured partnership between the Massachusetts EOLWD and the Commonwealth's network of local workforce boards. EOLWD, primarily through MDCS, establishes statewide workforce development policy, allocates funding, and provides oversight. Local workforce boards are charged with managing the oversight of the career centers within their designated regions, including selecting and contracting with center operators. The operators are procured through a competitive process which is mandated at least every four years under WIOA to ensure transparency, accountability, and alignment with local labor market needs. Each MassHire Career Center must be formally certified by the state.²²

Services at MassHire Career Centers are delivered through a mix of contracted operators, state staff, and partner organizations. Core career services, including job search assistance and career counseling, are typically provided by staff employed by the career center's operator. In most of the workforce areas, state staff work collaboratively with career center staff, although there are four workforce areas which are operated entirely by non-state staff.²³ Additionally, workforce areas have a network of partner organizations, also known as training vendors, which provide training services to customers. Per EOLWD's survey of training providers, most commonly learn about MDCS through state partners (29% of respondents), including CommCorp and the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance, as well as referrals from other training providers.

3.3 Description of grants awarded under the program

Between 2022 and 2024, the WIOA Dislocated and Wagner-Peyser programs each spent \$35.8 million on local employment services, while the WIOA Adult program spent \$35.0 million on the same services. In 2024 alone, local workforce boards spent \$14.6 million on the WIOA Adult program and the WIOA Dislocated Worker program, respectively. These local employment expenditures cover program costs, including employment and

²¹ For more information, see <https://www.mass.gov/doc/dcs-policy-04-114-04-114s-overview-of-wioa-and-wagner-peyser-allocations/download>.

²² For more information on the MDCS operator selection process, see <https://wioaplans.ed.gov/node/11651>.

²³ Based on interviews with MDCS staff.

job search services, as well as local administrative expenses. In the same year, total expenditures for the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs are \$15.3 million and \$22.7 million, respectively. In addition to local employment services expenditures, total expenditures include state administration for the WIOA Adult program, and state administration and Rapid Response expenditures for the WIOA Dislocated Worker program. In 2024, total expenditures under the Wagner-Peyser Employment Services program reached \$14.5 million, with \$13.2 million dedicated specifically to employment services.

Table 3B. Total expenditures by program (2022 – 2024)

	2022	2023	2024	Total (2022- 2024)
WIOA Adult				
Local employment services	\$8.3m	\$12.1m	\$14.6m	\$35.0m
State administration	\$0.9m	\$1.2m	\$0.6m	\$2.7m
WIOA Adult Total	\$9.2m	\$13.3m	\$15.3m	\$37.8m
WIOA Dislocated Worker				
Local employment services	\$9.3m	\$11.9m	\$14.6m	\$35.8m
State administration	\$2.7m	\$3.7m	\$3.6m	\$10.0m
Rapid Response	\$3.1m	\$2.8m	\$4.5m	\$10.4m
WIOA Dislocated Worker Total	\$15.1m	\$18.4m	\$22.7m	\$56.3m
Wagner-Peyser				
Local employment services	\$11.6m	\$11.0m	\$13.2m	\$35.8m
State administration	\$1.1m	\$1.5m	\$1.3m	\$3.9m
Wagner-Peyser Total	\$12.7m	\$12.5m	\$14.5m	\$39.7m

Note: Years shown in the table represent the state fiscal year. Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data

Expenditures for the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser programs do not match allocated amounts due to several reasons. For example, in 2024, \$18.0 million was allocated to the WIOA Adult program, while \$15.3 million was spent. First, these programs have a three-year period to expend their allotted funds, which allows for flexibility in spending, locally boards are required to spend an annual allocation within two-years. What is not spent locally, is returned to the state for expenditure in the third year. Second, funds can be reallocated between programs; for instance, if the WIOA Adult program incurs additional expenses while the WIOA Dislocated Worker program has surplus funds, the excess can be transferred to cover the shifts in local program needs to maximize program usage.

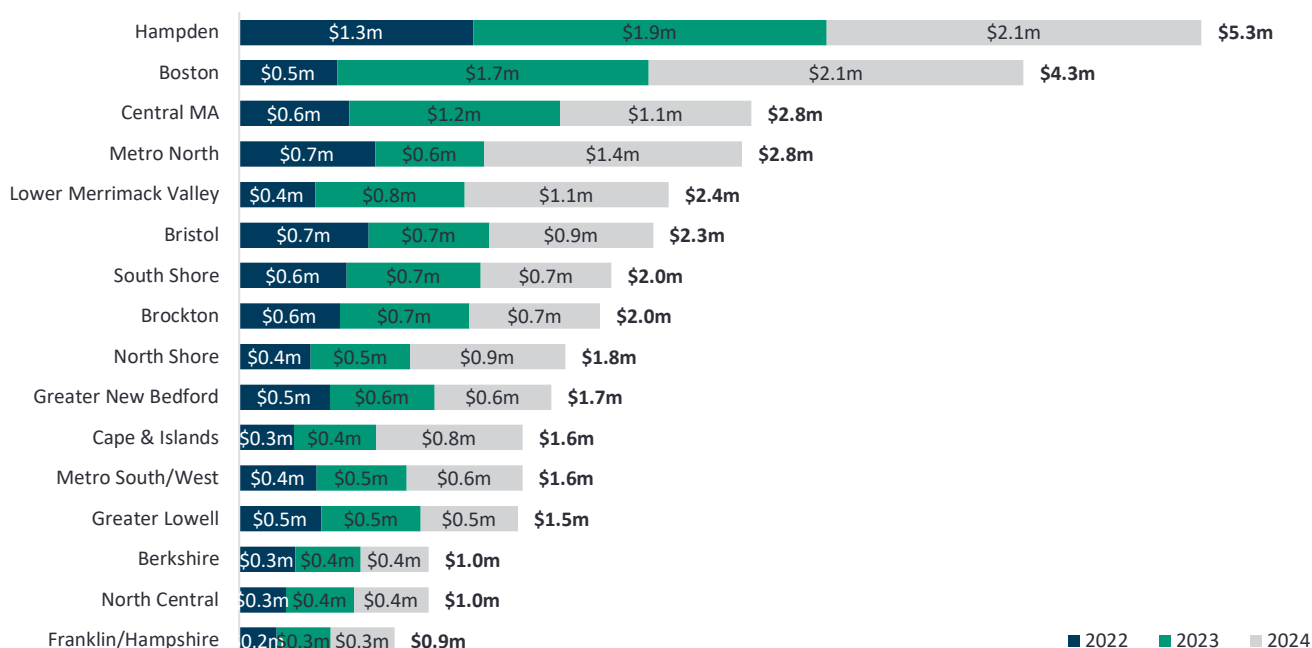
As previously mentioned, MDCS oversees 16 workforce development boards, which are supported by 25 career centers and four youth centers. Local funding for each workforce area is allocated based on specific economic and demographic criteria. The following section outlines how expenditures for local employment services are distributed across workforce regions. Please note that these figures reflect only local-level spending on employment services; state-level administrative costs are not attributed to individual workforce boards.

WIOA Adult Expenditure by Workforce Development Board

Between 2022 and 2024, the Hampden Workforce Development Board accounted for the largest share of local employment services expenses for the WIOA Adult program, totaling \$5.3 million over the three-year period. This is primarily driven by the high proportion (10%) of the Commonwealth’s economically disadvantaged adults residing in the region. The proportion of economically disadvantaged adults accounts for one-third of the funding allocation formula for the WIOA Adult program, which determines how much funding each local area receives. The Hampden and Boston workforce development boards rank at the top for the other two metrics in the allocation formula – (1) share of unemployed individuals in Areas of Substantial Unemployment (ASU) and

(2) share of excess unemployed individuals in ASUs.²⁴ These metrics are part of the WIOA Adult allocation formula and therefore contribute to higher expenditures in these locations.

Figure 3A. Local employment services expenditures for WIOA Adult (2022-2024)



Note: The values above may not match the total presented in Table 3B because not all local expenditures are categorized into a specific region. Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

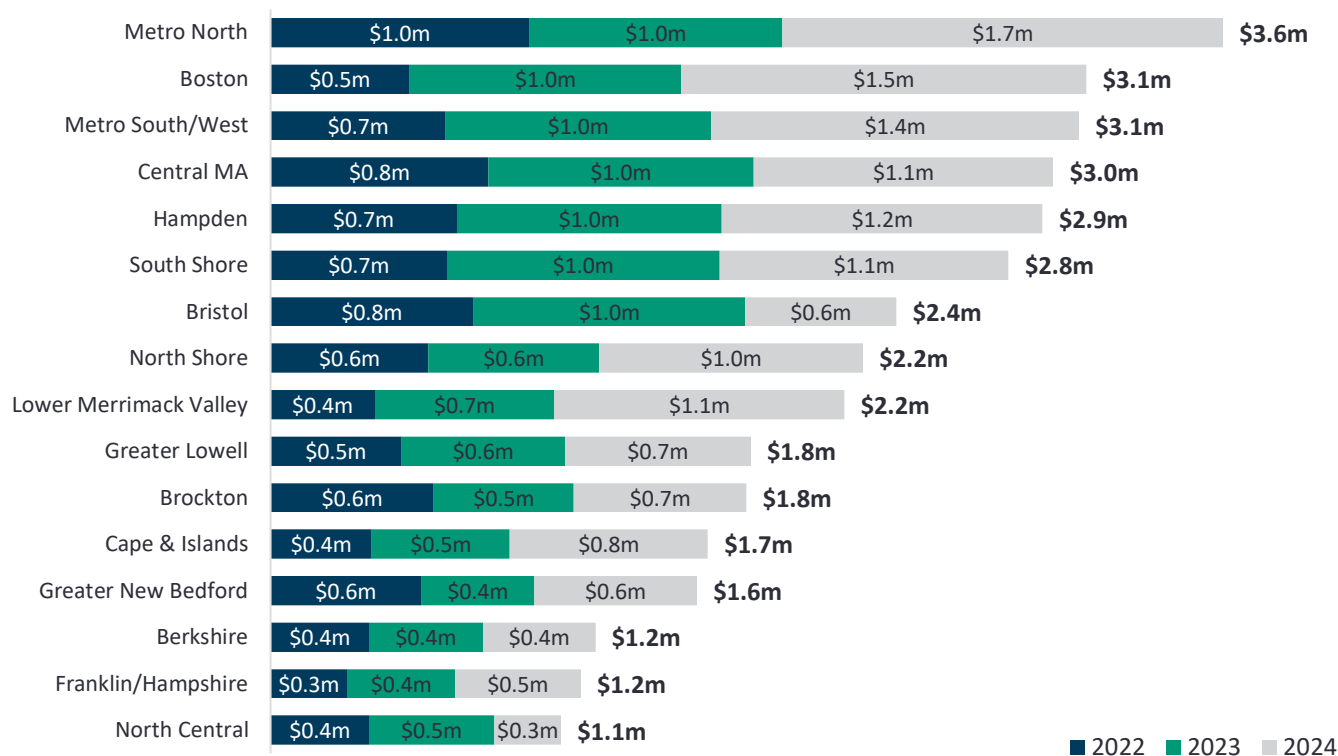
Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

WIOA Dislocated by Workforce Development Board

Over the 2022 to 2024 period, Metro North, Boston, and Metro South/West regions accounted for the largest share of Dislocated Worker local employment services expenditures. All three regions rank high for the following metrics that are incorporated into the Dislocated Worker formula allocations – the region’s unemployment rate, shares of the Commonwealth’s unemployment insurance (UI) total claimants, long-term claimants, and exhausters, and share of the Commonwealth’s three-year job losses in declining industries. For example, the Metro North region comprises 10% of the Commonwealth’s UI claimants, while the North Central region, which recorded the lowest WIOA Dislocated Workers expenditures from 2022 to 2024, accounts for just 4% of the total claimants. These metrics are key inputs to the allocation formula for the WIOA Dislocated Worker program. A larger share of UI claimants increases the allocation of funding for the region, therefore contributing to higher expenditures.

Figure 3B. Local employment services expenditures for WIOA Dislocated Worker (2022-2024)

²⁴ Excess unemployed individuals are defined as the number of unemployed individuals that exceeds 4.5% of the civilian labor force in that area. For more information, see https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/advisories/TEGL/2021/TEGL_09-21_Attachment_C_acc.pdf.



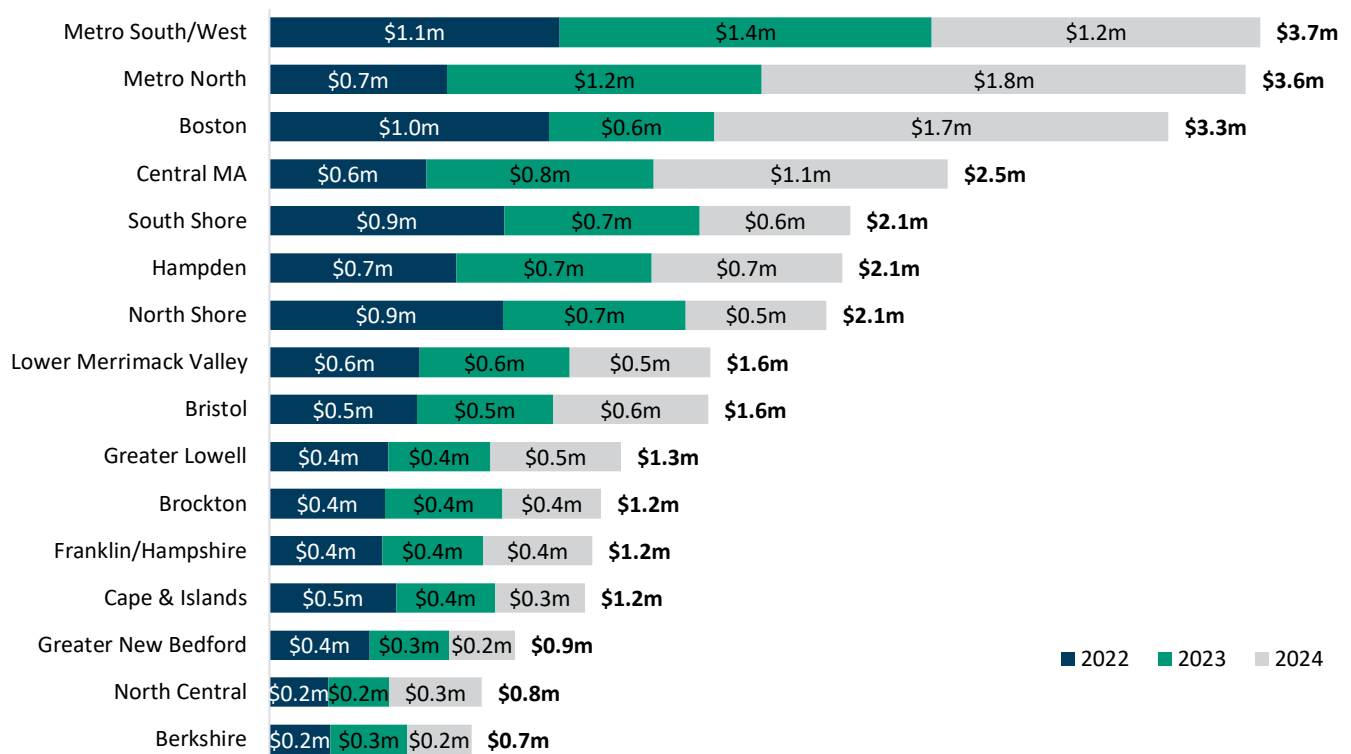
Note: The values above may not sum to the total presented in Table 3B because not all local expenditures are categorized into a specific region. Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

Wagner-Peyser by Workforce Development Board

The Metro South/West and Metro North regions recorded the highest Wagner-Peyser expenses between 2022 and 2024. This is because the Metro South/West and Metro North regions include the largest share of the civilian labor force (14% and 13%, respectively) and unemployed individuals (13% and 12%, respectively) in Massachusetts – the two factors included in the formula allocation for Wagner-Peyser funds.

Figure 3C. Local employment services expenditures for Wagner-Peyser (2022-2024)



Note: The values above may not sum to the total presented in Table 3B because not all employment service expenditures are categorized to a specific region. Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

3.4 Program outputs

This section of the report presents an overview of the number of participants who have engaged with the various services offered through the WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser Employment Services programs.

Across all three programs, every participant is a Wagner-Peyser participant due to the integrated nature of the career center system. For example, if a participant receives training from the WIOA Adult program, they are also assumed to be enrolled in the Wagner-Peyser program because they have accessed core employment services such as job search assistance or labor market information. To avoid counting the same person in multiple programs, this analysis for Wagner-Peyser includes only those participants who received exclusively Wagner-Peyser services and were not enrolled in the WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker programs.

Participation across three programs

This report classifies individuals in the MDCS program into three categories based on their stage in the program:

- **Enrollees:** Individuals who begin participating in a program for the first time during the given fiscal year.

- **Total exits:** Individuals who complete or leave a program during that year. A participant is considered to have exited a program when they have not received a reportable service for 90 consecutive days.
- **Active Participants:** Individuals who receive services from a program at any point during the year, regardless of when they enrolled or exited. Participants are considered to be active from the time of enrollment all the way to program exit.

For example, a participant who enters the WIOA Adult program in 2022 and finishes in 2023 is counted as an enrollee in 2022 and an exit in 2023. Because this individual receives services in both years, they are considered an active participant in both 2022 and 2023.

Participants who exit a program fall into one of three subcategories:

- Completed training
- Did not complete training
- Did not receive training

In the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, some participants receive training services. Among these, some complete training, while others begin but do not finish. Others receive non-training services only.

The Wagner-Peyser program does not offer training services; it focuses on job search assistance, referrals, and related employment services. The number of enrollees, exits, and active participants from 2021 through 2024 varies by program. Note that the number of total exits in 2024 is not complete, as participant exit data is only available through 2024 Q3.

Table 3C. Number of participants entering, exiting, and served each year, by program

Program	2021	2022	2023	2024* (Q1-Q3)	Compound Annual Growth Rate (2021 – 2023)
WIOA Adult					
Enrollees	571	878	1,111	915	39%
Total exits	495	736	919	761	36%
Completed training	251	359	469	361	37%
Did not complete training	43	103	119	136	66%
Did not receive training	201	274	331	264	28%
Active participants	1,094	1,477	1,852	1,848	30%
WIOA Dislocated Worker					
Enrollees	1,128	862	1,204	1,008	3%
Total exits	1,082	1,292	950	891	-6%
Completed training	600	754	478	413	-11%
Did not complete training	79	127	121	139	24%
Did not receive training	403	411	351	339	-7%
Active participants	2,277	2,057	1,969	2,027	-7%
Wagner-Peyser Employment Services					
Enrollees	60,415	60,383	88,555	107,701	21%
Total exits	58,143	60,675	80,048	78,277	17%
Active participants	64,191	66,431	94,311	115,964	21%

Note: The number of participants for the Wagner-Peyser program does not include participants who are also enrolled in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, as all participants are automatically enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. The number of participants entering and exiting in a given year does not equal the total number of participants served because some participants may receive services across multiple years prior to exiting. Years shown in the table represent the state fiscal year. Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

*Exit numbers for FY 2024 reflect data from Q1 to Q3 only and do not include participants who exit in Q4, due to data availability.

Source: Analysis of MDSC data

The WIOA Adult program has demonstrated steady growth in participant engagement. The number of individuals entering the program rose from 571 in 2021 to a peak of 1,111—a 95% increase—in 2023, suggesting increased demand for adult employment services. Exits and total served also climbed steadily, reaching 919 exits and 1,852 participants served in 2023, increases of 86% and 69% respectively. Even though 2024 only includes three quarters of exit data, both enrollees (915) and those served (1,848) nearly match the previous year's totals, indicating ongoing strong performance. During the 2021-2024 period, on average 49% of participants who exited completed training, while 13% began, but did not complete training. The remaining share of WIOA Adult participants who exited during this period did not receive training.

The Dislocated Worker program, in contrast to the Adult program, did not experience substantial growth in new participants between 2021 and 2023. Enrollees fell from 1,128 in 2021 to 862 in 2022, while exits rose from 1,082 to 1,292, contributing to a steady decline in total participants served. In 2023, enrollees picked up to a peak of 1,204 in 2023, reflecting a 7% rise over 2021. Overall, both the number of program exits and total participants served declined during this period—exits fell by 12% and total served dropped by 14%. Because eligibility for the Dislocated Worker program is tied to job loss, these trends closely reflect changes in the state's unemployment rate, which fell from 5.3% in 2021 to 3.6% in 2023.²⁵ Among WIOA Dislocated Worker participants who exited the program between 2021 and 2024, an average of 53% completed training, while 11%

²⁵ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics via FRED

did not complete training. The remaining 26% did not receive training. Preliminary data from the first three quarters of 2024 indicate a recent uptick in demand for services, corresponding with an increase in the state's unemployment rate to 4%.

The Wagner-Peyser program also experienced growth, though not as pronounced as the Adult program, across all key participation measures between 2021 and 2023. Participant enrollees increased from 60,415 in 2021 to 88,555 in 2023—a 47% rise. Exits and total served also climbed steadily, reaching 80,048 exits and 94,311 participants served in 2023, marking increases of 38% and 47%, respectively. More importantly, even though 2024 data only covers the first three quarters of exits, all three indicators—enrollees, exits, and total participants served—have already surpassed the totals from previous years. According to staff interviews, a key factor behind this growth is the expansion of online services offered by MDCS. The greater availability of virtual programs, digital job search tools, and remote support reduced barriers and helped engage more participants, leading to higher enrollment and engagement in the Wagner-Peyser program.

In summary, the Adult program demonstrates consistent growth in participation, reflecting a rising demand for employment services. The fluctuating figures in the Dislocated Worker program suggest its responsiveness to broader labor market needs, particularly during times of economic uncertainty and increased unemployment. Significant growth in the Wagner-Peyser program likely reflects a combination of expanded outreach efforts, programmatic changes, and broader economic factors, as more individuals seek support with job searches and career advancement during the post-pandemic economic recovery. This is supported by the results from EOLWD’s survey of jobseekers at MassHire Career Centers which found that a quarter of jobseekers are repeat customers over a 5-year span and receiving services more than twice was very uncommon.

Types of services being provided

MDCS offers three core types of career services—basic, self-directed, and intensive—through its WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser programs. Table 3D presents the percentage of participants that exited each program who received these services.

Basic services include foundational support such as job search assistance and access to information regarding available employment-related resources offered at MassHire Career Centers. In the WIOA Adult program, 97% of participants received basic services in both 2023 and 2024. The WIOA Dislocated Worker program also showed strong engagement, with 99% receiving basic services by 2024. The Wagner-Peyser program experienced an increase in the percentage of participants receiving basic services, rising from 93% in 2021 to 96% in 2024.

Self-directed services allow participants to take the initiative in their job search, often through online tools and resources. The WIOA Adult program reported that 97% of participants utilized self-directed services in 2023, with a slight decline to 96% in 2024. The WIOA Dislocated Worker program increased to 98% in 2024. In contrast, the Wagner-Peyser program peaked at approximately 83% in recent years since 2021, a trend attributed to the expansion of online services offered by MDCS.

Intensive services provide more personalized support, including one-on-one counseling and training programs. Both the WIOA Dislocated Worker and Adult programs maintained high levels of intensive service provision, with 100% of Dislocated Worker participants receiving these services throughout the observed years. The Wagner-Peyser program, however, had a lower share, with 62% of participants receiving intensive services in 2024. This share includes individuals exclusively enrolled in Wagner-Peyser.

Table 3D. Share of participants receiving basic, self-directed, and intensive career services by program and year of exit

Program	2021	2022	2023	2024*
WIOA Adult				
Share receiving basic services	94%	94%	97%	97%
Share receiving self-directed services	89%	95%	97%	96%
Share receiving intensive services	99%	99%	99%	100%
WIOA Dislocated Worker				
Share receiving basic services	96%	97%	98%	99%
Share receiving self-directed services	96%	97%	97%	98%
Share receiving intensive services	100%	100%	100%	100%
Wagner-Peyser Employment Services				
Share receiving basic services	93%	93%	95%	96%
Share receiving self-directed services	75%	82%	83%	82%
Share receiving intensive services	59%	63%	64%	62%

Note: Please note: The estimates shown for the Wagner-Peyser program exclude individuals who are also enrolled in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. Only those who have exited the programs are reflected in this table. Years shown in the table represent the state fiscal year.

*Participant numbers for FY 2024 reflect data from Q1 to Q3 only and do not include participants who exit in Q4, due to data availability.

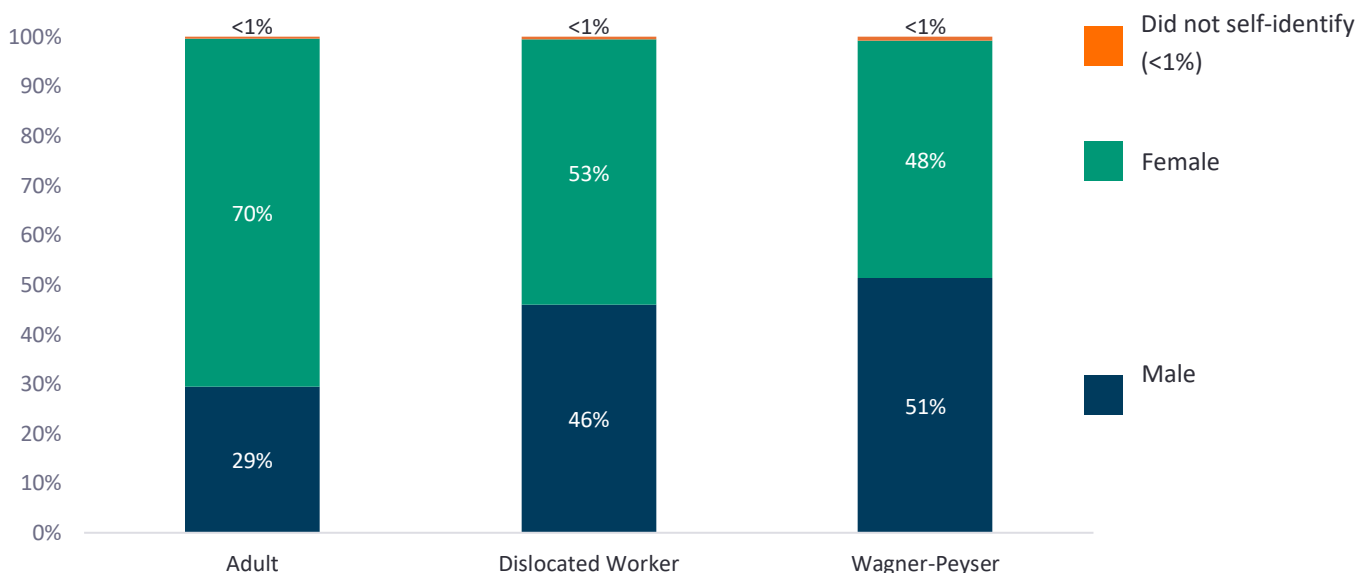
Source: Analysis of MDCS data

3.5 Participant demographics

This section presents an overview of the demographic characteristics of individuals who exited the WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser programs between 2022 – 2024. The data represents an average across the three-year period and provides insights into the populations served by each program. Note that 2024 includes participants who exit between Q1 – Q3, as Q4 exit data is not available in the most recent year.

Across all three programs, gender distribution reflects notable differences in the populations served. The WIOA Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs have a relatively balanced gender split. In contrast, the WIOA Adult program shows a high proportion of female participants, with 70% female and 29% male. In 2023, the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau estimated that about 49% of Massachusetts' overall population was male and 51% was female.

Figure 3D. Gender (average distribution from exit years 2022 – 2024)

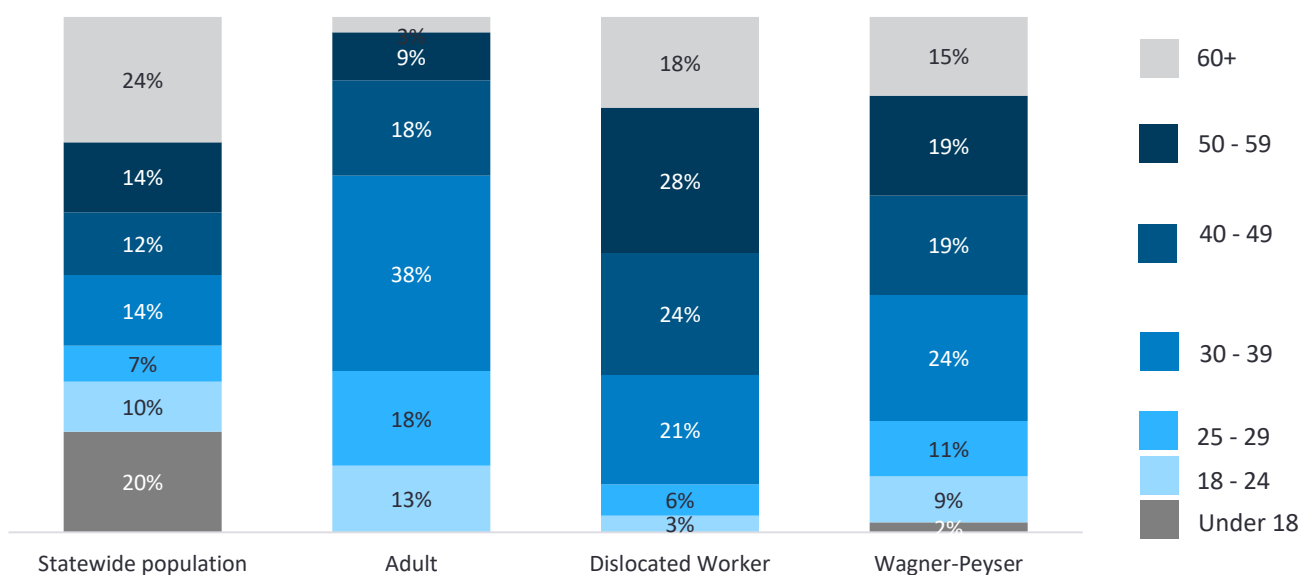


Note: Shares for the Wagner-Peyser program do not include participants who are also enrolled in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, as all participants are automatically enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. This data only includes individuals who have exited the programs. For 2024, only participants who exited between Q1 and Q3 are included.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

The age distribution of participants shows how each program serves different segments of the workforce. All programs serve a broad mix of age groups, however the WIOA Adult program tends to support younger participants, with 69% below the age of 40, compared to 31% and 46% for the WIOA Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs, respectively. Just over half of Massachusetts' overall population is below the age of 40. The WIOA Dislocated Worker program primarily serves older workers, with 46% of participants aged 50 and above. In comparison, the Wagner-Peyser program serves a more even spread of job seekers across all age groups, with participants evenly distributed among those aged 30 to 60 and above.

Figure 3E. Age of Program Participants: Average Distribution from exit years 2022 – 2024



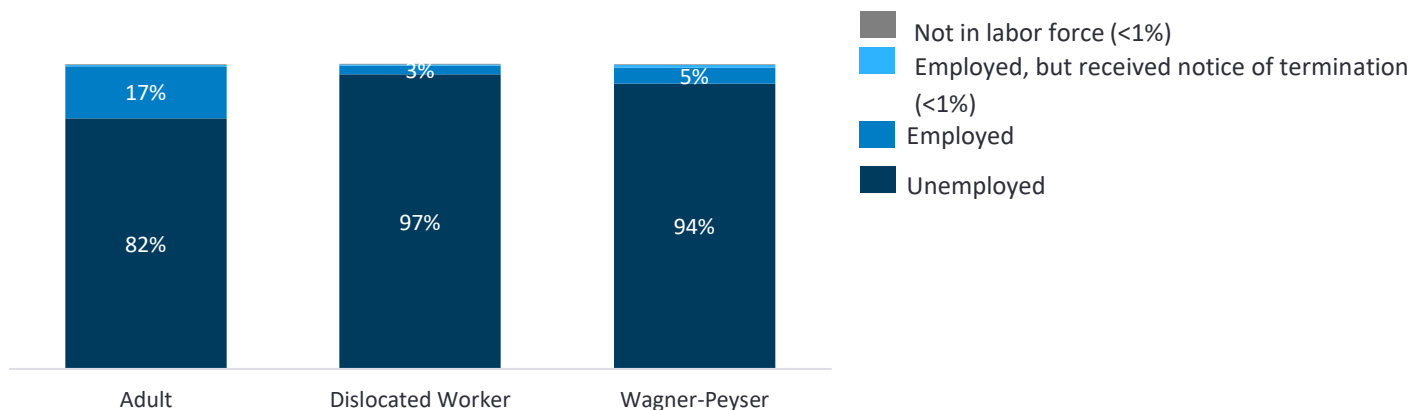
Note: Shares for the Wagner-Peyser program do not include participants who are also enrolled in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, as all participants are automatically enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. This data only includes individuals who have exited the programs. For 2024, only participants who exited between Q1 and Q3 are included. Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

Across all three programs, most participants are unemployed when they enter, though the share varies by program. The WIOA Dislocated Worker program has the highest share of unemployed participants at 97%,²⁶ reflecting its focus on individuals affected by layoffs and business closures. In the WIOA Adult program, 82% of participants are unemployed upon entry, while 17% are employed. In the Wagner-Peyser program, 94% are unemployed and 5% are employed prior to entering the program. Across all three programs, less than 1% are not in the labor force prior to entering.

²⁶ This number is not 100% accurate because, although individuals must be unemployed to qualify for the Dislocated Worker program, during the data collection reporting period, some may have received an unemployment notice but were not yet officially unemployed.

Figure 3F. Employment status prior to entry (average distribution from exit years 2022 – 2024)



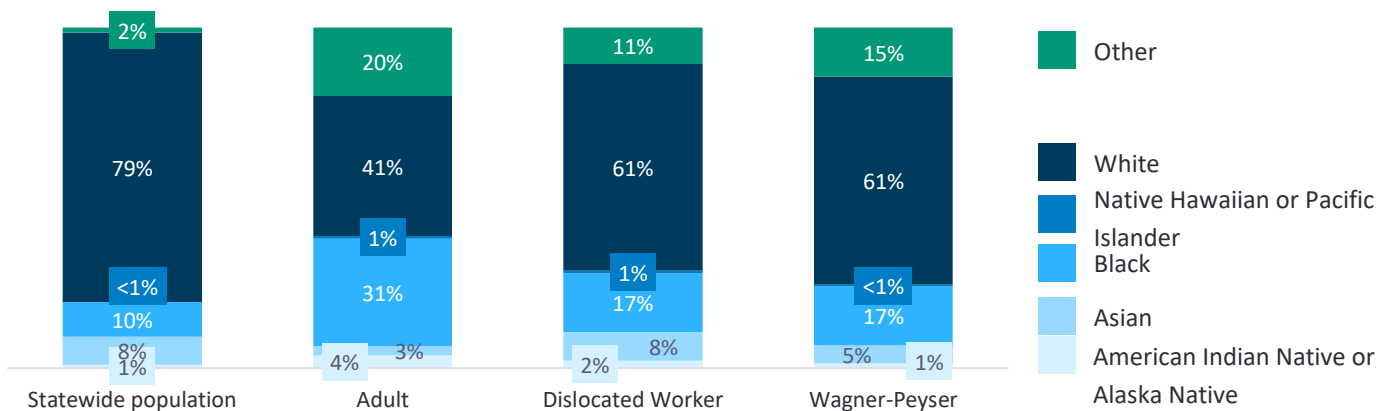
Note: Shares for the Wagner-Peyser program do not include participants who are also enrolled in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, as all participants are automatically enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. This data only includes individuals who have exited the programs. For 2024, only participants who exited between Q1 and Q3 are included.

This table only includes individuals who have exited the programs. Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

The racial makeup of participants is similar for the WIOA Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs but differs for the WIOA Adult program. The WIOA Adult program has a smaller share of White participants (41%) relative to the WIOA Dislocated Worker (61%) and Wagner Peyser (61%) programs. Across all three programs, White participants make up the largest share followed by Black participants (31% for WIOA Adult, 17% for WIOA Dislocated Worker, and 17% for Wagner-Peyser). American Indian Native, Asian, and Hawaiian Pacific Islander make up a smaller share of participants across the three programs. Compared to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, all three programs have a larger share of Black (10% of the statewide population) and American Indian Native (1% of the statewide population) participants.

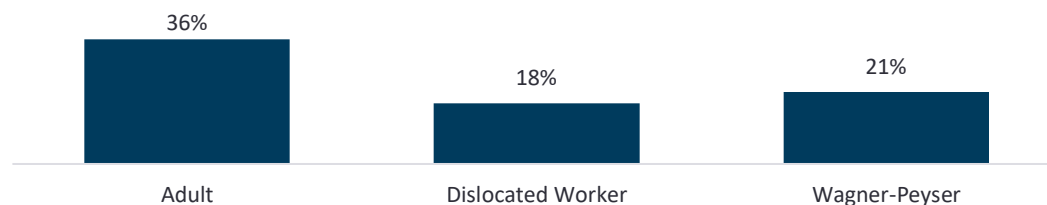
Figure 3G. Race (average distribution from exit years 2022 – 2024)



Note: Shares for the Wagner-Peyser program do not include participants who are also enrolled in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, as all participants are automatically enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. This data only includes individuals who have exited the programs. For 2024, only participants who exited between Q1 and Q3 are included.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

Figure 3H. Hispanic ethnicity (average distribution from exit years 2022 – 2024)

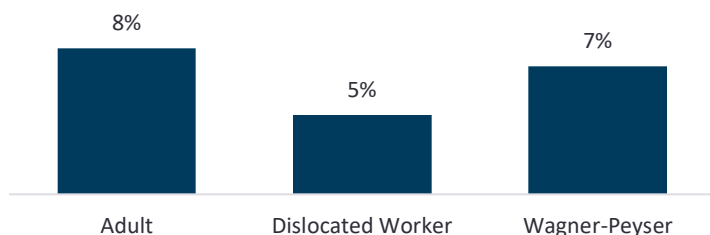


Note: Shares for the Wagner-Peyser program do not include participants who are also enrolled in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, as all participants are automatically enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. This data only includes individuals who have exited the programs. For 2024, only participants who exited between Q1 and Q3 are included.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

The share of participants identifying as Hispanic varies across the three programs. The WIOA Adult program has the highest representation, with 36% of participants identifying as Hispanic. In the WIOA Dislocated Worker program, 18% of participants identify as Hispanic, while the Wagner-Peyser program reports 21% Hispanic participation. All three programs have a higher share relative to the state of Massachusetts for which 13% of the population identifies as Hispanic or Latino.

Figure 3I. Disability status (average distribution from exit years 2022 – 2024)



Note: Shares for the Wagner-Peyser program do not include participants who are also enrolled in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, as all participants are automatically enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. This data only includes individuals who have exited the programs. For 2024, only participants who exited between Q1 and Q3 are included.

Note: Shares for the Wagner-Peyser program do not include participants who are also enrolled in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, as all participants are automatically enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. This table only includes individuals who have exited the programs.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

Each program serves individuals with disabilities, although the proportion varies. In the WIOA Adult program, 8% of participants identify as having a disability. The WIOA Dislocated Worker program has a lower share, with 5% of participants reporting a disability, while Wagner-Peyser has a 7% share of individuals with a disability.

Participants' use of public assistance and unemployment insurance varies across the three programs, reflecting differences in program design and participant needs. Public assistance includes recipients of SNAP, TANF, SSI/SSDI, and general/refugee assistance. From 2022 to 2024, over half of Wagner-Peyser participants on public assistance received SNAP benefits (67%). TANF is the second largest public assistance category, with an average of 22% receiving these benefits during the same period.

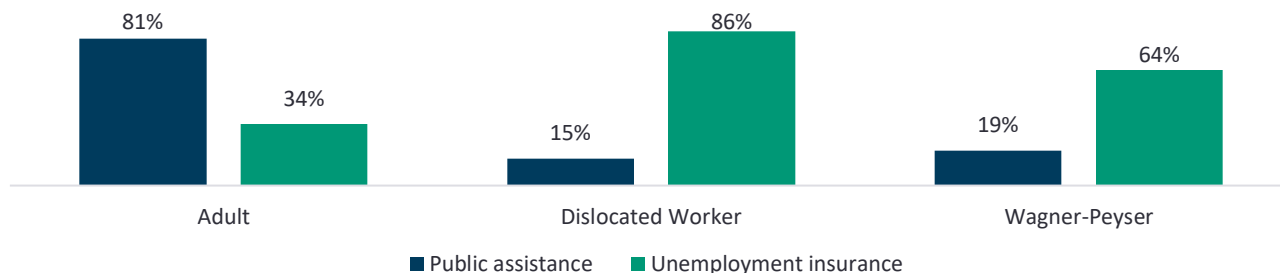
In contrast SSI/SSDI and general/refugee assistance account for smaller proportions, with 10% and 1% of participants receiving these benefits, respectively. The breakdown of public assistance categories is similar for the WIOA Adult and WIOA Dislocated Worker programs.

In the WIOA Adult program, 81% of participants receive public assistance, highlighting the program's focus on individuals facing economic hardship. In contrast, only 15% of WIOA Dislocated Worker participants receive public assistance, but a large majority (86%) receive unemployment insurance, consistent with the program's

focus on recently laid-off workers. The Wagner-Peyser serves a broader population, with 19% receiving public assistance and 64% receiving unemployment insurance benefits.

Participation in public assistance programs plays a significant role in program engagement. According to EOLWD’s survey of jobseekers at MassHire Career Centers, most customers learn about MDCS through these benefits. Additionally, the survey indicates that many individuals are required to visit MassHire Career Centers to continue receiving unemployment insurance.

Figure 3J. Use of public assistance and unemployment insurance (average distribution from exit years 2022 – 2024)

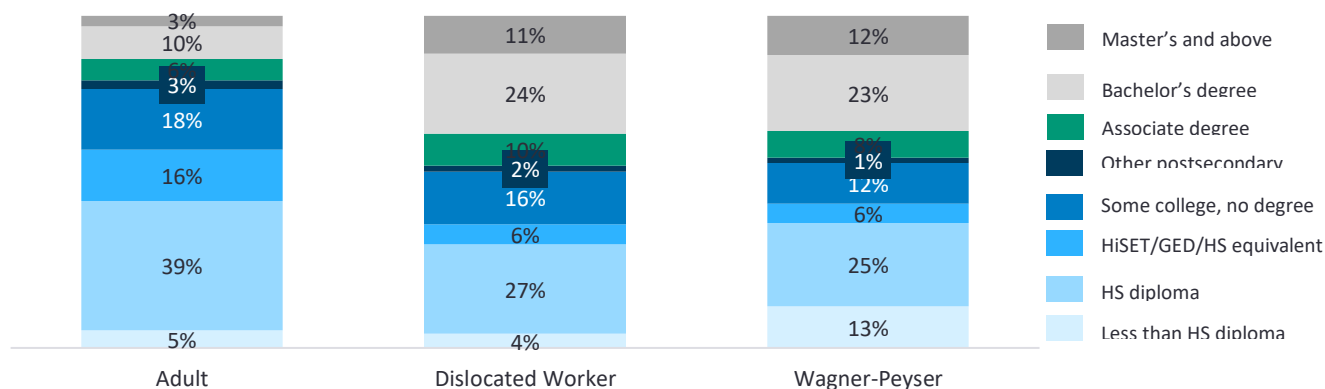


Note: Shares for the Wagner-Peyser program do not include participants who are also enrolled in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, as all participants are automatically enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. This data only includes individuals who have exited the programs. For 2024, only participants who exited between Q1 and Q3 are included.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

Participants in each program enter with varying levels of education. In the WIOA Adult program, a significant portion of participants have a secondary school diploma (39%) or secondary school equivalent (15%). The WIOA Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs serve a larger share of individuals with advanced degrees relative to the WIOA Adult program. In the WIOA Dislocated Worker program, 24% of participants hold a bachelor’s degree as their highest level of education, and 11% hold a degree beyond a bachelor’s degree. In comparison, the WIOA Adult program features 10% of participants with a bachelor’s degree and 3% with a degree beyond that level. The Wagner-Peyser program has a similar distribution to WIOA Dislocated Worker, with 23% holding a bachelor’s degree as the highest level of education and 12% possessing a degree beyond a bachelor’s.

Figure 3K. Highest education level (average distribution from exit years 2022 – 2024)

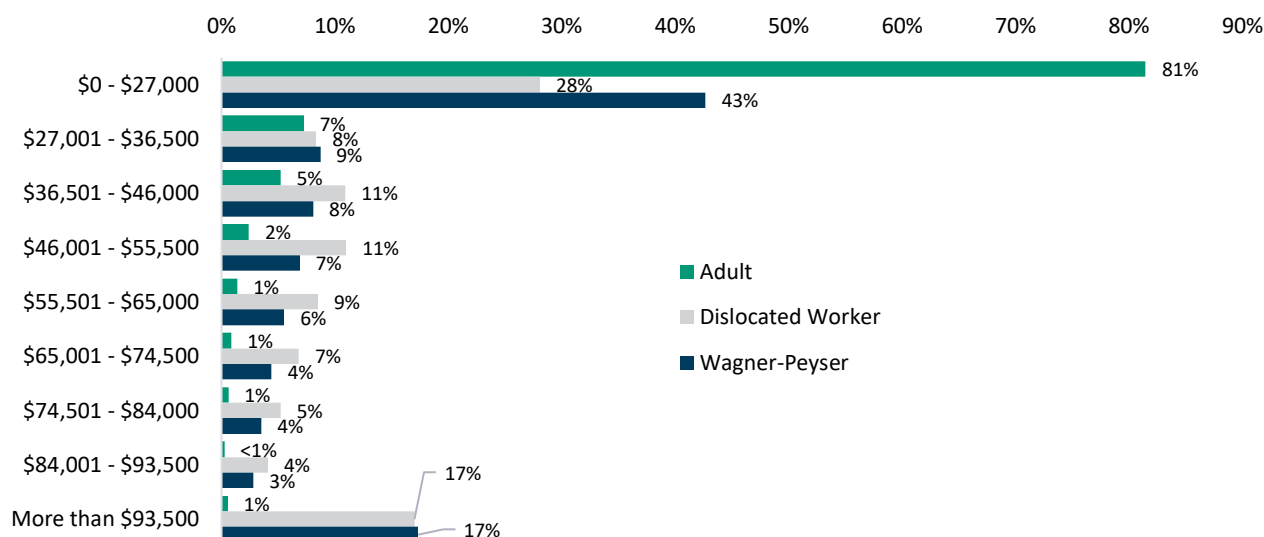


Note: Shares for the Wagner-Peyser program do not include participants who are also enrolled in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, as all participants are automatically enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. This data only includes individuals who have exited the programs. For 2024, only participants who exited between Q1 and Q3 are included.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

Earnings prior to program entry vary between the three programs. Over 80% of participants in the WIOA Adult program have annual earnings below \$27,000, relative to 28% in WIOA Dislocated Worker and 43% in Wagner-Peyser. The WIOA Dislocated Worker program is more evenly distributed within the varying income groups, although both the Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs have 17% of participants earning more than \$93,500. The results of EOLWD’s survey suggest that lower-income participants may require support services to receive services from MassHire. Slightly less than a fifth of jobseekers require support services such as housing, public transit, and unemployment insurance.

Figure 3L. Distribution of participants who exit by pre-program income bracket (average distribution from exit years 2022 – 2024)



Note: Shares for the Wagner-Peyser program do not include participants who are also enrolled in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, as all participants are automatically enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. This data only includes individuals who have exited the programs. For 2024, only participants who exited between Q1 and Q3 are included.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

3.6 Outcome – skill gains

According to EOLWD’s survey of employers, the lack of qualified applicants is the biggest challenge for hiring. To this end, across the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) are tracked for participants. An MSG serves as a performance indicator, measuring a participant’s progress toward acquiring skills necessary for employment and career advancement. These gains may include educational functioning level improvement, attainment of a secondary school diploma or equivalent, receipt of a secondary or post-secondary transcript or report card, achievement of training milestones, or passage of a technical or occupational exam.²⁷ Per EOLWD’s survey of jobseekers, learning new skills is one of the top positive outcomes of MDCS services.

In addition, the number of participants who receive a credential (i.e., diploma, degree, or certification) is recorded for both the WIOA Adult and WIOA Dislocated Worker programs. While MSG reflects a participant’s

²⁷ Educational functioning level is a Measurable Skill Gain used to measure reading, math, and English skills among participants receiving instruction below the postsecondary level. For more information on MSGs, see <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/performance-indicators>.

progress in education during program enrollment, credential attainment measures whether a participant earns a recognized diploma, degree, or certification during the program or within one year after exiting the program.

From 2021 to 2024, the WIOA Adult program showed moderate consistency in outcomes, with an average of 46% of participants receiving a Measurable Skill Gain (MSG) and 44% earning a credential. The WIOA Dislocated Worker program performed slightly better, averaging 50% MSG attainment and 45% credential attainment over the same period. During this period, MSG and credential attainment for WIOA Adult participants varied – MSG rates increased from 2021 to 2022, before declining in 2023 and reaching a high of 50% in 2024. Credential rates remained the same in 2021 and 2022, before declining to 41% in 2023 and increasing to 47% in 2024. Wagner-Peyser participants are not included in the MSG or credential attainment measure. This is expected, given that Wagner-Peyser’s primary focus is not on training, but rather on employment services such as job matching and referrals.

Table 3E. Share of participants receiving a Measurable Skill Gain (MSG) and credential, program and year of exit

Program	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average 2021-2024
WIOA Adult					
Share of participants receiving an MSG	42%	48%	43%	50%	46%
Share of participants receiving a credential	44%	44%	41%	47%	44%
WIOA Dislocated Worker					
Share of participants receiving an MSG	50%	57%	45%	47%	50%
Share of participants receiving a credential	46%	49%	43%	42%	45%
Wagner-Peyser Employment Services					
Share of participants receiving an MSG	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Share of participants receiving a credential	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Note: The data presented above does not include participants who exited for the following reasons: institutionalized, health/medical, deceased, Reserved Forces called to Active Duty, foster care, or criminal offenders. Years shown in the table represent the state fiscal year.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data

3.7 Outcome – job placements

Wage data for the WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser programs is sourced directly from the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL). This data is derived from two primary sources: the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) and the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS). DUA provides detailed, Massachusetts-specific employment and wage records, while SWIS is a federal data-sharing system that enables access to wage records from other states.

Employment and wage outcomes are monitored for participants who are tracked as employed in each quarter for up to four quarters following their exit from the program. For example, if a participant leaves the WIOA Adult program on January 2, 2023, their employment and wage data will be collected for the first quarter after exit (April 2, 2023), the second quarter (July 2, 2023), the third quarter (October 2, 2023), and the fourth quarter (January 2, 2024). Since it can take some time for individuals to secure employment after exiting these programs, tracking over four quarters provides a better understanding of participant outcomes.

Table 3F presents the proportion of participants who are employed for at least one of the four quarters reported after exiting the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser programs, covering the period from 2021 to 2024. Please note that the employment rate data for 2024 is still being compiled and is not yet complete.

Table 3F. Employment rate, by program and year of exit

Program	2021	2022	2023	2024*	Average 2021-2024
WIOA Adult	80%	84%	84%	78%	82%
WIOA Dislocated Worker	86%	84%	84%	86%	85%

Wagner-Peyser	76%	77%	77%	73%	77%
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Note: The data presented above does not include participants who exited for the following reasons: institutionalized, health/medical, deceased, Reserved Forces called to Active Duty, foster care, or criminal offenders. Years shown in the table represent the state fiscal year.

*The share of participants in 2024 only includes participants who exited in Q1 of 2024 (7/1/2023 – 9/30/2023) due to data availability. These participants do not have employment data reported in the fourth quarter after exit.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data

On average between 2021 and 2024, employment rates were highest for WIOA Dislocated Worker participants (85%), followed by WIOA Adult participants (82%) and Wagner-Peyser participants (77%). The WIOA Adult program shows a positive trend in employment rates from 2021 to 2023, increasing from 80% in 2021 to 84% in 2022 and 2023. The WIOA Dislocated Worker program demonstrates more stable performance, with employment rates remaining between 84% to 86% during the four-year period. The Wagner-Peyser program also exhibits steady employment outcomes between 2021 and 2023, although employment rates are lower than the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

When compared to employment levels prior to program entry, the post-program employment rates reflect substantial improvements across all programs. Within the WIOA Adult program, the proportion of participants employed increased from just 17% before enrollment to 82% following program completion. The Wagner-Peyser program also demonstrates a significant rise in employment outcomes, with only 5% of participants employed at entry compared to an average of 77% after exit. For the Dislocated Worker program, participants begin the program unemployed by definition, as eligibility requires job loss; therefore, the post-program employment rate represents a full measure of successful re-employment outcomes.

Table 3G shows the distribution of employment outcomes by quarter following program exit for the three workforce programs. It presents the share of participants who gain employment in each of the four quarters after exit, as a proportion of the total number of individuals who secured employment at any point during the four quarters. These figures help illustrate how quickly participants were able to reenter the workforce after leaving the programs. Please note that for 2024, only data from the first three quarters is available.

Table 3G. Timing of employment outcomes by quarter after exit among participants who gain employment

Program	2021	2022	2023	2024*	Average (from 2021 to 2024)
WIOA Adult					
Employed in first quarter after exit	84%	86%	86%	87%	86%
Employed in the second quarter after exit	8%	6%	7%	9%	8%
Employed in the third quarter after exit	4%	6%	4%	4%	5%
Employed in the fourth quarter after exit	4%	1%	3%	N/A	3%
Total employed	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
WIOA Dislocated Worker					
Employed by first quarter after exit	89%	88%	91%	89%	89%
Employed by second quarter after exit	5%	6%	6%	7%	6%
Employed by third quarter after exit	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%
Employed by fourth quarter after exit	3%	3%	1%	N/A	2%
Total employed	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Wagner-Peyser Employment Services					
Employed by first quarter after exit	71%	77%	75%	79%	77%
Employed by second quarter after exit	14%	13%	14%	15%	14%
Employed by third quarter after exit	9%	6%	7%	7%	7%
Employed by fourth quarter after exit	6%	4%	4%	N/A	4%
Total employed	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: The data presented above does not include participants who exited for the following reasons: institutionalized, health/medical, deceased, Reserved Forces called to Active Duty, foster care, or criminal offenders. Years shown in the table represent the state fiscal year.

*The share of participants in 2024 only includes participants who exited in Q1 of 2024 (7/1/2023 – 9/30/2023) due to data availability. These participants do not have

employment data reported in the fourth quarter after exit.

Across all three programs, the majority of employed participants secure jobs within the first quarter after exiting. The WIOA Adult and WIOA Dislocated Worker programs have the highest share of employed participants finding their job in the first quarter after exiting. Over the four-year period, more than 80% of employed WIOA Adult participants and nearly 90% of employed WIOA Dislocated Worker participants found jobs in the first quarter after exiting. Although the Wagner-Peyser program has a smaller share of first-quarter employment, approximately 90% of employed participants are working in the first or second quarter after exit.

In addition to the skills acquired within the program, the high employment rate after program completion may be the result of additional services offered by MassHire Career Centers through the Wagner-Peyser program. For example, according to EOLWD's survey of jobseekers, participants with an MDCS online account are using them to search for jobs.

If MDCS were to set a goal of increasing the employment rate, jobseekers identified personalized job recommendations, one-on-one support, and tools to manage their job search and career development as possible improvements to the program. In the same survey, employers identified digital resume matching as a tool to improve sourcing of job candidates.

Note that Table 3G does not measure job retention. Instead of tracking the same individuals over time to assess whether they remain employed, it shows the timing of when participants first gain employment after exiting a program. For retention analysis, see Section 3.10.

3.8 Outcome – wage outcomes

The following section summarizes the wage outcomes experienced by participants in the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser programs between program enrollment and completion. This analysis includes only participants who exit one of the MDCS programs and obtained employment within the first three quarters after exit in the FY 2022 – 2024 reporting periods. Participants who do not gain employment within these three quarters are excluded from this analysis.

For the WIOA Adult program, the average change in annual wage for participants who secured employment after the program is calculated by taking the difference between a participant's wages prior to entering the program and wages after exiting the program. For the WIOA Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs, an earnings replacement rate is calculated for participants who secured employment after exiting the program instead of measuring changes in wages before and after program participation. The earnings replacement rate measures post-program wages as a percentage of pre-program wages – in other words, the proportion of prior earnings that participants recovered after exiting the program. For details on the methodology, refer to Appendix A.

The approach to measuring wage outcomes differs between the Adult program and the Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs because these programs serve distinct participant populations and have different goals. The WIOA Adult program primarily helps individuals entering or reentering the workforce, so the focus is on wage growth and upward mobility. In contrast, the WIOA Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs primarily serve participants who have lost prior employment, often with established wage histories. For these participants, the analysis focuses on how much their earnings after completing the program were able to replace what they earned before losing their job.

Table 3H. Wage outcomes for WIOA Adult participants pre- and post-program periods

	Pre-program average annual wage	Post-program average annual wage	Average change in annual wage, \$	Average change in annual wage, %
All participants	\$17,005	\$33,845	\$16,840****	99%
Gender:				
Male	\$18,636	\$39,433	\$20,797****	112%
Female	\$16,435	\$31,896	\$15,460****	94%
Age group:				
Under 18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
18 – 24	\$13,187	\$27,024	\$13,836****	105%
25 – 29	\$17,204	\$30,783	\$13,579****	79%
30 – 39	\$17,206	\$35,978	\$18,772****	109%
40 – 49	\$19,396	\$36,717	\$17,322****	89%
50 – 59	\$17,538	\$37,914	\$20,376****	116%
60 +	\$16,342	\$27,874	\$11,532***	71%

Note: All figures are in 2024-dollar amounts. The sum of pre-program wages and the reported average change may not equal the post-program annual wage. The change reflects a statistically estimated effect, not a simple arithmetic difference between pre- and post-program values. Statistical significance levels are denoted as follows: **** = p < 0.001 (99.9% confidence), *** = p < 0.025 (97.5% confidence), ** = p < 0.05 (95% confidence), * = p < 0.10 (90% confidence).

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

In the WIOA Adult program, there is a positive, significant change in annual wages for participants who secured employment after exiting the program. WIOA Adult participants who secured jobs after completing the program experience an average annual wage gain of \$16,840, resulting in an average post-program wage that is nearly double the average pre-program annual wage. Increases are positive and statistically significant across gender and age groups. Men who secured jobs after completing the program see a larger increase in wage (\$20,797) compared to women (\$15,640). The largest dollar increase in wages is among middle-aged participants between 30-59 years old.

Table 3I. Changes in annual wages for WIOA Dislocated Worker participants pre- and post-program periods

	Pre-program average annual wage	Post-program average annual wage	Earnings replacement rate
All participants	\$64,780	\$59,658	92%
Gender:			
Male	\$71,958	\$65,722	91%
Female	\$58,215	\$54,069	93%
Age group:			
Under 18	N/A	N/A	N/A
18 – 24	\$28,810	\$39,686	138%
25 – 29	\$38,026	\$42,118	111%
30 – 39	\$46,222	\$55,914	121%
40 – 49	\$63,624	\$63,817	100%
50 – 59	\$78,026	\$65,782	84%
60 +	\$86,780	\$57,361	66%

Note: All figures are in 2024-dollar amounts.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

In the WIOA Dislocated Worker program, the earnings replacement rate among participants who secured jobs after completing the program is 92%, indicating that on average, participants earned 92% of their pre-program earnings. Female participants have a slightly higher earnings replacement rate (93%) compared to male participants (91%). Age also appears to influence earnings outcomes: participants between 18 – 49 have an average earnings replacement rate at, or above 100%, meaning these groups not only recovered their pre-program wages but also experienced wage growth beyond previous earnings. The youngest participants, ages 18 to 24, experienced the highest earnings replacement rate of 138%, earning 38% more on average after the program than they did before.

Table 3J. Changes in annual wages for Wagner-Peyser participants pre- and post-program periods

	Pre-program average annual wage	Post-program average annual wage	Earnings replacement rate
All participants	\$59,334	\$53,538	90%
Gender:			
Male	\$67,963	\$60,535	89%
Female	\$50,544	\$46,456	92%
Age group:			
Under 18	\$2,491	\$9,754	392%
18 – 24	\$21,706	\$28,884	133%
25 – 29	\$41,232	\$42,998	104%
30 – 39	\$53,038	\$51,933	98%
40 – 49	\$70,230	\$64,233	91%
50 – 59	\$81,464	\$67,574	83%
60 +	\$70,422	\$51,248	73%

Note: All figures are in 2024-dollar amounts.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

In the Wagner-Peyser program, the earnings replacement rate among all participants who secured jobs after completing the program averages 90%, meaning participants earned 90% of their pre-program wages on average. The pattern mirrors that of the WIOA Dislocated Worker program, with females who secured jobs having a slightly higher earnings replacement rate (92%) compared to males (89%). Younger participants also achieve rates above 100%, indicating wage growth beyond pre-program levels. Even among participants aged 60 and older who secured jobs after the program, the earnings replacement rate of 73% shows that most of their pre-program earnings are recovered after exit.

3.9 Wage outcomes: completers vs. non-completers

While the observed increases in wages in the WIOA Adult program (described in 3.8) is statistically significant from no change, the analysis does not include a counterfactual comparison—assessing what earnings might have been if participants had not enrolled in the programs but still found employment.

The ideal counterfactual would involve tracking a matched group of trainees (the “treatment group”) and non-trainees (the “control” group) over time, controlling for variables such as age, education, prior work experience, and local labor market conditions in addition to other support programs. This longitudinal design would provide a more accurate understanding of the true impact of program participation on earnings and employment outcomes. However, such an approach is not feasible with current data limitations, as tracking of non-participants or identifying a synthetic control group and consistent longitudinal identifiers are not available across systems as data are currently collected and reported.

To address this gap to some extent, the evaluation team used a proxy control group: individuals who begin but do not complete training in the WIOA Adult program. This allows for a comparative analysis between:

- Participants who successfully complete training
- Versus those who start but do not finish

This comparison helps assess the impact of training completion on economic outcomes. Table 3K shows the summary of the results for the WIOA Adult program and includes only participants who gained employment in Q1, Q2, or Q3 after exit. The sample size for this analysis includes 1,135 individuals who completed WIOA Adult training and 224 individuals who began but did not complete WIOA Adult training. The WIOA Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs are excluded from this analysis due to their structural differences.

Table 3K. Average annual wage difference: training completers vs. non-completers

Segment		WIOA Adult	
Overall		\$6,718	***
Gender			
Male		\$12,193	**
Female		\$4,429	**
Age			
18-24		\$5,677	
25-29		\$9,843	**
30-39		\$5,300	
40-49		\$2,509	
50-59		\$5,561	
60+		NA (Small sample)	
Employment status at program entry			
Unemployed		\$6,032	***
Employed		\$9,249	***

Note: All figures are in 2024-dollar amounts. Numbers may not sum due to rounding. Statistical significance levels are denoted as follows: **** = $p < 0.001$ (99.9% confidence), *** = $p < 0.025$ (97.5% confidence), ** = $p < 0.05$ (95% confidence), * = $p < 0.10$ (90% confidence). Sample sizes for the analysis consist of 1,135 WIOA Adult completers and 224 WIOA Adult non-completers. The analysis includes exits reported during the FY 2022 – FY 2024 reporting period.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

Participants in the WIOA Adult program who complete their training see a statistically significant \$6,718 average increase in their earnings compared to those who start but do not complete the program. Gains are statistically significant for both men and women, as well as ages 25 – 29. They are also significant among participants who enter the program employed and unemployed. This suggests that finishing training is meaningfully linked to higher earnings, particularly among one of the youngest groups of training participants. In this analysis, statistical significance means that the difference in average earnings between the two groups is unlikely to have occurred by chance.

While comparing training completers and non-completers in the WIOA Adult program provides useful insight into the relationship between training completion and wage outcomes, it does not include a counterfactual to assess what participants' earnings would have been had they never enrolled in the program. For more details on the limitations of this analysis, see Appendix B.

Despite these limitations, the analysis remains informative. It provides initial evidence that participants who complete workforce development programs tend to experience higher earnings than those who do not complete them. This suggests that program completion is associated with positive wage outcomes.

3.10 Long-term outcomes / impacts

As outlined in the logic models above, long-term outcomes and impacts are essential for assessing whether the programs are driving sustainable improvements in participants' livelihoods and broader societal change. These

outcomes go beyond outputs such as participation and immediate results like job placements. They can be measured using the following metrics:

- Long-term job retention
- Decreased reliance on unemployment benefits and public assistance
- Job satisfaction and overall well-being
- Increased financial stability, including savings and homeownership
- Improved livelihoods across generations

Unfortunately, due to data limitations, we did not have sufficient data points to fully capture these metrics. However, plans for capturing these data could be incorporated into MDCS's internal decision-making regarding future data collection and analysis aimed at evaluating these longer-term impacts.

Medium-term job retention

Although long-term job retention data is not available for the WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser Employment Services programs, we were able to assess medium-term retention, specifically employment status through the fourth quarter after program exit.

Table 3L presents quarterly employment retention data for participants who were employed in the first quarter after exiting the programs between 2021 and 2024. It breaks down the share of participants who remained employed in each subsequent quarter, offering insight into sustained employment outcomes over time. For example, in 2021, 91 out of every 100 participants employed in the first quarter after exiting the WIOA Adult program retained their employment into the second quarter, and 82 out of 100 remained employed through the fourth quarter.

Table 3L. Quarterly employment retention of participants employed in Q1 after program exit

Program	2021	2022	2023	2024*
WIOA Adult				
Employed in Q1 after exit	100%	100%	100%	100%
Employed in Q1 and Q2 after exit	91%	92%	92%	90%
Employed in Q1, Q2, and Q3 after exit	85%	86%	84%	77%
Employed in Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4 after exit	82%	81%	76%	N/A
WIOA Dislocated Worker				
Employed in Q1 after exit	100%	100%	100%	100%
Employed in Q1 and Q2 after exit	95%	96%	93%	91%
Employed in Q1, Q2, and Q3 after exit	92%	92%	88%	74%
Employed in Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4 after exit	89%	89%	80%	N/A

Wagner-Peyser Employment Services				
Employed in Q1 after exit	100%	100%	100%	100%
Employed in Q1 and Q2 after exit	92%	92%	92%	90%
Employed in Q1, Q2, and Q3 after exit	86%	86%	85%	72%
Employed in Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4 after exit	80%	80%	75%	N/A

Note: The data presented above does not include participants who exited for the following reasons: institutionalized, health/medical, deceased, Reserved Forces called to Active Duty, foster care, or criminal offenders.

*2024 data only includes participants who exited in Q1 of 2024 (7/1/2023 – 9/30/2023) due to data availability. These participants do not have employment data reported in the fourth quarter after exit.

The analysis shows that, on average, the retention beyond Q1 remains strong, with the majority of participants employed in Q1 maintaining employment through the four quarters across all the programs. In the WIOA Adult program, approximately 90% of participants stay employed through at least Q2, and more than 75% remain employed through Q4 across all years.

The WIOA Dislocated Worker program shows particularly strong outcomes between 2021 and 2023, with over 93% remaining employed through Q2 and more than 88% remaining employed through Q3. While there is some attrition over time, a solid proportion of participants sustain employment through Q4, demonstrating continued engagement in the workforce.

The Wagner-Peyser program also exhibits consistent job retention patterns. Over 90% of participants who gain employment in Q1 remain employed in Q2 across most years. Although slightly less than the WIOA Dislocated Worker program, between 75%-80% remain employed through Q4.

Overall, the data illustrates that a large majority of individuals who initially gain employment through these programs continue working in the subsequent quarters, when they gain employment in the first quarter after exiting. While slight year-over-year variations are natural, especially with 2024 data still in progress, the programs continue to support meaningful workforce participation. This finding is further supported by EOLWD's survey of jobseekers, which found that nearly two-thirds of participants believe they have personally benefited from receiving MDCS services.

3.11 Cost per unit and effectiveness metrics

Cost per participant

This section presents the cost per participant for the WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser programs. By analyzing the program expenditures in relation to the number of individuals served, this metric offers insight into the relative investment required to deliver services under each program. The analysis uses active participant counts: those who receive services during the given year. Additionally, this analysis reports two types of costs: employment services costs, which reflect expenses spent by local workforce areas on employment services, and total costs, which include both employment services costs and statewide administration costs (and Rapid Response costs for the WIOA Dislocated Worker program).

Tables 3M, 3N, and 3O present the employment service costs and total costs per participant for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser, respectively. WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs served far fewer participants compared to the Wagner-Peyser program, but their per-person costs were substantially higher, reflecting the intensive services and training provided.

Table 3M. Cost per participant for WIOA Adult by year, in real 2024 dollars

	2022	2023	2024	Total	2022 – 2024 Growth Rate
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Total active participants	1,477	1,852	1,848	5,177	25%
Total costs (\$M)	\$9.9	\$13.7	\$15.3	\$38.8	55%
Local employment services costs (\$M)	\$8.9	\$12.4	\$14.6	\$36.0	64%
Total cost per participant	\$6,671	\$7,380	\$8,265	\$7,494	24%
Local employment services cost per active participant	\$6,044	\$6,710	\$7,917	\$6,951	31%

Note: The number of participants exiting in 2024 includes only those who exited between Q1 through Q3 due to data availability. Values are in real 2024 dollars and may not match figures reported previously in nominal dollars.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

Over the past three years, the WIOA Adult program has spent an average of \$7,494 per participant. During this period, reported costs increased by approximately 55% between 2022 and 2024. However, based on information provided by the MassHire Career Centers, the spending reported in 2022 is lower because these total cost figures do not include costs funded by American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. Because of ARPA's temporary support, many program costs during the evaluation period were covered by ARPA rather than the WIOA allocation. As a result, the apparent increase in costs from 2022 to 2024 may overstate actual growth, since some 2022 and 2023 expenses were funded through ARPA and not reflected in WIOA financial data. Additional state funding was also made available through annual appropriations to Career Centers in 2022 (\$9.5m) and 2023 (\$14.3m), above the usual annual appropriation for that fund.

Similarly, the WIOA Dislocated Worker program averaged \$9,561 per participant during the same period. Over the 2022-2024 period, total WIOA Dislocated Worker costs rose by 40%. Similarly, the total cost per active participant rose by 42%. As with the WIOA Adult program, the apparent growth may be overstated due to ARPA funding offsetting WIOA expenses in earlier years. This program was also impacted by the additional state funding discussed above.

Table 3N. Cost per participant for WIOA Dislocated Worker by year, in real 2024 dollars

	2022	2023	2024	Total	2022 – 2024 Growth Rate
Total active participants	2,057	1,969	2,027	6,053	-1%
Total costs (\$M)	\$16.2	\$19.0	\$22.7	\$57.9	40%
Local employment services costs (\$M)	\$9.9	\$12.3	\$14.6	\$36.8	48%
Total cost per participant	\$7,878	\$9,624	\$11,207	\$9,561	42%
Local employment services cost per participant	\$4,818	\$6,219	\$7,212	\$6,075	50%

Note: The number of participants exiting in 2024 includes only those who exited between Q1 through Q3 due to data availability. Values are in real 2024 dollars and may not match figures reported previously in nominal dollars.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

In contrast to the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, the Wagner-Peyser program has a significantly lower cost per participant. This is largely due to its broader reach and less intensive service model, which emphasizes career services over training. Over the 2022-2024 period, the average total cost per participant was \$148 declining from \$205 in 2022 to \$125 in 2024. Unlike the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, the cost per participant has declined over the past three years, a trend likely supported by the program's increasing use of virtual and remote support through online platforms.

Table 3O. Cost per participant for Wagner-Peyser by year, in real 2024 dollars

	2022	2023	2024	Total	2022 - 2024 Growth rate
Total active participants	66,431	94,311	115,964	276,706	75%
Total costs (\$M)	\$13.6	\$12.9	\$14.5	\$41.0	7%
Local employment services costs (\$M)	\$12.5	\$11.3	\$13.2	\$37.0	6%

Total cost per participant	\$205	\$137	\$125	\$148	-39%
Local employment services cost per participant	\$188	\$120	\$114	\$134	-39%

Note: The number of participants exiting in 2024 includes only those who exited between Q1 through Q3 due to data availability. Values are in real 2024 dollars and may not match figures reported previously in nominal dollars.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data.

Cost effectiveness

The most widely used methods to assess the cost-effectiveness of a social program are through cost-benefit analysis and the calculation of a cost-effectiveness ratio. Total costs should account for both direct and indirect expenses, while benefits should capture the gains experienced by participants and the broader society, both in the short and long term. By subtracting total costs from total benefits, the net benefit of a program can be determined. The cost-effectiveness ratio then provides a clear metric, showing how much it costs to achieve a given outcome for each program.

To evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the MDCS programs, EOLWD estimated costs and benefits as follows:

Benefit: The benefit calculation encompassed both primary and secondary gains for participants and governments, including the Commonwealth of Massachusetts government. Primary benefits were measured as increases in earnings for program participants. Secondary benefits included benefits for the government resulting from reduced reliance on public assistance programs, such as unemployment insurance, SNAP, and Medicaid. Additional secondary benefits stemmed from increased tax revenue due to higher earnings, based on the Massachusetts personal income tax rate of 5%.²⁸ While benefit estimates are often calculated for both the short and long term (discounted to present value), this analysis focused on near-term outcomes to keep estimates straightforward and conservative.

Cost. The analysis included all direct and indirect costs, such as state-level oversight by MDCS, employment services, and administrative expenses at career centers. Instead of simply using the total budget allocations for all three programs, the assessment aimed to closely align reported spending with outcome data. Therefore, only the total spending reported by career centers and MDCS was used to calculate aggregated costs.

Table 3P presents the results of net benefit calculations and the cost-effectiveness ratio by program and in aggregate for WIOA programs and Wagner-Peyser.

The WIOA Adult program shows a net gain in financial outcomes for society and a positive financial return, with a cost-effectiveness ratio of 1.92—meaning every dollar spent corresponds to \$1.92 in societal value of return. Participants gained \$58.1 million in increased earnings. Benefits accrue to the government from reduced spending on unemployment insurance (\$2.6 million), SNAP (\$2.8 million), and Medicaid (\$6 million), along with increased tax revenue of \$2.9 million. Altogether, the total benefits amount to \$72.4 million. On the cost side, the government incurs \$35.0 million in local employment services costs and \$2.7 million in state administrative costs, totaling \$37.8 million.

²⁸ Massachusetts Department of Revenue. <https://www.mass.gov/guides/personal-income-tax-for-residents>

Table 3P. Cost-benefit assessment for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser programs, 2022 through 2024

	Participants	Government	Society
WIOA Adult (\$ in millions)			
Benefits			
Increased earnings	\$58.1	\$0.0	\$58.1
Reduction of unemployment benefits	\$0.0	\$2.6	\$2.6
Reduction of SNAP benefits	\$0.0	\$2.8	\$2.8
Reduction of Medicaid benefits	\$0.0	\$6.0	\$6.0
Increased tax revenue	\$0.0	\$2.9	\$2.9
Total WIOA Adult benefits	\$58.1	\$14.4	\$72.4
Costs			
Local employment services costs	\$0.0	\$35.0	\$35.0
State administrative costs	\$0.0	\$2.7	\$2.7
Total WIOA Adult costs	\$0.0	\$37.8	\$37.8
WIOA Adult net gains	\$58.1	-\$23.4	\$34.7
Cost effectiveness ratio	-	-	1.92
WIOA Dislocated Worker (\$ in millions)			
Benefits			
Increased earnings	\$151.8	\$0.0	\$151.8
Reduction of unemployment benefits	\$0.0	\$4.1	\$4.1
Reduction of SNAP benefits	\$0.0	\$0.1	\$0.1
Reduction of Medicaid benefits	\$0.0	\$0.3	\$0.3
Increased tax revenue	\$0.0	\$7.6	\$7.6
Total WIOA Dislocated Worker benefits	\$151.8	\$12.1	\$163.9
Costs			
Local employment services costs	\$0.0	\$35.8	\$35.8
State administrative costs	\$0.0	\$10.0	\$10.0
Rapid response costs	\$0.0	\$10.4	\$10.4
Total WIOA Dislocated Worker costs	\$0.0	-\$56.3	\$56.3
WIOA Dislocated Worker net gains	\$151.8	-\$44.1	\$107.7
Cost effectiveness ratio			2.91
Wagner-Peyser (\$ in millions)			
Benefits			
Increased earnings	Not estimated	Not estimated	Not estimated
Reduction of unemployment benefits	Not estimated	Not estimated	Not estimated
Reduction of SNAP benefits	Not estimated	Not estimated	Not estimated
Reduction of Medicaid benefits	Not estimated	Not estimated	Not estimated
Increased tax revenue	Not estimated	Not estimated	Not estimated
Total Wagner-Peyser benefits	Not estimated	Not estimated	Not estimated
Costs			
Local employment services costs	\$0.0	\$35.8	\$35.8
State administrative costs	\$0.0	\$3.9	\$3.9
Total Wagner-Peyser costs	\$0.0	\$39.7	\$39.7
WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated and Wagner-Peyser (\$ in millions)			
Total benefits	\$209.9	\$26.5	\$236.4
Total costs	\$0.0	\$133.7	\$133.7
Total net gains	\$209.9	-\$107.3	\$102.6
Cost effectiveness ratio			1.77

Note: The benefits estimated for 2024 are based solely on participants who exit between Q1 and Q3, excluding those who exit in Q4. In contrast, the costs for 2024 encompass expenses from all four quarters, resulting in a conservative estimate of the overall cost-benefit analysis. Dollars are nominal.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data

The WIOA Dislocated Worker program also shows a net gain in financial outcomes for society and a positive rate of return, with a cost-effectiveness ratio of 2.91—meaning every dollar spent corresponds to \$2.91 in value.

Participants gained \$151.8 million in increased earnings. Benefits accrue to the government from reduced spending on unemployment insurance (\$4.1 million), SNAP (\$0.1 million), and Medicaid (\$0.3 million), along with increased state tax revenue of \$7.6 million. Altogether, the total benefits amount to \$163.9 million. On the cost side, the government incurs \$35.8 million in local employment services costs, \$10.0 million in state administrative costs, and \$10.4 million in rapid response costs, totaling \$56.3 million.

In evaluating Wagner-Peyser’s benefits, EOLWD took a conservative approach by assigning zero positive impact to the program. This reflects the Wagner-Peyser’s limited scope—primarily job matching and resume support—which makes it difficult to confidently attribute the entire wage gains or reductions in public assistance to its services. To clarify, if the same benefit estimation methodology used for WIOA programs were applied to Wagner-Peyser—accounting for increases in earnings, reduced reliance on public assistance (e.g., unemployment insurance, SNAP, Medicaid), and secondary benefits such as increased tax revenue—the estimated benefits would far exceed program costs.

However, unlike the training-intensive WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, which offer structured skill development and measurable outcomes, Wagner-Peyser’s minimal interventions serve a large population, making it difficult to attribute significant economic gains solely to its services. Therefore, to avoid overstating its impact, EOLWD chose to assign zero positive benefit to Wagner-Peyser in the cost-benefit analysis. This conservative assumption allows for a more cautious estimate and demonstrates that the combined benefits of the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs alone are sufficient to outweigh the total costs across all three programs (i.e. WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser).

After evaluating the total costs of MDCS programs—amounting to \$133.7 million—the net gain to society over three years is estimated at \$102.6 million. Notably, even excluding benefits from the Wagner-Peyser program, the analysis still shows a positive net benefit, with a cost-effectiveness ratio of 1.77.

As noted earlier, some 2022 and 2023 expenses were covered by ARPA and not reflected in WIOA financial data. To account for this, EOLWD conducted a sensitivity analysis using 2024 cost-per-participant figures for prior years. This adjustment reduced the cost-effectiveness ratio from 1.77 to 1.63. While slightly lower, the revised ratio still reflects a positive return on investment—indicating that the program remains beneficial to society even after accounting for higher cost levels supported by ARPA funding in earlier years.

3.12 Key findings

- 1. **Of the \$156 million allocated between 2022 and 2024 for the WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser programs, \$134 million was spent—including \$117 million on local employment services and Rapid Response and the remainder (~12.6%) on state administrative costs.** Among the three programs, the WIOA Dislocated Worker program was the largest, receiving \$64 million in total allocations and spending \$56 million. The WIOA Adult program followed with \$47 million allocated and \$38 million spent, while Wagner-Peyser was allocated \$45 million and spent \$40 million. It is important to note that Massachusetts typically operates under a three-year window to obligate and expend WIOA and Wagner-Peyser funds. Additionally, any funding allocations or expenditures influenced by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) are not included in these figures.

Table 3Q. Allocation, expenditure, and utilization of MDCS programs (2022–2024)

	2022	2023	2024	Total (2022- 2024)	Cumulative growth 2022-2024
WIOA Adult					
Allocated	\$13	\$17	\$18	\$47	43%

Spent	\$9	\$13	\$15	\$38	66%
% of allocated	73%	81%	85%	80%	+12 pp
WIOA Dislocated Worker					
Allocated	\$20	\$23	\$21	\$64	3%
Spent	\$15	\$18	\$23	\$56	50%
% of allocated	75%	81%	109%	88%	+34 pp
Wagner-Peyser					
Allocated	\$15	\$15	\$15	\$45	-1%
Spent	\$13	\$13	\$15	\$40	14%
% of allocated	85%	84%	98%	89%	+13 pp
Total					
Allocated	\$48	\$54	\$54	\$156	12%
Spent	\$37	\$44	\$53	\$134	42%
% of allocated	77%	82%	98%	86%	+21 pp

Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Source: Analysis of MDCS data

2. **Between 2022 and 2024, total allocations across the WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser programs increased by 12%, while total spending rose by a significantly higher 42%, indicating a strong expansion in service delivery.** The bulk of the allocation growth was driven by the WIOA Adult program, which saw a 43% increase in funding, whereas allocations for WIOA Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser remained relatively stable. On the expenditure side, WIOA Adult also led with a 66% increase in spending, followed by WIOA Dislocated Worker at 50% and Wagner-Peyser at 14%. Importantly, the percentage of allocated funds spent improved from 77% in 2022 to 98% in 2024, resulting in an average utilization rate of 86% over the three-year period. This upward trend could reflect more effective deployment of resources and stronger program execution. However, it's worth noting that 2022 spending may appear lower than usual due to the availability of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, which likely supplemented service delivery and reduced reliance on WIOA allocations during that year.
3. **Local employment expenditures are distributed across various workforce regions based on specific economic and demographic criteria.** The Hampden Workforce Development Board accounted for the largest share of local employment services expenses for the WIOA Adult program, totaling \$5.3 million, driven by the high proportion of economically disadvantaged adults in the region. For the WIOA Dislocated Worker program, regions such as Metro North, Boston, and Metro South/West recorded the highest expenditures, influenced by their unemployment rates and shares of unemployment insurance claimants. This targeted distribution of funds ensures that resources are allocated where they are most needed, addressing the unique challenges faced by different regions.
4. **The WIOA Adult program has shown significant growth in participant engagement, reflecting an increasing demand for employment services.** From 2021 to 2023, the number of participants entering the program surged from 571 to a peak of 1,111, marking a 95% increase. This growth is further evidenced by a 69% increase in the total number of participants served, rising from 1,094 in 2021 to 1,852 in 2023. Even with only three quarters of exit data available for 2024, the program continues to perform strongly, with 915 enrollees, 761 exits, and 1,848 participants served, indicating sustained interest and engagement in adult employment services.
5. **The participation trends in the WIOA Dislocated Worker program are closely tied to the state's economic conditions, particularly job loss and unemployment rates.** While the number of participants entering the program increased slightly from 1,128 in 2021 to 1,204 in 2023, overall engagement showed a 12% decline

in exits and a 14% drop in total participants served during the same period. This decline aligns with the state's decreasing unemployment rate, which fell from 5.3% in 2021 to 3.6% in 2023. However, preliminary data for the first three quarters of 2024 suggests a resurgence in demand for services, coinciding with a rise in the unemployment rate to 4%, highlighting the program's responsiveness to labor market fluctuations.

6. **The Wagner-Peyser program has experienced substantial growth in participant engagement, driven by the expansion of online services and outreach efforts.** Participant enrollees increased from 60,415 in 2021 to 88,555 in 2023, representing a 47% rise, while exits and total participants served also saw significant increases. By 2023, the program reached 80,048 exits and 94,311 participants served, marking increases of 38% and 47%, respectively. The availability of virtual programs, digital job search tools, and remote support has effectively reduced barriers to access, enabling more individuals to engage with the program and seek support for job searches and career advancement.
7. **Employment outcomes remained stable and above 75% across all three programs from 2021 to 2024, with a high share of participants securing work within the first quarter after exit.** The WIOA Adult program achieved an average employment rate of 82%, a significant improvement from its pre-program rate of only 17%. Similarly, the WIOA Dislocated Worker program averaged 85%, with all participants entering the program after experiencing job loss. In contrast, Wagner-Peyser participants had lower employment rates at around 77%, but still showed substantial gains compared to a pre-program employment rate of just 5%. Among the participants receiving employment, timing of employment also differed: over 80% of employed WIOA Adult participants and nearly 90% of WIOA Dislocated Worker participants secured jobs in the first quarter after exit, compared with 70–80% for Wagner-Peyser. However, by the second quarter after exit, Wagner-Peyser outcomes converged, with approximately 90% of employed participants working, like the other two programs.
8. **Across all three workforce programs, participants experienced meaningful post-exit earnings outcomes.** In the WIOA Adult program, wage gains averaged \$16,840 for participants who gain employment after exit. Men and middle-aged participants saw the largest dollar increases in wages. Men earned substantially more than women post-program, averaging more than \$7,500 higher in the WIOA Adult program. In the WIOA Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs, the average earnings replacement rate was 92% and 90%, respectively, meaning that participants who secured jobs after the program recoup nearly all of their pre-program wages. In both programs, the earnings replacement rate consistently exceeded 100% for younger participants, meaning that on average, these groups not only recovered their pre-program wages, but also experienced wage growth beyond their previous earnings. Additionally, counterfactual analysis comparing training completers with those who started but did not complete training shows that WIOA Adult participants who complete training earn, on average, \$6,718 more per year than non-completers.
9. **Participants who secured jobs after exiting WIOA and Wagner-Peyser programs showed strong medium-term job retention between 2021 and 2024, though declines were evident in 2023 and 2024.** Quarterly retention data—tracking participants employed in the first quarter after exit through the fourth quarter after exit—shows that over 90% remained employed in the second quarter throughout this period. From 2021 to 2024, all programs maintained at least 75% retention through the fourth quarter, with 2021 and 2022 exceeding 80%. However, 2023 saw a decline of at least 5 percentage points in full four-quarter retention across all programs.
10. **WIOA programs invest significantly more per participant than Wagner-Peyser, reflecting their intensive, training-focused service models.** From 2022 to 2024, the WIOA Adult program averaged \$7,494 per

participant, the WIOA Dislocated Worker program averaged \$9,561, and the Wagner-Peyser program averaged only \$148. Spending per participant in the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs showed a sharp increase between 2022 and 2024. However, some 2022 and 2023 MassHire centers' expenses were covered by ARPA and not reflected in WIOA financial data, which may overstate the growth in reported costs. Wagner-Peyser, on the other hand, saw a decline in per-participant spending over the same period. This reduction is largely attributed to the increased use of virtual and remote services delivered through online platforms, which lowered service delivery costs.

11. **Both WIOA programs delivered positive financial returns to society, with benefits outweighing program costs even under conservative assumptions.** Cost-benefit analysis shows that every dollar invested in the WIOA Adult program generated \$1.92 in total societal benefits, while the WIOA Dislocated Worker program generated \$2.91 per dollar spent. These returns are driven primarily by increased earnings among participants. Additional government savings from reduced public assistance and increased tax revenue also help offset program costs. Given the minimal cost per participant for the Wagner-Peyser program, which serves a large volume of individuals, EOLWD did not assign direct benefits to Wagner-Peyser in the analysis to avoid overstating its impact. Even under a conservative scenario—where costs from all three programs (WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser) are included, but benefits are counted only from the two WIOA programs—the findings still indicate a net positive benefit to society.

Section 4: Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund

4.1 Grant application and award process

WCTF is mainly funded by the Commonwealth through state annual appropriation (GAA line item 7002-1075). After the Massachusetts Legislature sets WCTF's annual appropriation, CommCorp issues a Request for Proposals (RFP). Once an RFP is released, Lead Applicants can submit proposals; see Section 4.2 for details. Application requirements for WCTF grants have stayed largely consistent since the program was revised in 2018. For example, in 2025, submissions included the following materials:

- **Partnership information** including information for each program partner
- **Program summary** including funding request and matching amount, proposed number and categories of participants, and project synopsis
- **Narrative description of the project** including specific industry needs
- **Budget and budget narrative** including a breakdown and description of use of grant and match contributions by project year and budget category
- **Implementation timeline** lists all proposed activities with the number of participants, start and end dates, number of hours, and training providers for each activity
- **Letter from collective bargaining unit** supporting program, if applicable²⁹
- **Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)** details roles and responsibilities of each partner
- **Letters of Intent filed with Local Workforce Development Boards**
- **Agreement to contract terms and conditions** including the Standard Disclosure Form certifying the Lead Applicant follows all applicable laws and regulations

Once applications are submitted, documents are screened for completeness, conformity to application requirements, and timeliness. Eligibility is then evaluated by a review committee comprised primarily of WCTF program and other CommCorp staff. The review committee evaluates applications based on the following criteria:

1. Past experience in serving participants through the target training occupations
2. Evidence of strong partner engagement (including employers)³⁰
3. Program design that is clear and aligned with WCTF program goals
4. Reasonable and detailed budget aligned with program design

Following the evaluation process, CommCorp recommends a subset of the applications for funding to EOLWD and the Governor's Office. The amount of funds requested, and the proposal narrative is the basis for the grant's statement of work and budget. Donnelly Grants can provide up to \$500,000 for selected applicants over the life of the grant, based on statutory requirements. Grantees are required to provide a 30% match of the total amount awarded. Match contributions may be cash or in-kind.

²⁹ Employers with local collective bargaining units must include the union as a partner in the partnership and include a letter of support from that union.

³⁰ If the employers in the partnership are not part of an industry already identified as a priority by the Commonwealth, the committee will then consider whether the industry plays a significant role in the state's economy or has additional workforce needs.

4.2 Description of educational and eligible service providers

Donnelly and HCBH Hubs Grants are available to partnerships focused on sector workforce development initiatives. Partnerships should include a diverse range of stakeholders and expertise but must designate a sole "Lead Applicant".³¹ Lead Applicants are responsible for coordinating the partnership to achieve project goals, which includes designing the project, managing the budget, and overseeing performance management measures. They must identify and access public and private resources for workforce development and are responsible for data collection and project evaluation.

Among the stakeholders in the partnership, a training provider must be included. The training provider need not be a specific type of entity and can be entities such as a community college, community-based organization, or technical high school.

Each partnership must also include at least two employers. The inclusion of two employers in the partnership helps tailor programs to meet employer needs, thereby enhancing the quality and competitiveness of Massachusetts firms. Employers are required to have enough demonstrated vacancies and/or hiring needs for workers in the proposed target occupation to hire or promote the proposed number of program graduates.³² Further, they must commit to a candidate-sourcing strategy that includes recruiting and training members of the proposed target population as a solution to meet this demand.³³

It is recommended for partnerships to also include Local Workforce Development Boards and organizations such as community colleges, economic development agencies, and trade associations. A governance structure must be established to define the roles and responsibilities of each partner, and signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOAs) are required for all members.

4.3 Description of grants awarded under the program

As outlined in Section 2.2.1, the WCTF consists of seven different programs offered since 2019. Since the majority of grants—over 98% of awarded funds from WCTF since FY 2019—are Donnelly and HCBH Hubs, this section primarily explains the process for awarding and evaluating grants within these two programs.

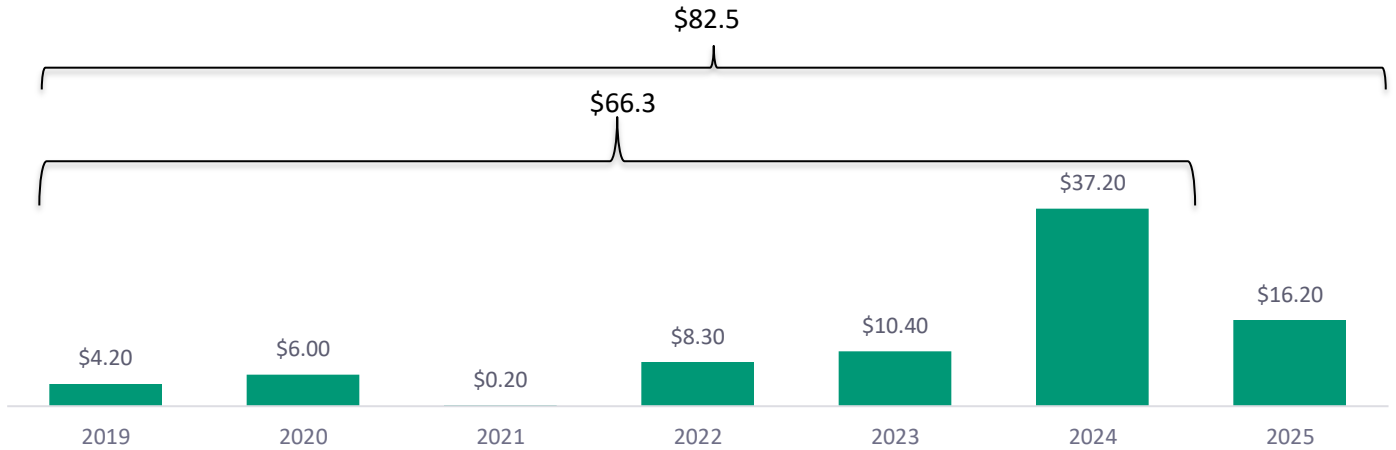
Funding for Donnelly and HCBH Hubs grants is organized by fiscal year. As outlined in Section 2.2.1, a total of \$83.8 million has been awarded in the WCTF program to date, with \$82.5 million awarded specifically through the Donnelly and HCBH Hubs. Donnelly Grants have been distributed since 2019, while HCBH Hubs began distributing funds in 2024—the same year the program was established. Of the \$82.5 million awarded through Donnelly and HCBH Hub Grants, only \$10.4 million was distributed during the first three years of the program (2019 - 2021) reflecting the major infusion of additional funds in 2022, as noted previously in Table 2C. Since then, awards have increased significantly, with a cumulative \$66.3 million awarded between 2019 and 2024, and an additional \$16.2 million awarded in 2025.

Figure 4A. Donnelly and HCBH Hubs Grant Awards by year (\$ in millions)

³¹ In the case of the Healthcare Workforce Hub Initiative, all Lead Applicants have been a MassHire Workforce Board.

³² WCTF Donnelly Grant RFP for 2025

³³ Ibid.



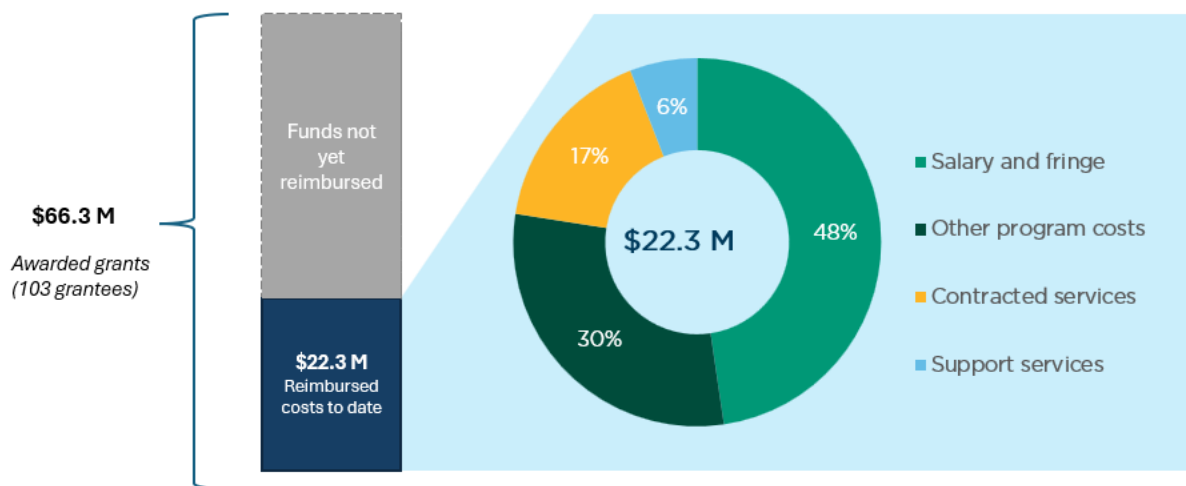
Source: Analysis of CommCorp data.

Note: Values presented are the total of Donnelly and HCBH Hub grants.

WCTF Funds are disbursed on a cost-reimbursement basis. Grantees are expected to submit monthly invoices using a standard template provided by CommCorp. Reimbursements are limited to allowable expenses incurred during the contract period. Grantees must maintain and, upon request, submit supporting documentation for all expenses. While there is a defined list of allowable costs, grants can cover training materials, salaries for instructors, support services for enrollees (e.g., transportation, childcare, etc.), and stipends for enrollees, among others. As mentioned previously in Section 4.1, grantees must match at least 30% of the grant amount over the lifetime of the grant.

Of the \$66.3 million in awarded Donnelly and HCBH Hubs Grants between 2019 and 2024, CommCorp has already reimbursed roughly \$22.3 million to grantees. The largest portion of the total spending is related to staff salaries and fringe benefits (48%), followed by other program costs (30%). Grantees have up to three years to complete their training and spend all their grant funding. Based on the length of the grants, it takes two to three years after award for each grant to fully expend its funds.

Figure 4B. Donnelly and HCBH Hub Grant reimbursements by expense category, 2019 through 2024, nominal dollars



Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

4.4 Program outputs

This section of the report presents the number of participants who engaged with various services offered through the WCTF program between 2020 and 2024. While the WCTF program was revised in 2018 and the first awards were made in 2019, enrollment into the program did not begin until 2020; as such, 2019 is not included in Table 4A. In addition, at the time this report was finalized, 2025 data was only available through April 2025; as a result, 2025 is not included in Table 4A. Like in the MDCS programs, Table 4A classifies individuals into three categories based on their stage in the program:

- **Enrollees:** Individuals who begin participating in the WCTF program for the first time during the given fiscal year.
- **Total exits:** Individuals who left the WCTF program during the given fiscal year. These individuals may not have necessarily started the program in the same year. Total exits consist of both positive and nonpositive completions.
 - **Positive completions:** Enrollees who successfully completed the entire training.
 - **Nonpositive completions:** Enrollees who left the program before completing the entire training.
- **Active Participants:** Individuals who receive services from the WCTF program at any point during the given fiscal year, regardless of when they enrolled or exited. Participants are considered to be active from the time of enrollment all the way to program exit.

Throughout this report, we discuss results for closed and active grants. These grant statuses are defined as follows:

- **Closed grants:** Grants where no participants are active in training and the grantee is no longer incurring eligible expenses and submitting requests for reimbursement. As mentioned previously, grantees have up to three years to spend their funds.
- **Active grants:** Grants where a contract has been executed and the grantee is undertaking training or other activities, incurring eligible expenses, and submitting required documentation for reimbursement.

From 2020 to 2024, 3,982 individuals enrolled in WCTF programs, including 2,201 in grants individuals that have been closed and 1,781 in grants still active as of June 2025. The number of enrollees and exits has steadily increased, and most participants who exited did so with positive outcomes. Turning to active grants, enrollment has grown sharply in recent years, especially in 2024, with the addition of HCBH Hubs Grants. These trends began during the COVID-19 pandemic so the growth may reflect the impact of extended and enhanced unemployment benefits, limited access to work opportunities, and restricted career-center services, among other conditions.

Table 4A. WCTF enrollees, total exits, and active participants (closed and active grants)

Program	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total	Compound Annual Growth Rate (2020 – 2024)
Closed grants							
Enrollees - Donnelly Grants	264	415	257	536	729	2,201	29%
Total exits - Donnelly Grants	208	397	285	461	757	2,108	38%
Positive completions	190	364	260	406	678	1,898	37%
Nonpositive completions	18	33	25	55	79	210	45%
Active participants - Donnelly Grants	264	471	331	582	850	2,498	34%
Active grants							
Enrollees	37	73	123	436	1,112	1,781	134%
Donnelly Grants	37	73	123	436	881	1,550	121%
HCBH Hubs Grants	–	–	–	–	231	231	N/A
Total exits	16	84	44	289	904	1,418	74%
Positive completions	11	70	43	289	708	1,121	183%
Donnelly Grants	11	70	43	289	614	1,027	173%
HCBH Hubs Grants	–	–	–	–	94	94	N/A
Nonpositive completions	5	14	1	81	196	297	150%
Donnelly Grants	5	14	1	81	184	285	146%
HCBH Hubs Grants	–	–	–	–	12	12	N/A
Active participants	37	94	133	525	1,267	2,056	142%
Donnelly Grants	37	94	133	525	1,036	1,825	130%
HCBH Hubs Grants	–	–	–	–	231	231	N/A

Note: Years shown in the table represent the state fiscal year. The total of 4,581 active participants may include duplicate counts if an individual's program participation spans more than one fiscal year. At the time this report was finalized, FY 2025 data was only available for 10 months; as a result, 2025 is not shown.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

4.5 Participant demographics

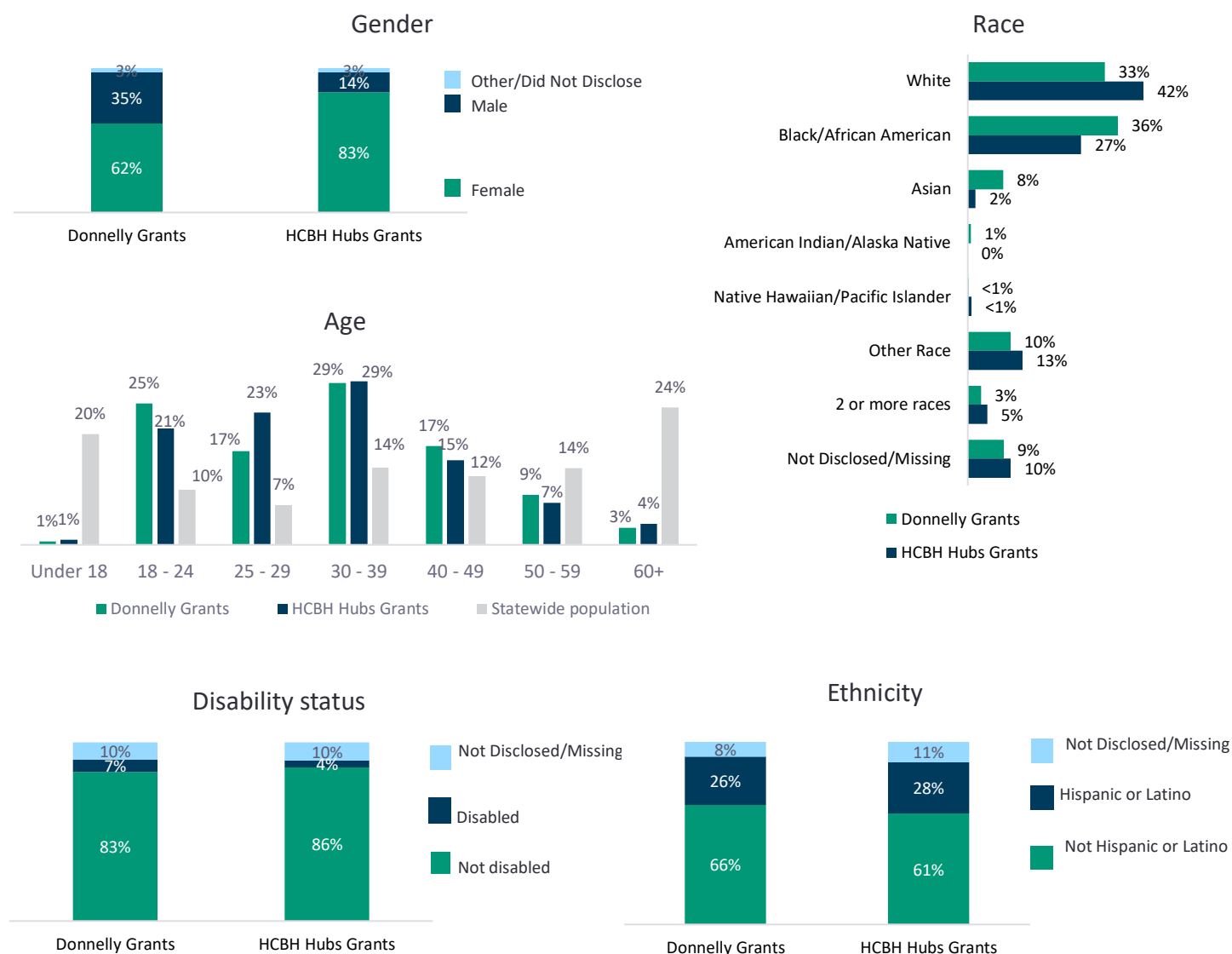
This section summarizes the demographic characteristics of participants exiting the WCTF program (i.e., both positive and nonpositive completions).³⁴ The data reflects the distribution for all participants completing training between 2020 and 2024 across all closed and active grants.

WCTF particularly appeals to younger adults, with 71% of Donnelly Grants participants and 74% of the HCBH Hubs Grants participants under the age of 40. Additionally, 25% of Donnelly Grants participants and 21% of HCBH Hub Grants participants are aged 18 to 24, reflecting the program's value proposition for individuals at the very start of their careers. Among WCTF participants, the majority are females. This contrasts with the statewide population, which is approximately evenly divided between males and females.

³⁴ Please refer to Section 4.4 for definitions of positive and nonpositive completions.

Black/African American participants, the largest racial group served by the Donnelly Grants, made up 36% of the total participants completing the program between 2020 and 2024. Only a third of Donnelly Grants participants who completed the program are White. For the HCBH Hubs Grants, White participants made up the largest share (42%), while Black/African American constituted the second largest racial group (27%). Hispanic/Latino participants made up 26% and 28% of Donnelly and HCBH Hub Grants participants. Additionally, 7% of Donnelly Grants participants and 4% of HCBH Hub Grants participants who completed the program identify as having a disability, which is less than the share of the statewide population with a disability (12%). This lower share could reflect reluctance among individuals to disclose that they have a disability.

Figure 4C. Participant demographics for WCTF program, 2020 – 2024



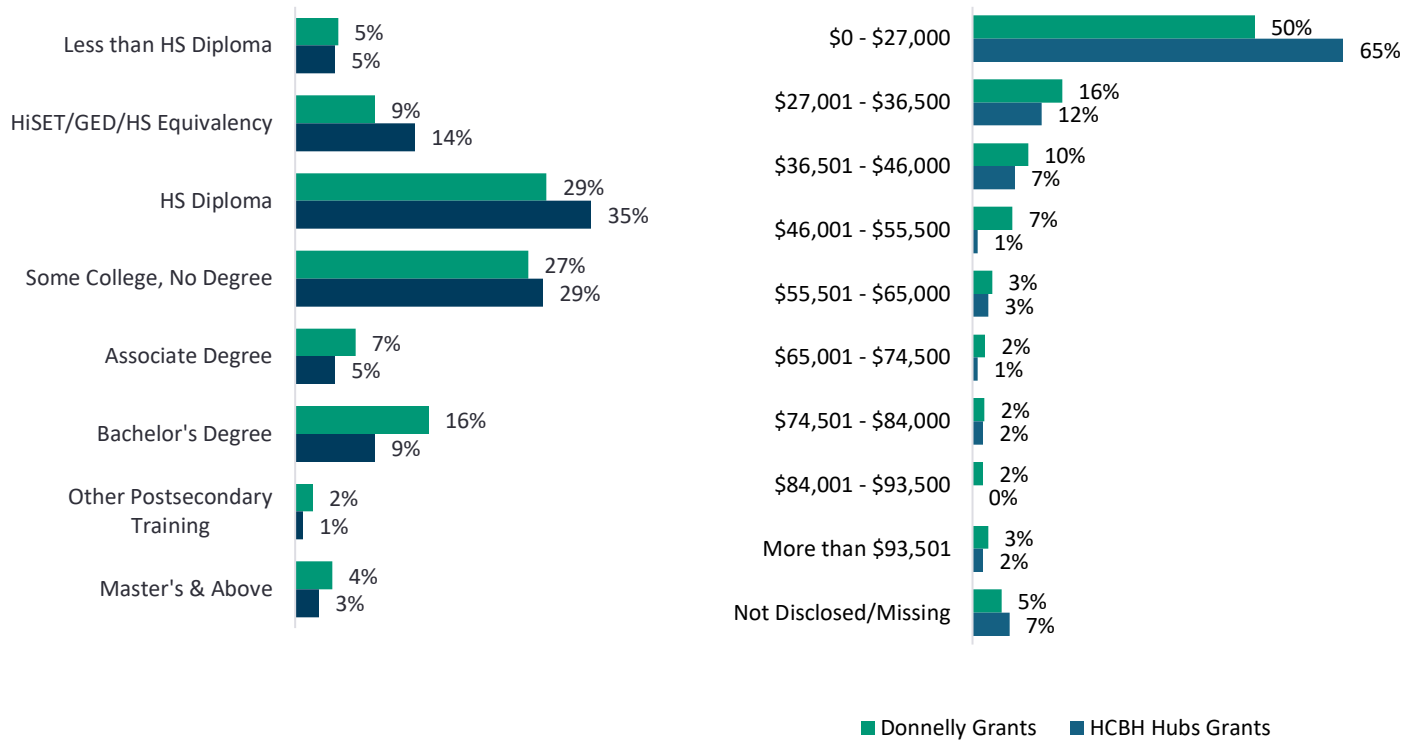
Note: Figures reflect participants completing the program between 2020 and 2024.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

Among participants completing the WCTF program, 22% in Donnelly Grants and 13% in HCBH Hubs Grants have a bachelor's degree or higher upon program entry, relative to the statewide population where nearly 48% hold a bachelor's degree or higher.

Half (50%) of participants in Donnelly Grants and nearly two-thirds (65%) of participants in HCBH Hubs Grants have household income below \$27,000. Further, 75% and 85% of participants in Donnelly and HCBH Hubs Grants, respectively, have a household income below \$46,000. In comparison, the median household income in Massachusetts is roughly \$105,000 thus showing that the WCTF program targets individuals from lower income backgrounds.

Figure 4D. Highest educational attainment level and household income for WCTF program, 2020 – 2024



Note: Figures reflect participants completing the program between 2020 and 2024.
Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

All participants of the WCTF program must be unemployed, underemployed (i.e., individuals earning less than 60% of the median household income for the Workforce Area in which they reside), or an incumbent worker.³⁵ A majority of enrollees in both programs were unemployed (52% in Donnelly Grants and 55% in HCBH Hubs Grants) while more than four-in-ten were underemployed prior to program participation. Roughly 1% of participants in Donnelly Grants are incumbent workers.

More than half (55%) of the participants in the Donnelly Grants and two-thirds (69%) of the participants in HCBH Hubs Grants received public assistance, while receipt of housing and childcare subsidies is less common. Individuals receiving public assistance reported receiving at least one of the following benefits:

TAFDC (Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children)

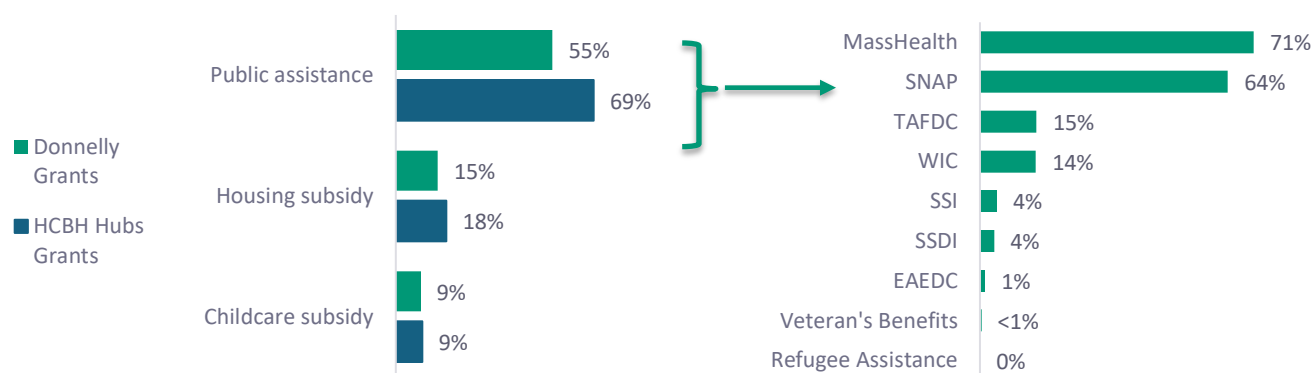
- SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)
- SSI (Supplemental Security Income)
- EAEDC (Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled, and Children)
- SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance)
- MassHealth
- WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children)

³⁵ Definition based on interviews with CommCorp staff and “Barriers to Employment” prepared by the EOLWD Department of Economic Research

- Veteran's Benefits
- Refugee Assistance (including Refugee Cash Assistance, medical assistance, Refugee Support Services)

Among the various public assistance programs, MassHealth and SNAP are the most common benefits: of the WCTF participants receiving public assistance, 71% are recipients of MassHealth and 64% receive SNAP.

Figure 4E. Use of public assistance programs and subsidies in WCTF program, 2020 to 2024



Note: Figures reflect participants completing the program between 2020 and 2024.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

4.6 Outcome – skill gains

This section summarizes the credentials earned by participants in the WCTF program. The analysis only includes data for positive completions (i.e., enrollees who successfully completed the entire training) and uses data from 2020 through 2024 across all closed and active grants.³⁶

CommCorp's internal data tracks credential attainment, particularly industry-recognized credentials, among WCTF participants, emphasizing the importance of obtaining requisite credentials for entry into the training's target occupations and sectors. An industry-recognized credential is either developed and offered by, or endorsed by, a nationally- or regionally recognized industry association or organization representing a sizeable portion of the industry sector.³⁷

While the WCTF program does not require credentials as part of the training, the program experiences a high level of credentialing due to training in specific sectors and occupations. From 2020 to 2024, the credential attainment rate (i.e., share of participants positively completing training that earned a credential) averaged 72% for the WCTF program. Over that period, the annual credential attainment rate varied between 54% and 83% as the number of participants earning certifications increased nearly eightfold during the period.

Table 4B. Credential attainment among WCTF positive completions (closed and active grants)

Program	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total	Compound growth from 2020 to 2024
Donnelly Grants	151	233	202	453	1,107	2,146	65%
HCBH Hubs Grants	--	--	--	--	55	55	--

³⁶ Please refer to Section 4.4 for definitions of positive and nonpositive completions and grant statuses.

³⁷ US Department of Labor

Program	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total	Compound growth from 2020 to 2024
Skills gained: Total [A]	151	233	202	453	1,162	2,201	67%
Positive completions - WCTF program [B]	201	434	303	695	1,403	3,036	63%
Credential attainment rate [A/B]	75%	54%	67%	65%	83%	72%	--

Note: Credential attainment figures presented in this table only reflect positive completions.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

4.7 Outcome – job placements

This section summarizes job placement trends among participants in the WCTF program. The data reflects only positive completions between 2020 and 2024 in grants that are closed as of June 2025. It means analysis includes only positive completions (i.e., enrollees who successfully completed the entire training) and excludes any nonpositive completions (i.e., enrollees who left the program before completing the entire training).

Employment outcomes for program participants are reported to CommCorp by grantees within 30 days of program completion date. Additionally, CommCorp also collects data from the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) on employment and wages for up to eight quarters after program completion. To conduct this analysis, EOLWD prioritized grantee-provided data and supplemented it with information from DUA when grantee-provided data was not available. In this report, any WCTF participant with wage data from either source is considered to have gained employment, as presented in Table 4C below. From 2020 through 2024, 16% of participants lack wage information from either source after program positive completion. This results in an average post-program employment rate of 84%, meaning that 1,596 participants out of 1,898 successfully completing the WCTF program between 2020 and 2024 were placed in employment after program. This is higher than the employment rate prior to program enrollment where 47% were underemployed or incumbent workers.

The reported employment rates based on the wage record match are likely understated. Unlike MDCS, CommCorp does not have access to State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) data; as such, it cannot track participants who found jobs, including those in military service, outside Massachusetts after completing their training. Further, DUA data only tracks wage-earners, not independent contractors. This leads to further underestimation of the rate given that a large portion of training conducted through the WCTF program are in contractor-heavy fields such as commercial truck drivers and CNAs.

Table 4C. Job placement for WCTF participants (closed grants)

Completion year	Number positively completing training	Number completed and placed in employment	Employment rate
2020	190	166	87%
2021	364	317	87%
2022	260	202	78%
2023	406	331	82%
2024	678	580	86%
Total, closed grants	1,898	1,596	84%

Note: Years shown in the table represent the state fiscal year. Employment figures represent the best available estimate based on current data. The actual employment rate may be higher if program participants have found employment outside Massachusetts. Figures include participants of both Donnelly and HCBH Hub Grants.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

4.8 Outcome – wage outcomes

This section summarizes the changes in annual wages experienced by participants in the WCTF program between enrollment and completion. While the WCTF program serves both unemployed and underemployed individuals, this analysis includes only underemployed participants and excludes those who were unemployed prior to the program. This exclusion is necessary because WCTF does not currently track wages over multiple time periods before program entry, unlike WIOA programs, which monitor pre-program wages for a longer duration rather than just at the point of entry. Including unemployed individuals—whose pre-program salary would be \$0—would overstate the changes in wage outcomes.

As with other programs, the analysis excludes individuals who have not found jobs after completing the program. Additionally, individuals whose post-program wages are reported solely from DUA data are excluded if those wages fall below the state minimum wage (\$15 per hour).³⁸ Participants still enrolled in the program are also excluded, as their wage outcome data is not yet available. For details on the methodology, refer to Appendix A.

In summary, the analysis below includes only participants who were underemployed at entry to the WCTF program and exited the program (whether through positive or nonpositive completion) between 2020 and 2024, across all closed and active grants, and who secured a job within 30 days of completing the program.³⁹

The results show a significant, positive increase in earnings among participants who exit the WCTF program and secure employment. WCTF participants who found jobs after completing the program experienced an average annual earnings increase of \$16,383. Among these participants, males experienced an average annual earnings increase of \$17,552, corresponding to a 62% rise, while females saw their earnings grow by \$15,356—a 65% increase. Those in the 60 and over age group recorded the highest dollar and percentage increases, with earnings rising by \$23,290 (152%). Participants in the 1st quintile of Massachusetts households benefitted from an average gain of \$17,896 (80%),⁴⁰ suggesting the program has a stronger impact on individuals in the lower income band.

Table 4D. Changes in real annual wages for WCTF underemployed participants (closed and active grants)

	Pre-program average annual wage	Post-program average annual wage	Average change in annual wage, \$	Average change in annual wage, %
All participants	\$25,188	\$41,571	\$16,383****	65%
Gender:				
Male	\$28,357	\$45,909	\$17,552****	62%
Female	\$23,613	\$38,969	\$15,356****	65%
Age group:				
Under 18		<i>N/A (small sample)</i>		
18 - 24	\$25,445	\$41,452	\$16,007****	63%
25 - 29	\$24,557	\$43,492	\$18,936****	77%
30 - 39	\$27,979	\$42,368	\$14,389****	51%
40 - 49	\$22,958	\$40,079	\$17,122****	75%

³⁸ Individuals without grantee-provided wages and with quarterly DUA wages below the state minimum wage (\$15 per hour) are removed because these individuals lack complete data for that quarter.

³⁹ Please refer to Section 4.4 for definitions of positive and nonpositive completions and grant statuses.

⁴⁰ The Massachusetts annual household income quintiles are defined as follows:

- 1st quintile: Up to \$36,620.
- 2nd quintile: \$36,621 - \$76,709
- 3rd quintile: \$76,710 - \$125,116
- 4th quintile: \$125,117 - \$204,728
- 5th quintile: Greater than \$204,728

50 - 59	\$23,407	\$39,614	\$16,207****	69%
60 +	\$15,311	\$38,601	\$23,290****	152%
Income quintile:				
1 st	\$22,423	\$40,318	\$17,896****	80%
2 nd	\$30,398	\$44,311	\$13,913****	46%
3 rd	\$30,131	\$42,694	\$12,563****	42%
4 th	No data			
5 th	No data			

Note: All figures are in 2024-dollar amounts. The sum of pre-program wages and the reported average change does not equal the post-program annual wage. The change reflects a statistically estimated effect, not a simple arithmetic difference between pre- and post-program values. Statistical significance levels are denoted as follows: **** = $p < 0.001$ (99.9% confidence), *** = $p < 0.025$ (97.5% confidence), ** = $p < 0.05$ (95% confidence), * = $p < 0.10$ (90% confidence).

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

4.9 Wage outcomes: completers vs. non-completers

While the observed increases in wages in the WCTF program (described in 4.8) are statistically significant, the analysis does not include a counterfactual comparison—assessing what earnings might have been if participants had not enrolled in the program but still found employment.⁴¹

As already mentioned in the MDCS section, an ideal counterfactual would involve tracking a matched group of trainees (the “treatment group”) and non-trainees (the “control” group) over time, controlling for variables such as age, education, prior work experience, and local labor market conditions in addition to other support programs. This longitudinal design would provide a more accurate understanding of the true impact of program participation on earnings and employment outcomes. However, such an approach is not feasible with current data limitations, as tracking of non-participants or identifying a synthetic control group and consistent longitudinal identifiers are not available across systems as data are currently collected and reported.

To partially address this gap, the evaluation team was able to use a proxy control group for the WIOA Adult and CTI programs: individuals who started but did not complete the programs. However, the current WCTF dataset does not include a sufficiently large proxy control group, that is, individuals who began but did not complete the WCTF program. As a result, the evaluation team was unable to apply the same methodology used for the Adult and CTI programs in the case of the WCTF program.

4.10 Long-term outcomes / impacts

Long-term outcomes and impacts are essential for assessing whether the programs are driving sustainable improvements in participants’ livelihoods as well as positive impacts for Massachusetts’ economy. These outcomes go beyond outputs such as participation and immediate results like job placements. They can be measured using the following metrics:

- Decreased reliance on unemployment benefits and public assistance
- Increased job security in technical fields
- Reduced shortage of qualified workers

Currently, CommCorp is unable to obtain data on how long WCTF enrollees remained in their jobs after the program. However, data on promotion rates is collected for incumbent workers for the WCTF program. Unfortunately, due to the recent addition of incumbent workers to the program, EOLWD did not have sufficient data points to fully assess long-term outcomes. Should CommCorp and EOLWD choose to evaluate these areas

⁴¹ The change in annual wages for WCTF participants between pre- and post-program periods is statistically significantly different from 0 change.

in the future, it will be crucial to collect additional data, particularly by tracking participants over time. This approach would provide a clearer picture of employment trends, retention rates, and the lasting impact of workforce programs, ultimately helping to guide future improvements.

4.11 Cost per unit and effectiveness metrics

Cost per participant

This section presents the cost per participant for the WCTF program. The data reflects all participants enrolling in the program between 2020 and 2023 across all closed and active grants.⁴² 2024 is excluded from this analysis as it mostly reflects active grants which have not finished enrollment.

By analyzing the program expenditures in relation to the number of individuals served, the cost per participant offers insight into the relative investment required to deliver services under the WCTF program. This analysis focuses on enrollees (those who signed up to receive training). Additionally, it reports the total costs of the WCTF program to the Commonwealth. Total costs include both program costs, through reimbursements tracked by financial status reports (FSRs), and state program administration costs which are calculated based on the requirement to allocate 10% of submitted grantee reimbursements for state program administration.⁴³ Table 4E provides the total costs per enrollee for the WCTF program allocation year of the grant.

The average grantee reimbursements and total cost per enrollee for grants from 2019 through 2023 are \$3,913 and \$4,304, respectively.

Table 4E. Cost per enrollee for the WCTF program (closed and active grants)

Allocation year	Number of grantees	Total reimbursements (\$M)	Total cost, including statewide program administration* (\$M)	Number of enrollees	Total reimbursements per enrollee	Total cost per enrollee
2019/2020	22	\$1.6	\$1.8	848	\$1,922	\$2,114
2021	9	\$2.4	\$2.6	689	\$3,483	\$3,832
2022	20	\$3.6	\$4.0	1,207	\$2,983	\$3,281
2023	28	\$6.8	\$7.5	944	\$7,203	\$7,924
Total	103	\$14.4	\$15.9	3,688	\$3,913	\$4,304

*Total costs are equal to total reimbursements multiplied by 110%. This reflects the 10% of reimbursements that CommCorp receives for administration. The total cost represents the total cost of running the program to the state.

Note: Years shown in the table represent the state fiscal year. Dollar figures represent real 2024 US dollar figures. While the first grants of WCTF were awarded in 2019, enrollment did not begin until 2020. As such, 2019 and 2020 are combined.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data.

As of April 2025, grants awarded in 2023 show an average cost of \$7,924, higher compared to the average \$3,059 for grants awarded between 2019 and 2022. Based on interviews with WCTF program staff, this difference is expected, as active grants often reflect early, front-loaded spending—especially in recent years like 2023—while participant enrollment is still ongoing. Over time, as more participants enroll and complete training, the average cost per enrollee typically declines and aligns more closely with closed grant levels (see 2019 through 2022).

⁴² Please refer to Section 4.4 for definitions of grant statuses.

⁴³ Please refer to Section 2.2.2 for information on the distribution of grant funding.

Cost effectiveness

This section presents the estimates of cost-effectiveness for the WCTF program. The data reflects all participants exiting the WCTF program (i.e., both positive and nonpositive completions) between 2020 and 2024 across all closed and active grants.⁴⁴

The most widely used methods to assess the cost-effectiveness of a social program are through cost-benefit analysis and the calculation of a cost-effectiveness ratio. Total costs should account for both direct and indirect expenses, while benefits should capture the gains experienced by participants and the broader society, both in the short and long term. By subtracting total costs from total benefits, the net benefit of a program can be determined. The cost-effectiveness ratio then provides a clear metric, showing how much it costs to achieve a given outcome for each program.

To evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the WCTF program, EOLWD estimated costs and benefits as follows:

- **Benefit:** The benefit calculation encompassed both primary and secondary gains for participants and governments, including the Commonwealth of Massachusetts government. Primary benefits were measured as increases in earnings for program participants. Secondary benefits included benefits for the government resulting from reduced reliance on public assistance programs, such as unemployment insurance, SNAP, and Medicaid. Additional secondary benefits stemmed from increased tax revenue due to higher earnings, based on the Massachusetts personal income tax rate of 5%. While benefit estimates are often calculated for both the short and long term (discounted to present value), this analysis focused on near-term outcomes to keep estimates straightforward and conservative.
- **Cost.** The analysis included all program costs for closed grants, particularly program expenses reimbursed to grantees and statewide program administration costs. Instead of simply using the total appropriations for the program, the assessment aimed to closely align reported spending with outcome data. Therefore, both the total spending reimbursed to WCTF grantees and the resulting state program administration costs were used to calculate aggregated costs. Because only closed grants are included, total costs in this analysis are smaller than the total costs cited above in the analysis of cost per enrollee.

Table 4F presents the results of net benefit calculations and the cost-effectiveness ratio for the WCTF program. The WCTF program shows a net gain in financial outcomes for society and a positive rate of return, with a cost-effectiveness ratio of 3.39—meaning every dollar spent corresponds to \$3.39 in value. Participants gained \$70.0 million in increased earnings. Benefits accrue to the government from reduced spending on unemployment insurance (\$3.3 million), SNAP (\$2.0 million), and Medicaid (\$4.4 million), along with increased state tax revenue of \$3.5 million. Altogether, the total benefits amount to \$83.3 million. On the cost side, the government incurs \$22.3 million in reimbursements to grantees and \$2.2 million in statewide program administrative costs, totaling \$24.6 million.

Table 4F. Cost-benefit assessment for WCTF, \$ in millions (closed and active grants)

	Participants	Government	Society
Benefits			
Increased earnings	\$70.0	\$0.0	\$70.0
Reduction of unemployment benefits	\$0.0	\$3.3	\$3.3
Reduction of SNAP benefits	\$0.0	\$2.0	\$2.0
Reduction of Medicaid benefits	\$0.0	\$4.4	\$4.4

⁴⁴ Please refer to Section 4.4 for definitions of positive and nonpositive completions and grant statuses.

Increased tax revenue	\$0.0	\$3.5	\$3.5
Total WCTF benefits	\$70.0	\$13.3	\$83.3
Costs			
Grantee reimbursements	\$0.0	\$22.3	\$22.3
Statewide program administration	\$0.0	\$2.2	\$2.2
Total WCTF costs	\$0.0	\$24.6	\$24.6
WCTF net gains	\$70.0	-\$11.3	\$58.7
Cost effectiveness ratio	-	-	3.39

Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding. Figures reflect participants completing the WCTF program between 2020 and 2024.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data.

4.12 Key findings

- WCTF, first established in 2006, invests in demand-driven programs that are designed by industry sector partnerships to provide training, wraparound services, and support job placement.** CommCorp issues RFPs which Lead Applicants use to apply for funding. Applications are evaluated based on their past experience, partner engagement (including employers), program design, and proposed budget information. The applicant's proposal serves as the foundation for the grant's statement of work.
- From FY 2019 to FY 2025, the WCTF program received \$111.5 million in state and federal funding, including \$37.5 million in one-time funds related to the Commonwealth's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.** Of this total, approximately \$100.3 million was allocated to program-specific costs, which were available for grant applicants. The remaining 10% of total funding was allocated to statewide administrative costs. During this period, \$83.8 million was awarded to grantees, including \$82.5 million to Donnelly and HCBH Hubs grants. As of 2025, 84% of the total available funds for grants have been awarded.
- The total costs of the Donnelly and HCBH Hub programs between 2019 and 2024 amount to \$66.3 million.** This includes approximately \$22.3 million in reimbursements already submitted by grantees out of the \$66.3 million awarded. The largest share of grantee spending goes to staff salaries and fringe benefits (48%), followed by other program costs (30%). Grantees have up to three years to complete their training and spend the funding.
- The WCTF program has shown significant growth in participant engagement, reflecting an increasing demand for employment services.** From 2020 to 2024, the number of enrollees in Donnelly Grants increased from 301 to 1,610. This growth is further evidenced by an increase in the total number of active participants, rising from 301 in 2020 to 1,886 in 2024. The HCBH Hubs program, which awarded one-time funds in 2024, had 231 enrollees. These trends began during the COVID-19 pandemic so the growth may reflect the impact of extended and enhanced unemployment benefits, limited access to work opportunities, and restricted career-center services, among other conditions.
- The WCTF program primarily serves individuals who are generally younger, mostly female, more racially and ethnically diverse, and more economically disadvantaged than the statewide average.** Over 60% of participants in Donnelly Grants and over 80% in HCBH Hubs Grants are female. 36% of Donnelly Grant participants are Black/African American, compared to 27% of HCBH Hubs Grant participants. 33% of Donnelly Grant participants are White, compared to 42% of HCBH Hubs participants. Between 25% - 30% of participants in both programs are Hispanic or Latino. Most (69%) come from households earning less than \$46,000, and 38% receive public assistance. Only 11% have a bachelor's degree or higher.
- The WCTF program's credential attainment rate averaged 72% from 2020 to 2024.** The credential attainment rate varied significantly year-over-year, with a high in 2024 of 84% of participants receiving a

credential, compared to only 54% in 2021. The number of participants receiving a credential in Donnelly Grant- sponsored programs increased significantly from 151 in 2020 to 1,107 in 2024, which represents an annual growth of 65%.

7. **Closed WCTF grants achieved an average employment rate of 84% between 2020 and 2024.** The employment rate remained relatively constant over these four years: in 2020, the employment rate was 87% and in 2024, the employment rate was 86% for participants in closed grants. The post-training rate is higher than the employment rate prior to program enrollment where 47% were underemployed or an incumbent worker.
8. **Underemployed participants experienced positive wage growth after exit, with an average increase in annual wages of nearly \$16,400.** Across closed and active grants, average annual earnings for underemployed participants were \$25,200 prior to entry, however earnings rose sharply to over \$41,500 after exiting the WCTF program. While men experienced larger wage increases than women (\$17,552 vs. \$15,356), both genders achieved roughly the same proportional increase (62% for men vs. 65% for women). The largest earnings boost was among participants aged 60 and older who saw an increase of over \$23,290 (or 152%). The program also significantly benefited those in the lowest income quintile, with an average increase of \$17,896.
9. **The average cost per WCTF enrollee between 2019 and 2023 is \$4,304 which includes both grantee reimbursements and resulting statewide administrative costs.** From 2019 through 2022, the total cost per enrollee does not exceed \$4,000. However, in more recent years, the total cost per enrollee is higher, as active grants reflect early, front-loading spending. As more participants complete training in these active grants, the per-capita costs are expected to decline.
10. **The WCTF program has generated a positive financial return for society, with a cost-effectiveness ratio of 3.39, meaning every dollar spent produced \$3.39 in value.** Participants gained \$70 million in increased earnings with no personal costs, while estimated government savings on public assistance and increased tax revenues totaled \$13.3 million. These gains are compared to total costs of \$24.6 million yielding a net gain of \$58.7 million in private plus societal benefits.

Section 5: Career Technical Initiative

5.1 Grant application and award process

CTI, like WCTF, is mainly funded by the Commonwealth through state annual appropriations. After the Massachusetts Legislature sets CTI's annual budget, CommCorp issues Requests for Proposals (RFPs), sometimes in multiple rounds if demand is high.

Once an RFP is released, Lead Applicants can submit proposals; see Section 5.2 for details.⁴⁵ Application requirements have stayed largely consistent from Round 1 to Round 10. For example, in Round 10, submissions included the following materials:⁴⁶

- **Application summary** including information for MDCS partners
- **Application narrative** including past relevant experience managing similar training programs, potential occupations, history of collaboration with MDCS partners, anticipated challenges, and plans for use of funding
- **Program budget** including an outline of all program costs
- **Letters of Commitment** including letters from the local MassHire Career Center and Workforce Board and from employers supporting each pathway by committing to interview participants completing the CTI program when they have openings to fill

Once applications for CTI Implementation Grants are submitted, documents are screened for completeness, conformity to application requirements, and timeliness. Eligibility is then evaluated by a review committee comprised of representatives from CommCorp (i.e., CTI program staff) and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The review committee evaluates applications based on the following criteria:

1. History of Chapter 74/N74 program delivery to adult or high school population
2. Past or demonstrated current collaboration with a MassHire Career Center
3. Evidence of employer partnerships
4. Program design that is clear and aligned with CTI program goals
5. Demonstrated capacity to fulfill grantee requirements and CTI program goals

Following the evaluation process, the review committee forwards the top candidate applications for funding to EOLWD, which, in turn, reviews and then submits the full recommendation package to the Governor's Office for final approval. The Governor's Office, through EOLWD, communicates approval notifications to CommCorp. As noted earlier in Section 2.2.2, CTI Implementation Grants can provide up to \$10,000 per proposed participant for selected applicants. Grantees can also apply for Start-Up or Expansion Funds as part of the Implementation Grant. Start-Up Grants can total up to \$40,000 while Expansion Funds provide \$10,000 per new proposed pathway.

⁴⁵ Interview with CTI staff

⁴⁶ Request for Proposals (RFP) for Round 10 of CTI

Applicants who are not awarded grants receive feedback on their evaluations and can meet individually with program staff for technical assistance. They are also encouraged to reapply in future rounds after addressing identified concerns and may receive support from CTI program staff during the pre-application process.

5.2 Description of educational and eligible service providers

CTI Implementation Grants are available to Massachusetts high schools with DESE Chapter 74 vocational programs that match adult training initiative occupations. These designated schools have the required equipment and instructors for daytime students and provide evening training as “Lead Applicants”.

Lead Applicants are responsible for ensuring that core program services are provided to program participants. Lead Applicants may choose to deliver some or all of these core program services internally, or they may partner with a MassHire Career Center or another third-party provider to outsource service delivery. Partnering with Career Centers helps align program goals with labor market needs and supports employer engagement. MassHire Career Centers offer strong collaboration with CTI grantees, improving coordination and delivery. Schools outsourcing key services must include a Scope of Work in the Memoranda of Agreement (MOA). Collaboration with MassHire Workforce Boards is also encouraged for regional workforce alignment.

Each Lead Applicant must secure Letters of Support or MOA from employers for each of the training pathways in the program. These employers agree to interview CTI participants for open jobs, and they may also help with recruiting, curriculum input, and providing internships or externships.

5.3 Description of grants awarded under the program

As outlined in Section 2.2.2, the Career Technical Initiative (CTI) offers Implementation Grants, Start-Up Funds, Expansion Funds, and Planning Grants. Since the majority of grants—over 99% of the total funding awarded since program inception in 2021—are Implementation Grants, this section primarily explains the process for awarding and evaluating Implementation Grants.

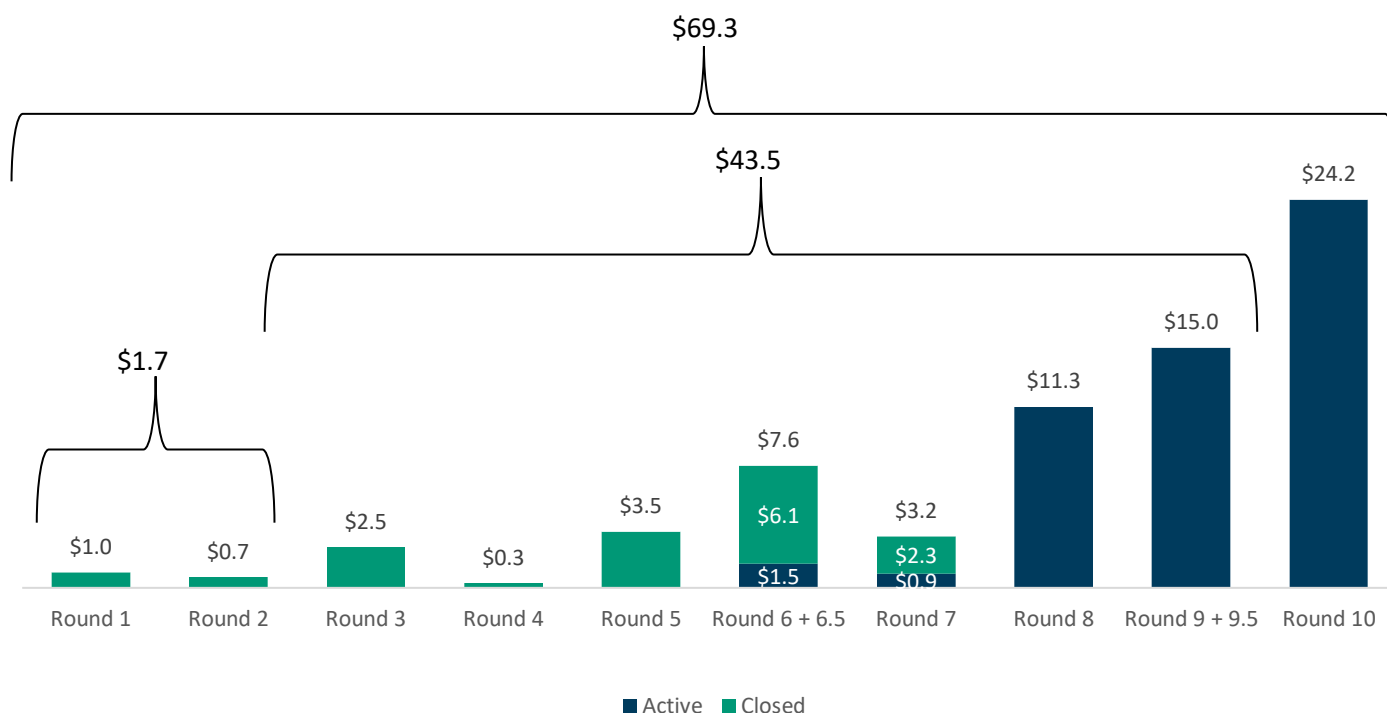
Funding for CTI Implementation Grants is structured into distinct rounds to facilitate organized distribution. As outlined in Section 2.2.2, a total of \$69.7 million has been awarded to date, with \$69.3 million awarded specifically through Implementation Grants. These grants have been distributed across 10 rounds since 2021, which includes intermediary rounds such as 6.5 and 9.5. Round 1 and 2 were funded using a pay-per-performance model. Rounds 3 through 10 used a cost reimbursement funding model.⁴⁷ The funding model was revised after Round 2 because the original structure placed a heavy upfront financial burden on Chapter 74 schools, limiting participation of schools statewide. Additionally, from an administrative perspective, tracking milestones, and reimbursing schools and their Career Center partners proved to be inefficient.⁴⁸ Of the total \$69.3 million in Implementation Grants awarded, only \$1.7 million was distributed in Round 1 and Round 2 reflecting the newness of the program and major infusion of additional funds in 2023. Between Round 3 and Round 9, CommCorp awarded an additional \$43.5 million in grants, primarily spanning fiscal years 2022 through 2024. However, because appropriations can fund multiple rounds and carry over into subsequent fiscal years, for evaluation purposes it is difficult to directly align rounds and grant awards and with specific appropriations or fiscal years. The most recent round, Round 10, awarded \$24.2 million—the largest amount awarded in a single round to date and an indication of the strong demand for CTI statewide. The Request for Proposals (RFP)

⁴⁷ The first Round 3 grants were awarded in FY 2022 (September 2021).

⁴⁸ Interviews with CTI program staff

for Round 10 was released in January 2025, and awardees were announced in August 2025. The Round 10 awarded grants will affect programming in fiscal year 2026.

Figure 5A. CTI Implementation Grants Awards by round and status (\$ in millions)



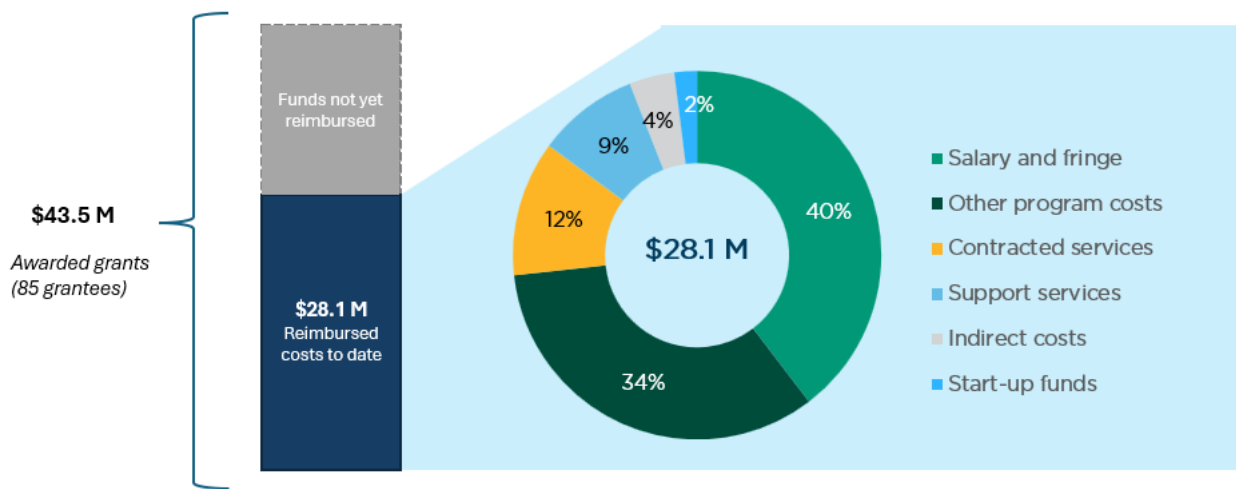
Note: As of April 2025, 24% of the total \$69.7 million grants have been closed whereas about 66% are still active. Most of the active grants are grants that are given out in 2024 and 2025.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data.

As part of the program, grants are awarded to Chapter 74 high schools in Massachusetts to provide training and placement services for unemployed and underemployed workers. Funds are then disbursed on a cost-reimbursement basis. Grantees are expected to submit monthly invoices using a standard template provided by CommCorp. Reimbursements are limited to allowable expenses incurred during the contract period. Grantees must maintain and, upon request, submit supporting documentation for all expenses. While there is a defined list of allowable costs, grants can cover training materials, salaries for instructors, support services for enrollees (e.g., transportation, childcare, etc.), and training incentives for enrollees, among others.

Of the \$43.5 million in awarded Implementation Grants between Rounds 3 and 9, CommCorp has already reimbursed roughly \$28.1 million to grantees. The largest portion of the total spending is related to staff salaries and fringe benefits (40%), followed by program costs, which include training materials, equipment purchases, and space rental (34%). Grantees have up to three years to complete their training and spend all their grant funding. Some grantees choose to buy training materials early, while others spread purchases over time, which can affect what the current spend-down figure is at any point in a grant. Therefore, spending on grants from Rounds 6 through 9 is still ongoing and some grants remain active.

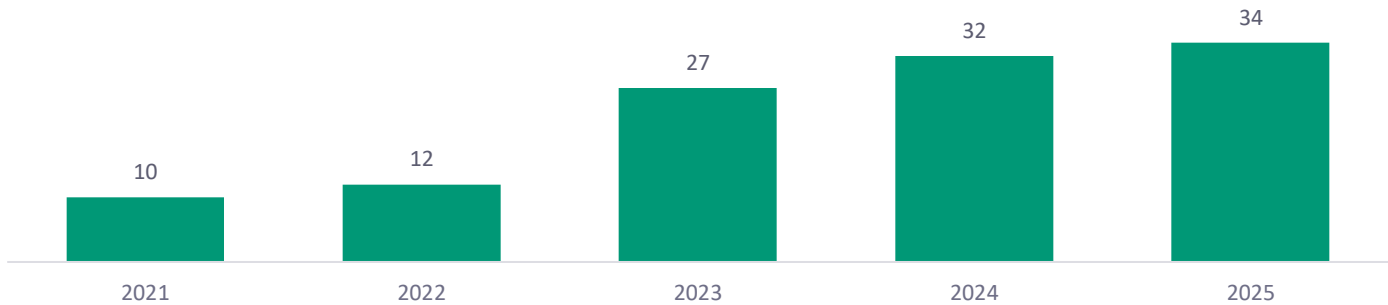
Figure 5B. CTI Implementation Grant reimbursements by expense category, Rounds 3 through 9, nominal dollars



Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.
Source: Analysis of CommCorp data.

In addition to increases in awards to grantees, there has been an expansion in the number of Chapter 74 schools served by the CTI program. In 2021, when the program first began, there were 10 participating vocational schools. Participation has grown each year since and, as of 2025, now stands at 34 schools out of approximately 89 (38%) vocational schools statewide with Chapter 74-approved programs.

Figure 5C. Chapter 74 approved schools served by the CTI program, 2021 to 2025



Source: Analysis of CommCorp data.

5.4 Program outputs

This section of the report presents the number of participants who engaged with various services offered through the CTI program between 2021 and 2024, regardless of the round in which they received support. At the time this report was finalized, FY 2025 data was only available through April 2025; as a result, 2025 is not included in Table 5A. Like in the MDCS and WCTF programs, Table 5A classifies individuals into three categories based on their stage in the program:

- **Enrollees:** Individuals who begin participating in the CTI program for the first time during the given fiscal year.

- **Total exits:** Individuals who left the CTI program during the given fiscal year. These individuals may not have necessarily started the program in the same year. Total exits consist of both positive and nonpositive completions.
 - **Positive completions:** Enrollees who successfully completed the entire training.
 - **Nonpositive completions:** Enrollees who left the program before completing the entire training.
- **Active Participants:** Individuals who receive services from the CTI program at any point during the given fiscal year, regardless of when they enrolled or exited. Participants are considered to be active from the time of enrollment all the way to program exit.

Throughout this report, we discuss results for closed and active grants. These grant statuses are defined as follows:

- **Closed grants:** Grants where no participants are active in training and the grantee is no longer incurring eligible expenses and submitting requests for reimbursement. As mentioned previously, grantees have up to three years to spend their funds.
- **Active grants:** Grants where a contract has been executed and the grantee is undertaking training activities, incurring eligible expenses, and submitting required documentation for reimbursement.

From 2021 to 2024, 2,943 individuals enrolled in CTI programs, including 2,180 in grants that have been closed and 763 in grants still active as of June 2025. For closed grants, the CTI program consistently achieved high rates of positive completions, with 81% of enrollees successfully completing training across all years. The number of enrollees and exits has steadily increased, and most participants who exited did so with positive outcomes. Turning to active grants, enrollment grew sharply from 2023 to 2024 as more funds have been awarded. Positive completions are expected to continue to rise in active grants as grant implementation continues.

Table 5A. CTI enrollees, total exits, and active participants, closed and active grants (Rounds 1 - 9)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total	Compound annual growth from 2021 to 2024
Closed grants						
Enrollees	181	346	933	720	2,180	58%
Total exits	161	281	812	821	2,075	72%
Positive completions	134	254	678	698	1,764	73%
% of enrollees who positively completed trainings	74%	73%	73%	97%	81%	-
Nonpositive completions	27	27	134	123	311	66%
Active participants	181	366	1018	926	2,491	72%
Active grants						
Enrollees	--	--	62	701	763	NA
Total exits	--	--	36	425	461	NA
Positive completions	--	--	32	364	396	NA

% of enrollees who positively completed trainings	--	--	52%	52%	52%	-
Nonpositive completions	--	--	4	61	65	NA
Active participants	--	--	62	727	789	NA

Note: Years shown in the table represent the state fiscal year. The total of 3,280 active participants may include duplicate counts if an individual's program participation spanned more than one fiscal year. Participants did not necessarily exit the program in the year in which they enrolled. At the time this report was finalized, FY 2025 data was only available for 10 months; as a result, 2025 is not shown.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

5.5 Participant demographics

This section summarizes the demographic characteristics of participants exiting the CTI program (i.e., both positive and nonpositive completions).⁴⁹ The data reflects the distribution for all participants completing training between 2021 and 2024, regardless of the round in which they received support across all closed and active grants.

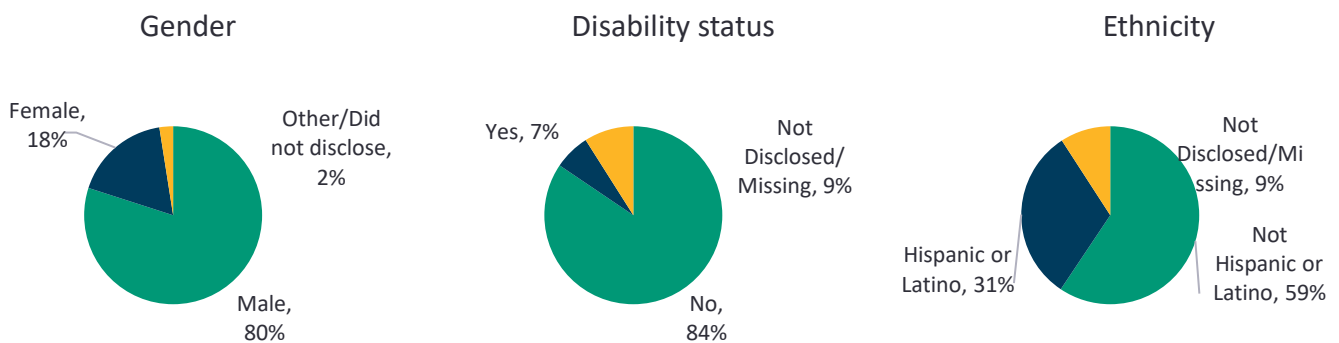
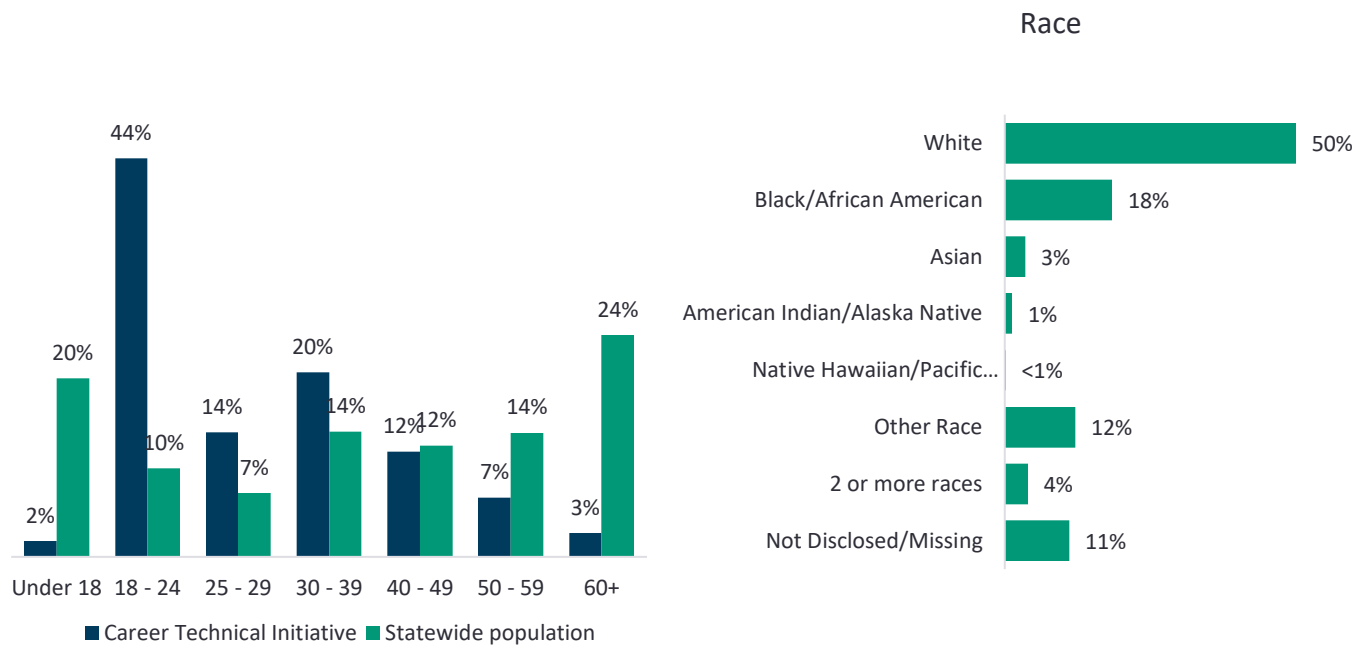
Like the WCTF program, CTI particularly appeals to younger adults, with 80% of participants under 40 years old. Additionally, a notable 44% of participants are aged 18 to 24, reflecting a focus on individuals at the very start of their careers. Among CTI participants, 80% are males. This contrasts with the statewide population, which is approximately evenly divided between males and females.

Half of CTI participants who completed the program between 2021 and 2024 are White. Black/African American participants, the second largest racial group, make up 18%; 31% of participants are Hispanic or Latino, 12% is from another race and 11% of the racial data is missing. Additionally, 7% of CTI participants who completed the program identify as having a disability, which is slightly less than the share of the statewide population with a disability (12%). This lower share could reflect reluctance among individuals to disclose that they have a disability.

Figure 5D. Participant demographics for CTI program, 2021 to 2024

Age

⁴⁹ Please refer to Section 5.4 for definitions of positive and nonpositive completions.

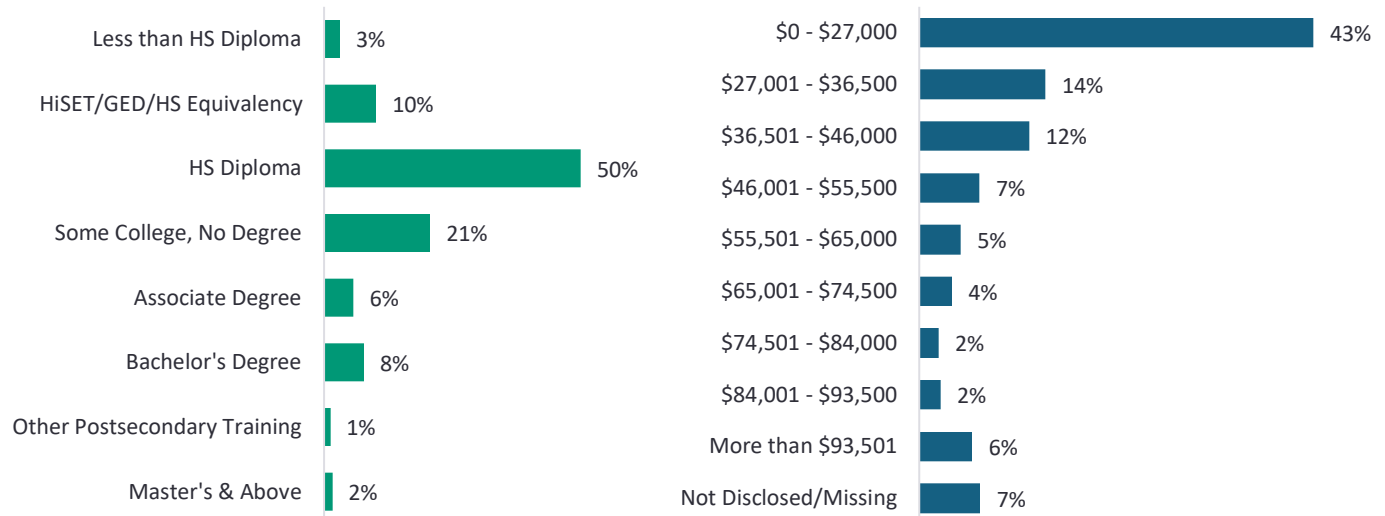


Note: Figures reflect participants completing the program between 2021 and 2024. Figures may not appear to sum due to rounding.
Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

Among participants completing the CTI program, only 11% have a bachelor's degree or higher upon program entry, relative to the statewide population where nearly 48% hold a bachelor's degree or higher.

More than four in ten participants in the program have household income below \$27,000. Further, roughly two-thirds of participants have household income below \$46,000. In comparison, the median household income in Massachusetts is roughly \$105,000 thus showing that the CTI program targets individuals from lower income backgrounds.

Figure 5E. Highest educational attainment level and household income for CTI program, 2021 to 2024



Note: Figures reflect participants completing the program between 2021 and 2024.
Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

All participants of the CTI program must be either unemployed or underemployed (i.e., individuals earning less than 60% of the median household income for the Workforce Area in which they reside).⁵⁰ Slightly more than half of enrollees were underemployed (52%) and 48% were unemployed prior to program participation.

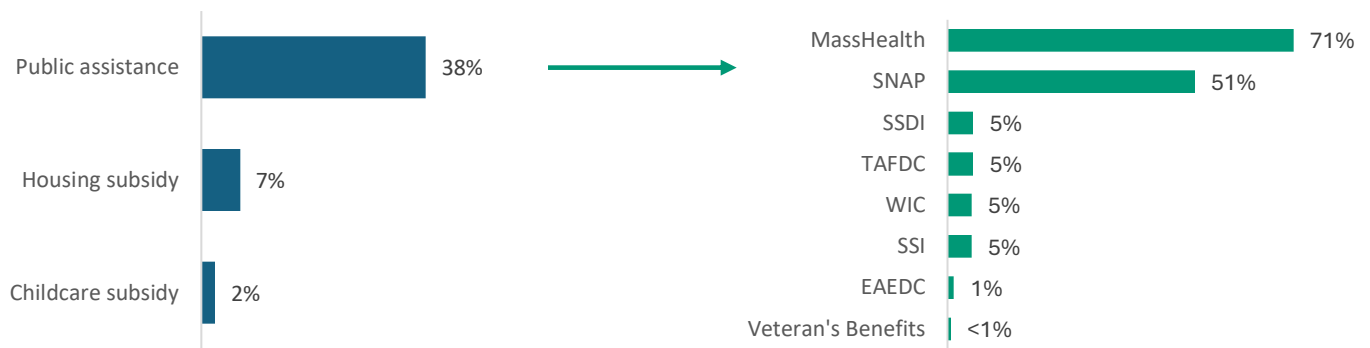
Over a third (38%) of the participants in the CTI program received public assistance, while receipt of housing and childcare subsidies is less common. Individuals receiving public assistance are receiving at least one of the following benefits:

- TAFDC (Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children)
- SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)
- SSI (Supplemental Security Income)
- EAEDC (Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled, and Children)
- SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance)
- MassHealth
- WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children)
- Veteran's Benefits
- Refugee Assistance (including Refugee Cash Assistance, medical assistance, Refugee Support Services)

Among the various public assistance programs, MassHealth and SNAP are the most common benefits: of the CTI participants receiving public assistance, 71% are recipients of MassHealth and 51% receive SNAP.

Figure 5F. Use of public assistance programs and subsidies in CTI program, 2021 to 2024

⁵⁰ Acceptable CTI Eligibility Documentation Listing



Note: Figures reflect participants completing the program between 2021 and 2024.
Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

5.6 Outcome – skill gains

This section summarizes the credentials earned by participants in the CTI program. The analysis only includes data for positive completions (i.e., enrollees who successfully completed the entire training) and uses data from 2021 through 2024, regardless of the round in which they received support across all closed and active grants.⁵¹

CommCorp’s internal data tracks two types of credential attainment among CTI participants. The first includes licensure credentials, such as Related Training Instruction (RTI) credit or Tier 1 Certification. The second includes safety credentials, which cover certifications like Hot Work Safety, First Aid/CPR/AED, and OSHA (both 10- and 30-hour). These categories help distinguish the types of qualifications participants earn through the program.

From 2021 to 2024, the credential attainment rate (i.e., share of participants positively completing training that earned a credential) was 100% for the CTI program. In other words, all participants positively completing the program earned either a licensure or safety credential. With respect to the two types of credentials, the numbers of participants earning licensure and safety certifications have both increased nearly tenfold between 2021 and 2024. Attainment of licensure credentials increased from 134 in 2021 to 1,062 in 2024. Likewise, the number of participants receiving a safety credential increased from 132 in 2021 to 1,057 in 2024.

Table 5B. Credential attainment among CTI positive completions, closed and active grants (Rounds 1 - 9)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total	Compound annual growth from 2021 to 2024
Licensure credential	134	254	710	1,062	2,160	99%
Safety credential	132	241	703	1,057	2,133	100%
Any credential [A]	134	254	710	1,062	2,160	99%
Positively completed CTI program [B]	134	254	710	1,062	2,160	99%
Credential attainment rate [A/B]	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	–

Note: Years shown in the table represent the state fiscal year.
Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

⁵¹ Please refer to Section 4.4 for definitions of positive and nonpositive completions and grant statuses.

5.7 Outcome – job placements

This section summarizes job placement trends among participants in the CTI program. The data reflects only positive completions from Rounds 1 through 5 of funding.⁵² All grants in these rounds are closed as of June 2025. Rounds 6 through 9 are excluded as not all participants in these rounds have completed training and, thus, lack available job outcome data. Round 10 is excluded because participants have not yet enrolled in this round.

Employment outcomes for program participants are reported to CommCorp by grantees 30 days after the program completion date. Additionally, CommCorp also collects data on wages from the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) reflecting employment outcomes for up to eight quarters after program completion. To conduct this analysis, EOLWD prioritized grantee-provided data and supplemented it with information from DUA when grantee-provided data was not available. In this report, any CTI participant with wage data from either source is considered to have gained employment, as presented in Table 5C below. From Rounds 1 through 5, participants without wage information from either source after program positive completion—16% of the total—are considered unemployed. This results in an average post-program employment rate of 84%, meaning that 831 participants out of 994 successfully completing the CTI program from Rounds 1 through 5 were placed in employment after program. This is higher than the employment rate prior to program enrollment where 52% were underemployed.

It's important to recognize that the reported employment rates are likely to be understated. Unlike MDCS, CommCorp does not have access to State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) data; as such, it cannot track participants who found jobs, including those in military service, outside Massachusetts after completing their training.

Table 5C. Job placement for CTI participants, closed grants (Rounds 1 – 5)

Round	Number completing training	Number completed and placed in employment	Employment rate
1	144	134	93%
2	64	57	89%
3	283	265	94%
4	15	13	87%
5	488	362	74%
Total, Rounds 1 - 5	994	831	84%

Note: Employment figures represent the best available estimate based on current data. The actual employment rate may be higher if program participants have found employment outside Massachusetts.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

⁵² Please refer to Section 4.4 for definitions of positive and nonpositive completions.

5.8 Outcome – wage outcomes

This section summarizes the changes in annual wages experienced by participants in the CTI program between program enrollment and completion. While the CTI program serves both unemployed and underemployed individuals, this analysis includes only underemployed participants and excludes those who were unemployed prior to the program. This exclusion is necessary because, like the WCTF program, the CTI program does not currently track wages over multiple time periods before program entry and only collects wage data at the point of entry. Therefore, including unemployed individuals—whose pre-program salary would be \$0—would overstate the changes in wage outcomes.

As with other programs included in this report, the analysis also excludes individuals who have not found jobs after completing the program. Additionally, individuals whose post-program wages are reported solely from DUA data are excluded if those wages fall below the state minimum wage (\$15 per hour).⁵³ Participants still enrolled in the CTI program are also excluded, as their wage outcome data is not yet available. For details on the methodology, refer to Appendix A.

In summary, the analysis below includes only participants who were underemployed at entry to the CTI program and exited the program (whether through positive or nonpositive completion) between 2021 and 2024, for closed grants between Rounds 1 and 9 and who gained employment within 30 days of completing the program.⁵⁴

The results show a significant, positive increase in earnings after participants exit the program. CTI participants who found jobs after completing the program experienced an average annual earnings increase of \$15,465. Among these participants, males experienced an average annual earnings increase of, corresponding to a 50% rise, while females saw their earnings grow by \$14,664—a 51% increase. Those in the 18 to 24 age group recorded the highest dollar and proportional increase, with earnings rising by \$16,536 (60%). Participants in the 1st quintile of Massachusetts households benefitted from an average gain of \$17,259 (67%).⁵⁵ This is more than the annual increase of \$11,096 (30%) and \$14,587 (48%) for the 2nd and 3rd quintiles, respectively, suggesting the program has a stronger impact on individuals in the lower income band.

Table 5D. Changes in real annual wages for underemployed CTI participants, closed grants (Rounds 1 - 9)

	Pre-program average annual wage	Post-program average annual wage	Average change in annual wage, \$	Average change in annual wage, %
All participants	\$30,097	\$45,563	\$15,465****	51%
Gender:				
Male	\$30,705	\$46,178	\$15,473****	50%
Female	\$28,579	\$43,243	\$14,664****	51%
Age group:				
Under 18		<i>N/A (small sample)</i>		
18 - 24	\$27,403	\$43,939	\$16,536****	60%
25 - 29	\$32,299	\$47,007	\$14,709****	46%

⁵³ Individuals without grantee-provided wages and with quarterly DUA wages below the state minimum wage (\$15 per hour) are removed because these individuals lack complete data for that quarter.

⁵⁴

Please refer to Section 5.4 for definitions of positive and nonpositive completions and grant statuses.

⁵⁵ The Massachusetts annual household income quintiles are defined as follows:

- 1st quintile: Up to \$36,620.
- 2nd quintile: \$36,621 - \$76,709
- 3rd quintile: \$76,710 - \$125,116
- 4th quintile: \$125,117 - \$204,728
- 5th quintile: Greater than \$204,728

30 - 39	\$33,699	\$48,523	\$14,824****	44%
40 - 49	\$33,890	\$48,099	\$14,209***	42%
50 - 59	\$34,649	\$44,435	\$9,786***	28%
60 +	N/A (small sample)			
Income quintile:				
1st	\$25,866	\$43,126	\$17,259****	67%
2nd	\$37,590	\$48,686	\$11,096****	30%
3rd	\$30,562	\$45,149	\$14,587****	48%
4th	No data			
5th	No data			

Note: All figures are in 2024-dollar amounts. The sum of pre-program wages and the reported average change does not equal the post-program annual wage. Results do not include individuals with DUA wages below the state minimum wage (\$15 per hour). The change reflects a statistically estimated effect, not a simple arithmetic difference between pre- and post-program values. Statistical significance levels are denoted as follows: **** = $p < 0.001$ (99.9% confidence), *** = $p < 0.025$ (97.5% confidence), ** = $p < 0.05$ (95% confidence), * = $p < 0.10$ (90% confidence).

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

5.9 Wage outcomes: completers vs. non-completers

While the observed increases in wages for the CTI program (described in 5.8) are statistically significant from no change, the analysis does not include a counterfactual comparison— assessing what earnings might have been if participants had not enrolled in the programs but still found employment.

The ideal counterfactual would involve tracking a matched group of trainees (the “treatment group”) and non-trainees (the “control” group) over time, controlling for variables such as age, education, prior work experience, and local labor market conditions in addition to other support programs. This longitudinal design would provide a more accurate understanding of the true impact of program participation on earnings and employment outcomes. However, such an approach is not feasible with current data limitations, as tracking of non-participants or identifying a synthetic control group and consistent longitudinal identifiers are not available across systems as data are currently collected and reported.

To address this gap to some extent, the evaluation team used a proxy control group: nonpositive completions. As explained in 5.4, these are individuals who begin but do not complete training in the CTI program. This allows for a comparative analysis between:

- **Positive completions:** Enrollees who successfully completed the entire training.
- **Nonpositive completions:** Enrollees who left the program before completing the entire training.

This comparison helps assess the impact of training completion on economic outcomes. Table 5E shows the impact of completing training in the CTI program relative to participants who start, but do not complete, training by gender, age, and Massachusetts household income quintile. The sample size for this analysis includes 1,764 individuals who completed CTI training and 311 individuals who began but did not complete the program.

Table 5E. Average annual wage difference, training completers vs. non-completers, closed grants (Rounds 1 - 9)

Segment		
Overall	\$4,528	***
Unemployed	\$9,842	****
Underemployed	\$1,774	
Gender		
Male	\$3,928	**
Female	\$3,823	
Other/Did Not Disclose	\$21,617	***
Income quintile		
1st	\$5,559	***

2nd	\$6,056	*
3rd	\$6,011	
4th	No data	
5th	No data	

Note: Dollar figures represent real 2024 US dollar figures. Statistical significance levels are denoted as follows: **** = $p < 0.001$ (99.9% confidence), *** = $p < 0.025$ (97.5% confidence), ** = $p < 0.05$ (95% confidence), * = $p < 0.10$ (90% confidence).

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data

Participants in the CTI program who complete their training see a statistically significant \$4,528 increase in their earnings compared to those who start but do not complete the program. In this analysis, statistical significance means that the difference in average earnings between the two groups is unlikely to have occurred by chance.

While comparing positive and nonpositive completions of the CTI program provides useful insight into the relationship between program completion and wage outcomes, it does not include a counterfactual to assess what participants' earnings would have been had they never enrolled in the CTI program. For more details on the limitations of this analysis, see Appendix B. Despite these limitations, the analysis remains informative. It provides initial evidence that participants who complete the CTI program tend to experience higher earnings than those who do not complete them. This suggests that successful program completion is associated with positive wage outcomes.

5.10 Long-term outcomes / impacts

As mentioned in Section 4.10, long-term outcomes and impacts are essential for assessing whether the programs are driving sustainable improvements in participants' livelihoods and broader societal change. These outcomes go beyond outputs such as participation and immediate results like job placements. They can be measured using the following metrics:

- Decreased reliance on unemployment benefits and public assistance
- Increased job security in technical field
- Reduced shortage of qualified workers

Currently, CommCorp is unable to collect data on how long CTI enrollees remained in their jobs after the program. Additionally, since CTI does not serve incumbent workers like the WCTF program, no data is collected on promotion rates. Unfortunately, due to data limitations, EOLWD did not have sufficient data points to fully assess long-term outcomes. Should CommCorp and EOLWD choose to evaluate these areas in the future, it will be crucial to collect additional data, particularly by tracking participants over time. This approach would provide a clearer picture of employment trends, retention rates, and the lasting impact of workforce programs, ultimately helping to guide future improvements.

5.11 Cost per unit and effective metrics

Cost per participant

This section presents the cost per participant for the CTI program. The data reflects reimbursements from Rounds 3 through 5 of CTI funding. All grants in these rounds are closed as of June 2025. Rounds 1 and 2 are not included because the pay-per-performance model used to fund these grants did not allow for tracking of reimbursements. Rounds 6 through 9 are not included because grants in these rounds are still active, and, thus, have not completed enrollments or submitted final reimbursement requests. Based on interviews with CTI program staff, current spending in Rounds 6 through 9 reflects early, front-loaded spending. Over time, as more

participants complete training, the average cost per enrollee typically declines and aligns more closely with closed grant levels. Finally, Round 10 is not included because contracts for these grants have not yet been finalized.

By analyzing the program expenditures in relation to the number of individuals served, the cost per participant offers insight into the relative investment required to deliver services under the CTI program. This analysis focuses on enrollees (those who signed up to receive training). Additionally, it reports the total costs of the CTI program to the Commonwealth. Total costs include both program costs, through reimbursements tracked by financial status reports (FSRs), and state program administration costs which are calculated based on the requirement to allocate 10% of submitted grantee reimbursements for state program administration.⁵⁶ Table 5F provides the total costs per enrollee for the CTI program by funding round.

The average grantee reimbursements and total cost per enrollee for grants from Round 3 through 5 are \$6,206 and \$6,827, respectively. This aligns closely with the \$6,000 maximum funds per participant available to grantees in these rounds.

Table 5F. Cost per enrollee for CTI, closed grants (Rounds 3 – 5)

Round	Number of grants	Total reimbursements (\$M)	Total cost, including statewide program administration* (\$M)	Number of enrollees	Total reimbursements per enrollee	Total cost per enrollee
3	7	\$2.2	\$2.4	319	\$6,906	\$7,597
4	1	\$0.2	\$0.2	17	\$11,785	\$12,964
5	8	\$3.4	\$3.7	597	\$5,673	\$6,240
Total	85	\$5.8	\$6.4	933	\$6,206	\$6,827

*Total costs are equal to total reimbursements multiplied by 110%. This reflects the 10% of reimbursements that CommCorp receives for administration. The total cost represents the total cost of running the program to the state.

Note: Dollar figures represent real 2024 US dollar figures.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data.

Cost effectiveness

This section presents the estimates of cost-effectiveness for the CTI program. The data reflects all participants exiting the CTI program (i.e., both positive and nonpositive completions) between 2020 and 2024 across all closed grants between Rounds 3 and 5.⁵⁷ Rounds 1 and 2 are not included because the pay-per-performance model used to fund these grants did not allow for tracking of reimbursements. Since the newer rounds were not closed at the time of the evaluation, we focused only on Rounds 3 to 5. As a result, the figures presented below should be considered early indicators of cost-effectiveness. To fully assess the effectiveness of the program, we recommend conducting a follow-up evaluation once Rounds 6 through 10 are complete.

The most widely used methods to assess the cost-effectiveness of a social program are through cost-benefit analysis and the calculation of a cost-effectiveness ratio. Total costs should account for both direct and indirect expenses, while benefits should capture the gains experienced by participants and the broader society, both in the short and long term. By subtracting total costs from total benefits, the net benefit of a program can be determined. The cost-effectiveness ratio then provides a clear metric, showing how much it costs to achieve a given outcome for each program.

⁵⁶ Please refer to Section 2.2.2 for information on the distribution of grant funding.

⁵⁷ Please refer to Section 5.4 for definitions of positive and nonpositive completions and grant statuses.

To evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the CTI program, EOLWD estimated costs and benefits as follows:

- **Benefit:** The benefit calculation encompassed both primary and secondary gains for participants and governments, including the Commonwealth of Massachusetts government. Primary benefits were measured as increases in earnings for program participants. Secondary benefits included benefits for the government resulting from reduced reliance on public assistance programs, such as unemployment insurance, SNAP, and Medicaid. Additional secondary benefits stemmed from increased tax revenue due to higher earnings, based on the Massachusetts personal income tax rate of 5%. While benefit estimates are often calculated for both the short and long term (discounted to present value), this analysis focused on near-term outcomes to keep estimates straightforward and conservative.
- **Cost.** The analysis included all program costs for closed grants, particularly program expenses reimbursed to grantees and statewide program administration costs. Instead of simply using the total appropriations for the program, the assessment aimed to closely align reported spending with outcome data. Therefore, both the total spending reimbursed to CTI grantees and the resulting state program administration costs were used to calculate aggregated costs.

Table 5G presents the results of net benefit calculations and the cost-effectiveness ratio for the CTI program. The CTI program shows a net gain in financial outcomes for society and a positive rate of return, with a cost-effectiveness ratio of 2.18—meaning every dollar spent corresponds to \$2.18 in value. Participants gained \$11.9 million in increased earnings. Benefits accrue to the government from reduced spending on unemployment insurance (\$0.6 million), SNAP (\$0.2 million), and Medicaid (\$0.5 million), along with increased state tax revenue of \$0.6 million. Altogether, the total benefits amount to \$13.9 million. On the cost side, the government incurs \$5.8 million in reimbursements to grantees and \$0.6 million in statewide program administrative costs, totaling \$6.4 million.

Table 5G. Cost-benefit assessment for CTI program, \$ in millions (Rounds 3 – 5)

	Participants	Government	Society
Benefits			
Increased earnings	\$11.9	\$0.0	\$11.9
Reduction of unemployment benefits	\$0.0	\$0.6	\$0.6
Reduction of SNAP benefits	\$0.0	\$0.2	\$0.2
Reduction of Medicaid benefits	\$0.0	\$0.5	\$0.5
Increased tax revenue	\$0.0	\$0.6	\$0.6
Total CTI benefits	\$11.9	\$2.0	\$13.9
Costs			
Grantee reimbursements	\$0.0	\$5.8	\$5.8
Statewide program administration	\$0.0	\$0.6	\$0.6
Total CTI costs	\$0.0	\$6.4	\$6.4
CTI net gains	\$11.9	-\$4.4	\$7.5
Cost effectiveness ratio			2.18

Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding. Only closed grants from Rounds 3 through 9 are included.

Source: Analysis of CommCorp data.

5.12 Key findings

1. **The CTI Implementation Grant supports workforce training programs in construction, skilled trades, and manufacturing, delivered by Chapter 74 high schools. Each approved grantee may receive up to \$10,000 per proposed participant.** To qualify, Lead Applicants—Chapter 74 high schools applying for funding—must demonstrate a strong program design, secure employer commitments, and establish partnerships with local MassHire Career Centers and Workforce Boards. Employer partners are expected, at minimum, to interview

CTI participants. They may also contribute to curriculum development, recruitment, and work-based learning opportunities, helping ensure the program remains tightly aligned with regional labor market demands.

2. **From FY 2021 to FY 2025, the CTI program received \$89.4 million in state and federal funding, including \$25 million in one-time funds related to the Commonwealth’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its resulting societal impacts.** Of this total, 90%—approximately \$80.4 million—was allocated to program-specific costs, which were available for grant applicants. The remaining 10% of total funding was allocated to statewide administrative costs. During this period, \$69.7 million was awarded to grantees across Rounds 1 through 10, including \$69.3 million in Implementation Grants and \$400,000 in standalone Start-Up and Planning Grants. Due to the additional \$25 million in ARPA funding allocated in 2023, it took time for the CTI program to fully distribute the expanded resources. However, with the increased level of awards in 2025, 87% of available funds (\$69.7 million of \$80.4 million) have been awarded by Round 10. The remaining \$10.3 million will be awarded in the subsequent rounds. The rollout was slower in the initial years reflecting the newness of the program and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, with relatively low percentages of available funds being awarded but by 2025, the pace of awards accelerated significantly indicating strong program uptake.
3. **The total costs of the CTI programs between Rounds 3 and 9 amount to \$45.3 million.** This includes approximately \$41.2 million in reimbursements already submitted by grantees out of the \$43.5 million awarded. Based on these reimbursements, CommCorp has received \$4.1 million to cover statewide administrative costs for the programs. The largest share of grantee spending goes to staff salaries and fringe benefits (40%), followed by program costs such as training materials, equipment purchases, and space rental (34%). Given that the funding mechanism was revised starting in Round 3 from a pay-for-performance model to a reimbursement model, and that Round 10 grants have just been awarded and are not yet operational, the total costs for those rounds are not evaluated in this report.
4. **From 2021 to 2024, the CTI program enrolled 2,943 individuals, including 2,180 in grants that have been closed and 763 in grants still active, demonstrating strong interest in CTI’s services.** Over this period, the number of enrollees (58% annually) and exits (72% annually) in closed grants has steadily increased, and most participants who exited did so with positive outcomes (81% of all enrollees). Enrollment grew sharply from 2023 to 2024 in active grants as more funds have been awarded.
5. **The CTI program primarily serves unemployed and underemployed individuals who are generally younger, mostly male, more racially and ethnically diverse, and more economically disadvantaged than the statewide average.** Nearly 80% of CTI participants are under 40, 44% are aged 18–24, 80% are male, 31% are Hispanic or Latino, and 18% are Black/African American. Most (69%) come from households earning less than \$46,000, and 38% receive public assistance. Only 11% have a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to 48% statewide.
6. **From 2021 through 2024, all CTI participants successfully completing training earned a credential.** The number of licensure and safety certifications awarded increased nearly tenfold, from 134 and 132 in 2021 to 1,062 and 1,057 in 2024, respectively. Over this period, most credentialed participants earned both types, and the total number receiving credentials grew by nearly 100% annually.
7. **Across closed funding rounds (Rounds 1 through 5), the CTI program achieved an average post-training employment rate of 84%, successfully placing 831 out of 994 participants who completed training.** Employment numbers have increased—from 134 in Round 1 to 362 in Round 5— while employment rates

have remained relatively consistent. However, the lack of access to out-of-state employment data may understate the actual employment outcomes. The post-training rate is higher than the employment rate prior to program enrollment where 52% were underemployed.

8. **For CTI program participants who were underemployed at the time of entry and later secured jobs after completing the program, average annual earnings increased by \$15,465—a 51% rise.** Across closed grants in Rounds 1 through 9, average annual earnings for underemployed participants were \$30,097 prior to entry, however earnings rose sharply to \$45,563 after exiting the CTI program. While men experienced larger wage increases than women (\$15,473 vs. \$14,664), both genders achieved roughly the same proportional increase (50% for men vs. 51% for women). The program significantly benefited those in the lowest income quintile, with an average increase of \$17,259. Additionally, counterfactual analysis comparing training completers with those who started but did not complete training shows that CTI participants who complete training earn, on average, \$4,500 more per year than non-completers.
9. **The average cost per CTI enrollee across Rounds 3 to 5 is \$6,827, which includes both grantee reimbursements and resulting statewide administrative costs paid to CommCorp.** This closely aligns with the estimated cap of \$6,600 per participant, which comprises the \$6,000 available to CTI grantees for these rounds and an additional 10% for statewide administration based on grantee reimbursements.
10. **The CTI program has generated a positive financial return for society, with a cost-effectiveness ratio of 2.18, meaning every dollar spent produced \$2.18 in value.** Participants gained \$11.9 million in increased earnings with no personal costs, while estimated government savings on public assistance and increased tax revenues totaled \$2.0 million. These gains are compared to total costs of \$6.4 million yielding a net gain of \$7.5 million in private plus societal benefits.

Section 6: Summary and recommendations

Recommendations

This section presents considerations for MDCS, CommCorp, and EOLWD to inform future program planning and enhance data collection efforts to strengthen the rigor of future evaluations and enhance program-based recommendations. The key considerations are first organized for MDCS and CommCorp, followed by overarching considerations applicable across both contexts.

Considerations	Rationale
MDCS	
Coordinate with the Massachusetts DUA and US Department of Labor to enable long-term tracking of participant outcomes beyond program exit.	Currently, MDCS’s data collection process is set to comply with PIRL requirements by capturing wage data for four quarters following program exit. While this supports analysis of short- and medium-term outcomes under WIOA and Wagner-Peyser, evaluating long-term job success requires data beyond one year—specifically on job retention and career advancement. MDCS should coordinate with the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) and US Department of Labor, the agency managing State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) data to assess the feasibility of extending wage data collection from four to at least twelve quarters post-exit, enabling more long-term evaluation.
Track hours worked in addition to total quarterly wages.	While the current practice of tracking participant wages on a quarterly basis provides insight into employment status, it does not fully capture the intensity of employment (e.g., full-time vs. part-time). To enhance this analysis, MDCS should track total hours worked per quarter both before program enrollment and after program exit. This would allow for the calculation of an effective hourly wage and help clarify whether changes in earnings (i.e., pre-program, vs. post-program earnings) are driven by higher pay or simply more hours worked.
Collect baseline data—starting with household income—to accurately assess participants’ economic status prior to program entry.	Currently, MDCS does not capture this information, limiting the ability to measure program impact against participants’ initial conditions. Establishing a baseline allows for meaningful tracking of outcomes over time. In addition to household income, other key metrics to track include home ownership, household composition, housing stability, transportation access, debt levels, health insurance coverage, and other indicators that reflect overall well-being beyond just employment and wages. Collecting and consistently monitoring these indicators will help ensure that workforce development programs are effectively serving their intended populations and driving measurable improvements.
Assess the tracking of distinct service interactions to better evaluate program effectiveness.	WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser services encompass a wide range of support activities, but current MDCS data collection does not capture the specific nature, intensity, or frequency of these interactions. If a participant engages with services five times during their program period, the PIRL records it as a single interaction—without detailing the types of services received. This lack of granularity makes it difficult to isolate which services or combinations of services are most effective. By tracking each distinct interaction—such as visits with job counselors, resume workshops, employer referrals, or training sessions—MDCS could enable more precise analysis of service impact and better inform program design and resource allocation.
CommCorp	
Prioritize improving the quality of post-program outcomes data provided by grantees.	Although CommCorp actively gathers outcome data from its grantees, there remains a substantial gap in the completeness of this information for participants in both the CTI and WCTF programs. Specifically, among participants identified in this study as having achieved positive job outcomes, only a portion have those outcomes documented by the

grantees. Instead, for 34% of CTI participants and 20% of WCTF participants, the available outcome data comes from the Massachusetts DUA. This reliance on DUA data introduces potential limitations, as DUA records may not capture all employment outcomes—particularly for participants who find work out of state, receive a contractor job, or whose employment begins partway through the quarter. To address this issue and strengthen the accuracy of future evaluations, CommCorp should prioritize improving the quality and completeness of grantee-provided outcome data. This could involve enhanced reporting requirements, better data collection systems, or increased support and training for grantees to ensure that participant outcomes are thoroughly and consistently tracked.

Coordinate with the Massachusetts DUA and US Department of Labor to enable long-term tracking of participant outcomes beyond program exit.

Currently, CommCorp receives up to eight quarters of wage records from the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) following program exit. While this supports analysis of short- and medium-term outcomes, evaluating long-term job success requires data beyond this time period—specifically on job retention and career advancement. CommCorp should coordinate with DUA and the US Department of Labor to assess the feasibility of extending wage data collection from eight to at least twelve quarters post-exit, enabling more long-term evaluation.

Consider the feasibility of tracking employment outcomes from grantees beyond the current 30-day benchmark.

Currently, employment outcomes for CommCorp program participants as of 30 days after program completion are voluntarily reported to CommCorp by grantees. However, measuring short- and long-term job outcomes requires beyond 30 days after program completion. The current 30-day data point is insufficient to thoroughly analyze the short-term outcomes of the CommCorp programs as jobseekers often take longer than 30 days to be placed in employment. Analyzing long-term outcomes requires data on the length of job retention and instances of job promotion beyond one year. CommCorp should explore the feasibility of increasing the period of time post-program outcomes are collected from 30 days to two years. Further, one measurement of post-program outcomes is not sufficient and may fail to capture increases in wages following employment retention.

Coordinate with the Massachusetts DUA to explore collecting multiple pre-program wage measurements.

Unlike MDCS, which collects wage data for three quarters prior to program entry, CommCorp data captures wages just at the point of entry. This limitation prevents a thorough analysis of wage outcomes for individuals who entered the program unemployed. Currently, CommCorp’s pre-program wage data is available only for underemployed participants and, for WCTF, incumbent workers; data for unemployed individuals is not tracked. To evaluate wage changes before and after CommCorp services for those entering unemployed, information on their most recent earnings prior to unemployment—ideally several quarters before entry—is needed. CommCorp should coordinate with DUA to explore collecting this data for unemployed participants.

Consider reevaluating the CTI program once it is more mature and Round 10 closes.

This report primarily focuses on outputs and outcomes from Rounds 1–5 of CTI Implementation Grants. Rounds 6–9.5 and the ongoing Round 10 are excluded from parts of the analysis. Therefore, the results presented for CTI should be considered preliminary. CommCorp should plan to re-evaluate the CTI program once these later rounds are completed.

EOLWD

EOLWD should ensure that each agency (i.e., MDCS and CommCorp) integrates its program performance and financial data systems—or at least establishes interoperability between the systems—to enable outcome-based financial analysis.

During the evaluation, data gathering was challenging for both MDCS and CommCorp because performance and finance data are maintained in separate systems, managed by different teams using distinct IT infrastructures within both agencies. This lack of interoperability makes it difficult to link spending to outcomes, limiting real-time assessment of program effectiveness without significant effort to merge finance and performance data. Therefore, an integrated system within each agency—or at minimum, interoperability—would allow internal teams to review key metrics such as cost per participant or employment per dollar spent in real time. EOLWD should also ensure that

Coordinate with the Massachusetts DUA to explore collecting unemployment insurance usage data for both program participants and non-participants.	each agency proactively invests in strong data and measurement processes, systems, and staff to strengthen these capabilities. Currently, across MDCS and CommCorp, EOLWD only tracks wage data for individuals who participate in workforce development programs. However, to truly evaluate the effectiveness of these programs, it is essential to establish a valid counterfactual—a comparison group of individuals who did not enroll but were active in the labor market. Due to the lack of data on non-participants, the analysis presented in this report was limited in its ability to fully isolate the causal impact of program participation. To enable counterfactual analysis in future evaluations, EOLWD should work with the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance to assess the feasibility of a data-sharing agreement that would allow for analysis of wage and employment trends among non-participants.
Track individuals participating across multiple workforce development programs to assess the cumulative impact of cross-program engagement.	Currently, data from MDCS and CommCorp does not capture cross-enrollment, limiting the ability to evaluate how combined participation influences outcomes. Individuals enrolled in multiple programs may benefit from enhanced skill development and increased exposure to potential employers, potentially improving job placement rates. To better understand the marginal effect of each program, EOLWD should initiate data sharing between MDCS and CommCorp to enable tracking of cross-enrolled participants.

Caveats and limitations

- The analysis relies on information provided by the Massachusetts Department of Career Services (MDCS), Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp), and other public sources. This is not an audit report. The data was accepted as provided and was not independently verified beyond reasonable consistency checks.
- This study is based on data available as of June 30, 2024 for MDCS programs and April 30, 2025 for CommCorp programs. Any developments or updates beyond that date may result in different findings or conclusions. Future outcomes may differ from those anticipated in this study due to changes in the underlying data, shifts in local, state, or federal laws, variations in public assistance take-up rates, or broader changes in the economic conditions of Massachusetts.
- Estimates are constrained by current data collection processes and the availability of public information. Limitations in access to out-of-state employment data may also understate actual employment outcomes.
- The results show a snapshot of the programs between 2020 and 2024. The approach used in this analysis shows the programs' outputs, outcomes, and costs over a specified period of time. The results do not reflect or attempt to estimate an expansion, contraction, any other changes or impacts of the workforce development programs.
- Results may be influenced by factors related to the COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2022), including extended and enhanced unemployment benefits, limited access to work opportunities, and restricted career-center services, among other conditions.
- Both MDCS and CommCorp previously received funds through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to support the services offered to participants during the pandemic. In this analysis, expenditures and allocations associated with ARPA funding are reflected in the figures presented for CommCorp programs. ARPA funds to support the WIOA and Wagner-Peyser programs were directly obligated to the local career centers and are therefore not reflected in the expenditure and allocation data in the report.

- The cost effectiveness analysis presented in this study offers useful insights into the financial outcomes of MDCS programs, but it does not include a robust counterfactual—i.e., what would have happened without the programs. As a result, benefits like increased earnings and reduced public assistance cannot be fully attributed to program participation alone. Broader economic trends or personal circumstances may also play a role. Without a comparison group or experimental design, the analysis provides a directional estimate of impact rather than definitive causality. Still, by quantifying costs and benefits across stakeholders, it remains a valuable tool for informing policy, guiding resource allocation, and shaping future program design.
- Unlike MDCS, the wage data that CommCorp receives from DUA excludes participants who find jobs outside Massachusetts. Tracking out-of-state job placements is not possible for CommCorp as it is ineligible to be designated as a Performance Accountability and Customer Information Agency (PACIA). Only organizations that evaluate services provided under the federal WIOA are eligible to be PACIAs. Status as a PACIA grants access to the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) and the ability to request data from its warehouse; therefore, CommCorp does not have and cannot gain access to SWIS.
- Due to data limitations, this analysis could not assess long-term outcomes or impacts, such as reductions in unemployment or public assistance rates, and long-term job retention. These metrics are crucial for understanding the effectiveness of workforce development programs and their lasting influence on participants' lives. Without this information, it is challenging to evaluate the true success of our initiatives and make informed decisions for future improvements. If EOLWD decides to evaluate these metrics in the future, it will be essential to collect data at the individual participant level. This approach would allow for a more in-depth analysis of the long-term effects of our programs, enabling us to track participants' progress over time. By gathering detailed information on employment status, job retention, and reliance on public assistance, we can better assess the impact of our interventions and identify areas for enhancement. Additionally, this data could support the development of targeted strategies to improve outcomes for participants, ultimately contributing to more effective workforce development initiatives.

Appendix A: Wage outcome methodology

This section outlines the methodology and assumptions used to calculate wage outcomes for participants in the MDCS and CommCorp programs. The analysis relies on wage data from various sources to ensure accuracy and completeness.

Data sources

1. MDCS Programs

- Wage data was obtained from the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL).
- For each participant, wages were collected for three quarters prior to program entry and four quarters following program exit, sourced from the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) and the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS).

2. CommCorp Programs

- Pre-program hourly wages were provided by the grantees.
- Post-program wage data was derived from a combination of hourly wages reported by grantees and quarterly wage data from DUA.

Definition of pre- and post-program wages

1. Annualization of Pre-Program Wages

- For MDCS participants, pre-program wages were calculated as the sum of a participant's earnings in the second and third quarters prior to entering the program. These wages were annualized by multiplying by 2.
- For CommCorp participants, grantee-provided hourly wages were converted by multiplying the weekly hours worked by hourly wage and then annualized based on the assumption of 50 work weeks per year.

2. Annualization of Post-Program Wages

- MDCS participants' post-program wages were calculated as the sum of a participant's earnings in the second and third quarter after exiting the program. These wages were annualized by multiplying by 2.
- For CommCorp participants, EOLWD utilized grantee-provided wages and hours worked where available, applying the same annualization method as for pre-program wages. In cases where grantee data was unavailable, quarterly wage totals from DUA were multiplied by 4 to estimate annual wages. Individuals are excluded without grantee-provided wages and with DUA wages below the state minimum wage (\$15 per hour).

Adjustment for inflation

- To account for inflation, both pre- and post-program annual wages were converted to 2024 real dollar terms. This adjustment ensures that the analysis reflects the true economic value of earnings over time.

Calculation of wage outcomes

- The annual wages prior to program participation and the annual wages following program exit were then used to calculate the change in annual earnings for participants after exit. Across both MDCS and CommCorp programs, only participants who gain employment after exit are included in the wage outcome analysis.
 - For the WIOA Adult program, the change in earnings is calculated for participants who gain employment in Q1, Q2, or Q3 after exit as the difference between post-program wages and pre-program wages. The pre-program and post-program wages are calculated based on the methodology included above. For participants who exit in 2024, only those who gain employment in Q1 are included in the analysis due to data availability. Participants who are still enrolled in the program are excluded from the analysis.
 - For the WIOA Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser programs, the earnings replacement rate is calculated as post-program wages as a share of pre-program wages for participants who gain employment in Q1, Q2, or Q3 after exit. The pre-program and post-program wages are calculated based on the methodology included above. For participants who exit in 2024, only those who gain employment in Q1 are included in the analysis due to data availability. Participants who are still enrolled in the program are excluded from the analysis.
 - For CommCorp programs, the change in earnings is calculated as the difference between post-program wages and pre-program wages. Only participants who gain employment after completing the program are included in the analysis. Individuals with post-program wages reported solely from quarterly DUA data are excluded if those wages fall below the state

minimum wage (\$15 per hour), as this indicates incomplete data for that quarter. Individuals who do not secure a job after the program are also excluded. Additionally, individuals who were unemployed prior to the program are not included because the WCTF and CTI programs do not currently track wages over multiple time periods before program entry, unlike WIOA programs, which track pre-program wages for a longer duration. Participants who are still enrolled in the program are also excluded, as their wage outcome data is not yet available.

Appendix B: Counterfactual analysis (wage outcomes: completers vs. non-completers)

Although comparing training completers with non-completers in the WIOA Adult (Section 3.9) and CTI programs (Section 5.9) offers valuable insights into the relationship between training completion and wage outcomes, this analysis is subject to certain limitations.

1. **No comparison to non-participants:** The analysis does not include individuals who never enrolled in the program. Without a control group of non-participants, the effect of the programs cannot be generalized outside of the group of individuals that have entered the programs.
2. **Selection bias:** Individuals may not complete training for a variety of reasons including unobservable motivations and characteristics that cannot be measured with available data.⁵⁸ These unobservable characteristics could impact the measured effect of training on wages. For example, completing treatment may be affected by an intrinsic tenacity of a person which is also correlated with finding a well-paying job.
3. **Limited control over confounding variables:** The analysis does not control for key variables such as age, education, prior work experience, industry, or local labor market conditions. These factors can significantly influence employment and wage outcomes.
4. **Extensive margin focus:** The current analysis focuses only on the extensive margin—distinguishing between training completers and non-completers—without accounting for participation intensity. Factors such as hours of training, type of training, achievement levels, and credential attainment can significantly influence program outcomes. Without capturing these dimensions, it's difficult to attribute the true causal impact of workforce development programs.

Despite these limitations, the findings of this analysis remain informative. They provide initial evidence that participants who complete workforce development programs tend to experience higher earnings than those who do not complete them. This suggests that program completion is associated with positive wage outcomes.

⁵⁸ There is another level of selection bias that should be mentioned. While the various programs are available to most individuals in need of support, it is unlikely that all eligible individuals choose to participate in the programs. This type of selection bias cannot be evaluated with current data and so the wage impact of the programs should be evaluated among those who have self-selected into the programs (as a “treatment”).

Appendix C: Cost-effectiveness analysis

Overview

- **Time period:**
 - **MDCS:** The MDCS program covers program expenses and participants who exited between FY 2022 – 2024 (three-year period).⁵⁹ The analysis is conducted separately for each year and then aggregated to the full period of analysis.
 - **CommCorp:** The WCTF and CTI programs cover program expenses and participants who exited between FY 2020 – 2024. The analysis is conducted separately for each year and then aggregated to the full period of analysis.
- **Population:**
 - **MDCS:** Covers participants who exited between FY 2022 – 2024.
 - **CommCorp:** The WCTF program covers all participants who exited between 2020 and 2024 across all closed and active grants. The CTI program reflects all participants who exited the program between 2021 and 2024 across only closed grants and between Rounds 3 and 5.

Methodology

Two specific metrics were used to estimate the cost-effectiveness of the five programs: net gains and cost-effectiveness ratio, which are described below.

1. **Net gains** represent the overall benefits generated by each program after accounting for their total costs. A positive net gain indicates that the benefits of the program outweigh the costs, suggesting that the program produces a positive return on investment. In the report, net gains are calculated as:

$$\text{Net gains} = \text{total benefits} - \text{total costs}$$

2. **Cost-effectiveness ratio** represents the total amount of benefit generated for every dollar invested in the program. A cost-effectiveness ratio greater than 1 indicates that the program yields a positive return on investment. The ratio is calculated as:

$$\text{Cost effectiveness ratio} = \text{total benefits} / \text{total costs}.$$

Note: In traditional program evaluation, a cost-effectiveness ratio represents the cost per unit of a non-monetary outcome (e.g., cost per job placement, cost per credential earned, or cost per participant served). However, in this study, applying the traditional definition was not feasible or meaningful for several reasons:

- **Heterogeneous program designs:** The workforce development programs differ substantially in their goals, activities, target populations, and intended outcomes. For example, some programs focus on technical training, others on wraparound services, and others on career placement.

⁵⁹ Please note that the time periods included in the cost-effectiveness analysis for the MDCS and CommCorp programs differ from the evaluation period included in Section 1. This is because we focus specifically on the years of data for which we have complete data to estimate both costs and benefits for each program.

- **Non-comparable outputs:** Because each program produces different types of outcomes, there is no single standardized unit (e.g., “cost per job placement”) that would allow for an apples-to-apples comparison across programs.
- **Risk of misleading comparisons:** Forcing programs into a uniform non-monetary metric could obscure their actual value, distort interpretation, or unfairly penalize programs designed to deliver more intensive services.

Given these constraints, this study redefines the cost-effectiveness ratio as:

$$\text{Cost effectiveness ratio} = \text{total benefits} / \text{total costs}.$$

Under adjusted framework, the ratio measures the monetary benefit generated per dollar invested, which allows for a consistent, comparable, and economically meaningful evaluation across diverse programs.

The methodology used to calculate the costs and benefits associated with the cost effectiveness analysis is described below. All dollars are nominal.

Benefits

In this analysis, total benefits are comprised of benefits to participants and benefits to the government, which sums up to total benefits to society. Benefits to participants include increased earnings. Benefits to the government include reductions in unemployment benefits, SNAP benefits, Medicaid benefits, and increased tax revenue. They are further described below.

1. **Increased earnings:** Increased earnings are calculated for each participant by subtracting pre-program wages from post-program wages. The methodology of calculating pre- and post-program wages is described below.

a. Pre-program wages:

- For MDCS participants, pre-program wages are the sum of wages from three quarters prior to entry. These wages are annualized by multiplying by (4/3).
- For CommCorp participants, grantee-provided hourly wages were converted by multiplying the weekly hours worked by hourly wage and then annualized based on the assumption of 50 work weeks per year.
- For all participants who start the program unemployed, their pre-program wages are assumed to be \$0.⁶⁰

b. Post-program wages:

- For MDCS participants, post-program wages are the sum of wages from the four quarters after exit. Participants who exit in 2024 do not have a full four quarters of post-program wage data available. For these participants, the total post-program earnings of participants who exit in Q1 2024 are annualized by multiplying by (4/3). For participants who exit in all other quarters of 2024, the average post-program annual earnings per participant from Q1 2024 is applied.

⁶⁰ Please note that this methodology differs from the approach used to calculate wage outcome changes in Sections 3.8, 4.8, and 5.8. In the cost-effectiveness analysis, the total increase in earnings reflects the full gain under the assumption that the counterfactual scenario is unemployment for participants who were not employed prior to entry. This methodology captures participants’ overall economic status and its impact on quality of life, offering a broader perspective on societal benefits. It accounts for macro-level economic uplift in addition to micro-level wage changes presented in the wage outcome analysis.

- For CommCorp participants, EOLWD utilized grantee-provided wages and hours worked where available, applying the same annualization method as for pre-program wages. In cases where grantee data was unavailable, quarterly wage totals from DUA were multiplied by 4 to estimate annual wages.
 - For participants who exit the program and are still unemployed, post-program wages are assumed to be \$0.⁶¹
- 2. Benefits to government:** In addition to increased earnings, benefits to government are calculated for each participant who exits during the analysis, which includes reductions in unemployment benefits, SNAP benefits, Medicaid benefits, and an increase in state tax revenue.
- a. Reduction in unemployment benefits:** First, the number of participants who do not return to unemployment insurance (UI) benefits is calculated as the share of participants who do not return to UI benefits (67%) multiplied by the number of participants who gain employment after exiting the program and were previously unemployed.⁶² The total reduction in unemployment benefits is then calculated by multiplying the number of beneficiaries not returning to the program by the average UI benefit per claimant in Massachusetts provided by the Massachusetts UI Trust Fund.
 - b. Reduction in SNAP benefits:** First, the number of participants who do not return to SNAP benefits is calculated as the share of people who do not return to SNAP benefits in Massachusetts (80%) multiplied by the number of participants exiting the program who received public assistance prior to entering the program.⁶³ The total reduction in SNAP benefits is then calculated by multiplying the number of beneficiaries not returning to the program by the average SNAP benefit per claimant in Massachusetts provided by the US Department of Agriculture Food & Nutritional Service.
 - c. Reduction in Medicaid benefits:** Like the reduction in SNAP benefits, first, the number of participants who do not return to Medicaid benefits is calculated as the share of people who do not return to Medicaid benefits in the US (91%) multiplied by the number of participants exiting the program who received public assistance prior to entering the program.⁶⁴ The total reduction in Medicaid benefits is then calculated by multiplying the number of beneficiaries not returning to the program by the average Medicaid benefit per Adult claimant in Massachusetts provided by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.
- 3. Increased tax revenue:** Increased tax revenue is calculated by taking the increase in earnings multiplied by the state of Massachusetts' individual income tax rate (5%).

In the Wagner-Peyser program, benefits are not estimated. This reflects Wagner-Peyser's limited scope—primarily job matching and resume support—which makes it difficult to confidently attribute wage gains or

⁶¹ This methodology differs from the wage outcome calculations in Sections 3.8, 4.8, and 5.8, which include only participants who gain post-program employment and exclude those without jobs (i.e., \$0 wage). For the cost-effectiveness analysis, it is essential to include all participants who exit the program, regardless of whether they gain employment. Otherwise, we risk overestimating benefits and underestimating costs to the state.

⁶² The share of individuals who return to unemployment insurance (UI) is estimated in a study of 7 US states (PA, NC, OR, IA, MT, HI, and NH). The study found that a third of displaced recipients of UI became repeat users. Therefore, two-thirds (67%) do not return to the program. Marios Michaelides, "Repeat use in the U.S. unemployment insurance system," *Monthly Labor Review*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, September 2014, <https://doi.org/10.21916/mlr.2014.30>.

⁶³ The SNAP churn rate (i.e., the percentage of applicants that were active SNAP recipients 90 days prior) in Massachusetts averaged 20% for the first 5 months of 2025. Therefore, we calculate 80% of Massachusetts SNAP participants will not return to the program. Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance. *Performance Scorecard: May 2025*. Commonwealth of Massachusetts, May 2025. <https://www.mass.gov/doc/performance-scorecard-may-2025>

⁶⁴ In 2018, 9% of US adult Medicaid beneficiaries eligible on the basis of their incomes that disenrolled ended up re-enrolling within 12 months. Therefore, we calculate 91% of adult Medicaid beneficiaries will not return to the program. Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission. *An Updated Look at Rates of Churn and Continuous Coverage in Medicaid and CHIP*. October 2021. PDF file. <https://www.macpac.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/An-Updated-Look-at-Rates-of-Churn-and-Continuous-Coverage-in-Medicaid-and-CHIP.pdf>

reductions in public assistance to its services. To clarify, if the same benefit estimation methodology used for WIOA programs were applied to Wagner-Peyser—accounting for increases in earnings, reduced reliance on public assistance (e.g., unemployment insurance, SNAP, Medicaid), and secondary benefits such as increased tax revenue—the estimated benefits would far exceed program costs.

Costs:

Costs included in the analysis reflect the total expenditure incurred by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts while providing services through the program. Costs are calculated as follows:

- a. For MDCS programs, costs include both employment services costs, which reflect expenses spent by local workforce areas on employment services, and total costs, which include employment services costs, as well as statewide administration costs, statewide activities, and other workforce innovation opportunity functions (and Rapid Response costs for the WIOA Dislocated Worker program).
- b. For CommCorp programs, costs included in the analysis reflect the total reimbursements tracked by financial status reports (FSRs) and state program administration costs which are calculated based on the requirement to allocate 10% of submitted grantee reimbursements for state program administration.