

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 50-09
	DATE June 29, 2010

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
STATE WORKFORCE ADMINISTRATORS
STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARD CHAIRS AND DIRECTORS
STATE LABOR COMMISSIONERS
COMPREHENSIVE AND AFFILIATE ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER
DIRECTORS

FROM: JANE OATES /s/
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Encouraging Partnerships between the Workforce Investment System and Public Libraries to Meet Career and Employment Needs

1. **Purpose.** To announce a partnership between the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) encouraging collaborations between the workforce investment system and public libraries aimed at improving the quality and quantity of employment and training services to job seekers and unemployed individuals.
2. **Background.** ETA and IMLS entered into a partnership in October 2009 in recognition of the important roles that both the public workforce system and libraries have in addressing the varied employment-related needs of American workers, job seekers, unemployed workers, and employers. The goal of our Federal effort is to encourage libraries and the workforce system to collaborate in the delivery of employment and training services at the state and local levels, resulting in increased and enhanced employment and training services to job seekers that lead to good jobs, including career pathways and sustainable wages.

Demand for employment- and career-related services grew in the recent economic downturn and remains high today. Partnerships between the nation's public workforce system and the library system can increase the quality and number of access points for individuals to receive needed career information and assistance. For example, a March 2010 study sponsored by the Gates Foundation and IMLS estimates that 30 million Americans used a library computer to help address career and employment needs in the last 12 months. These job seekers reported using the library to submit online applications (68 percent), search for employment opportunities (76 percent), and work on their résumés (46 percent). Many of these people are regular library users. Three-quarters of these people reported using the library at least once a week. Given that job seekers are using libraries as a source of help, library staff can benefit from the expertise of the workforce system and the specialized tools and resources it has developed. Moreover, the workforce system can increase its reach and visibility by embracing

libraries as a partner. Many states and local areas see and are acting on the mutual benefits of collaboration between the workforce system and libraries.

Highlights of several current partnerships between the public workforce system and the nation's libraries are included in the appendix. Examples of formal and informal partnership activities include:

- Signing of memoranda of understanding or other formal agreements;
- Co-locations between One-Stop Career Centers and libraries;
- Inclusion of libraries as a stop on the route of mobile One-Stop Career Centers;
- Collaborating to train library staff about in-person and virtual employment and training resources available through the public workforce system;
- Collaborating to train public workforce system staff about the value of and opportunities for partnering with libraries;
- Using space available at a library to provide career assistance and employment services to library patrons (e.g., familiarizing patrons with career resources available electronically or in-person at One-Stop Career Centers) or to host career events (e.g., job fairs); and
- Sharing workforce and labor market information, including data on high-growth industries and occupations, from the public workforce system to libraries.

4. **ETA and IMLS Current and Planned Activities.** Activities planned and underway as part of this Federal effort include sharing of career and training information and tools among our two systems and dissemination of information about workforce-library partnerships. They include:

- Including library locations on America's Service Locator (www.servicelocator.org), a national online search tool. Now anyone can easily locate the nearest library along with a One-Stop Career Center or social service provider within their community.
- Sharing of information about in-person and online employment and training resources available through the public workforce system with IMLS and its strategic partners via appropriate Web sites, newsletters, conferences and other means.
- Collaborating with the National Governors Association, National Association of State Workforce Agencies, National Association of Workforce Boards, American Library Association, and Public Library Association to identify and disseminate examples of partnership activities between the public workforce system and libraries at the state and local levels.
- Planning (and archiving) a Webinar with the public workforce system and libraries to share examples of partnership activities for July 2010. Resources and information on state and local partnerships are available on the Reemployment Works! Community of Practice (<http://reemploymentworks.workforce3one.org>) on Workforce³One, ETA's online knowledge sharing, e-learning, and technical assistance portal.
- Training for librarians and other staff on the national electronic tools, including the workforce information portal CareerOneStop (www.careeronestop.org) and the

occupational database O*NET (<http://online.onetcenter.org>), is planned for August 2010. These tools are accessible to library patrons and other job seekers anytime at any physical location via the Internet.

- Sponsoring (by IMLS) a nationwide effort to train librarians on employment services through regional workshops for state librarians, development of curricula and tips for developing effective partnerships with the public workforce system at the state and local levels, and development of other resources.

5. Action Requested. State and local workforce investment boards, state workforce agencies, and One-Stop Career Centers are encouraged to establish partnerships with public libraries to complement and extend the career and employment services available through the public workforce system to job seekers and unemployed workers.

Additionally, the public workforce system is encouraged to participate in the Webinar on this partnership scheduled for July 2010 and to visit the Reemployment Works! Community of Practice (<http://reemploymentworks.workforce3one.org>) on Workforce³One to access or share examples of partnerships. Information pertaining to the date of the Webinar will be available on Workforce³ One (www.workforce3one.org).

6. Inquires. Please direct questions concerning this Training and Employment Notice to the appropriate ETA regional office.

7. Attachment. The attachment is Appendix, “Highlights of Existing Partnerships Between the Public Workforce System and Public Libraries.”