



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
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Field Operations Memo 2008-6
February 1, 2008

To:  **Transitional Assistance Office Staff**

From: **John Augeri, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations**

Re: **TAFDC – Jewish Vocational Services (JVS) Expansion of Vocational Education Programs**

Overview

Jewish Vocational Service (JVS) is one of the largest providers of workforce development services in the Greater Boston area. JVS provides a continuum of services, from pre-employment education and training, through placement, post-placement education and supports leading to career advancement. These services are focused on three key sectors:

- Hospitality,
- Health Care, and
- Retail.

JVS will offer TAFDC clients Customer Service, Culinary Arts or Careers in Medical Office Training Programs beginning February 2008. To allow the skills required for employment in the specified area, these programs also include Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) or Adult Basic Education (ABE), as needed. Entrance criteria is established by JVS and clients may begin services as soon as they are ready.

All programs also include job readiness and job placement services. To ensure job retention, JVS will provide case management services to individuals throughout the training, job search and the retention phases. In addition, JVS will track clients for up to two years after job placement.

Purpose of Memo

This Field Operations Memo informs TAO Staff about:

- where the JVS programs are being offered;
 - the vocational education programs offered by JVS; and
 - follow-up services offered by JVS.
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Programs and Program Eligibility

JVS will offer three vocational education programs:

- Customer Service Training Program (either leading directly to placement, or for some clients, as preparation for entry into the other two vocational education options);
- Culinary Arts Skills Training Program; or
- Careers in Medical Office Training Program.

There is a limit of 75 clients who may participate in these programs.

The JVS vocational education programs are being offered primarily to clients from the Dudley Square, Malden, Newmarket Square and Revere TAOs. However, clients from other TAOs in the greater Boston area who are able to commute to services at JVS may also enroll.

The Customer Service and Careers in Medical Office Training Programs will be offered at the JVS site located at 29 Winter Street, Boston. The Culinary Arts program will have a portion of the instruction offered at Madison Park High School (with the remainder of the instruction offered at the 29 Winter Street location).

Once clients are referred, JVS staff will work with them to determine which vocational education option best meets their needs and interests.

Assessments by JVS Staff include:

- an interview with program staff,
 - testing to determine English proficiency and basic skills, and
 - a manual dexterity test for culinary participants.
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JVS Program Descriptions

The JVS *Customer Service Training Program* is an open-entry, open-exit program (no set start/end date) serving two types of clients:

- clients who enter the Customer Service Training Program as a prerequisite to enrolling in the Culinary Arts or Careers in Medical Office Training Program; or
- clients who enroll in the Customer Service Training Program as their primary activity.

The Customer Service Training Program combines cultural orientation to the American workplace and the concept of customer service, job readiness training, and training in customer service principles and skills with intensive vocational ESOL instruction. Students will role play customer service and workplace situations while gaining the suitable vocabulary.

For some of the Customer Service participants who are not entering the other two vocational education tracks, JVS will work with employers in various industries to develop short-term programs customized to a specific employer with an immediate hiring need. Approximately 4-6 times throughout the year, JVS as part of the Customer Service Training Program will offer Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) programs of approximately 2-6 weeks, incorporating into the curriculum the employer's standard operating procedures, employee manuals, and JVS staff observation of the job.

This program meets the work program requirement. Enrollment in this program is open ended and may begin at any time.

To refer clients to the Customer Service Training Program on BEACON, AU Managers should select "Skills Training" as the activity on the ESP Referral Disposition window and select "JVS Initiative" as the resource. Referrals to these JVS programs can then be made on BEACON following established procedures.

**JVS Program
Descriptions
(continued)**

The *JVS Culinary Arts Skills Training Program* is operated in association with the Boston Public Schools using the state-of-the-art kitchens and facilities at Madison Park High School in Boston. Trained chefs are the instructors. This program prepares participants for employment in entry-level Food Service positions. Program components include: 4-week up-front Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) classes for those with limited English skills or a 4-week upfront safety and sanitation and computer skills class for English speakers, followed by 14 weeks of instruction in cooking, baking, ongoing VESL, and ServSafe (industry-recognized safety and sanitation certification).

This program meets the work program requirement. Enrollment in this program begins in April and August and lasts for 18 weeks. Potential participants may enroll in the Customer Service/ESOL classes while waiting for the next Culinary Arts start date.

To refer clients to the Culinary Arts Skills Training Program on BEACON, AU Managers should select “Skills Training” as the activity on the ESP Referral Disposition window and select “JVS Initiative” as the resource. Referrals can then be made on BEACON following established procedures.

The *JVS Careers in Medical Office Training Program* teaches clients Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, and Internet Explorer), medical terminology, anatomy, and medical insurance billing, preparing them for entry-level administrative positions in a medical office setting. Program components include 14 weeks of classroom instruction followed by five weeks of internship, in which clients gain work experience at one of JVS’ employer partners 4 days per week, returning to JVS on Fridays for additional instruction.

This program meets the work program requirement. Enrollment in this program begins in February, July and September and lasts for 19 weeks. Clients must demonstrate at least 8th grade English proficiency and 6th grade Math proficiency, be able to complete training, and have a clean criminal record. Clients may enroll in the Customer Service/ESOL classes while waiting for the next Medical Office start date.

To refer clients to the Careers in Medical Office Training Program on BEACON, AU Managers should select “Skills Training” as the activity on the ESP Referral Disposition window and select “JVS Initiative” as the resource. Referrals to these JVS programs can then be made on BEACON following established procedures.

**Follow-up
Services**

JVS Staff will work with clients to:

- develop resumes and cover letters,
- apply to appropriate positions (job search),
- practice interview skills, and
- monitor a client's progress once working.

During the job search phase, some clients may continue their internship to further build their skills or work experience. A computer lab is available and staffed five mornings per week to be used for job search activities.

Following job placement, JVS staff will check in weekly with clients to monitor progress at work, gradually decreasing these meetings over a 6 month period, as appropriate.

After 6-12 months of employment (depending on the individual's needs), cases are transferred to an Alumni Specialist, who conducts regular, less-intensive follow-up with clients for a period of two years.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478.
