



Everything You Need to Know About WIOA and TOP

How can I get help paying for my job training?

The MassHire Career Centers can help you apply for training grants of up to \$8,000 to cover the cost of approved job training programs. These training grants are funded through the U.S. Department of Labor's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

If you are currently collecting Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits, you may qualify for up to 26 weeks of extended benefits while you participate in job training. This is part of a state initiative called the Training Opportunities Program (TOP), run by the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA).

Who is eligible for a WIOA training grant?

To receive a WIOA grant, you must meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

1. You are either considered a dislocated worker OR you are income eligible.
 - a. Dislocated Worker: You lost your job through no fault of your own and either received or are eligible for unemployment benefits.
 - b. Income Eligible: You're receiving public assistance (like SNAP, SSI, or TANF), or your household income is below certain limits. Your local MassHire Career Center can help you determine whether you qualify as income eligible.
2. You are at least 18 years old.
3. You are a U.S. Citizen or authorized to work in the U.S.
4. You have a Social Security Number and a Massachusetts ID or driver's license.
5. Your highest level of education is high school diploma, GED/HiSET, or associate's degree.

*Please keep in mind, you are NOT eligible if you have a bachelor's degree or higher, recently completed a job training program, or previously received a WIOA training grant.

Who is eligible for extended Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits through the Training Opportunities Program (TOP)?

To be approved for TOP, you must meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

1. You lost your job and are receiving (or eligible for) unemployment benefits.
2. You need new skills to get a job in today's market.
3. You have the basic skills needed to succeed in training.
4. You submit your TOP application within the first 20 weeks of receiving unemployment benefits.
5. You're enrolling in a full-time training program that's approved by the state (DUA).

*Please keep in mind, if you are past your 20th week of unemployment benefits, you've missed the TOP application deadline and are no longer eligible.

How do I find a WIOA-approved training program?

1. Visit the MassHire [JobQuest](#) “Locate Training” page
2. Select “ITA” from the dropdown under “Approved Course Type”
3. Select *your geographic region* under “Approved Funding Regions”
4. Hit the blue “Search” button at the bottom of the page

How do I find a TOP-approved training program?

1. Visit the MassHire [JobQuest](#) “Locate Training” page
2. Select “Section 30” from the dropdown under “Approved Course Type”
3. Hit the blue “Search” button at the bottom of the page

How do I apply for a WIOA training grant?

1. Research training programs on [JobQuest](#). Make sure your program is approved for ITA (WIOA) in *your geographic region* (each region has different approved programs).
2. Reach out to your *local MassHire Career Center* and let them know you’d like help applying for a WIOA training grant.

How do I apply for TOP?

1. Research training programs on [JobQuest](#). Make sure your program is approved for Section 30 (TOP).
2. Log in to your [MyMassGov account](#) and click “Apply for the Training Opportunities Program.”
3. Print the application and complete your section. Ask your training program to complete their section.
4. Upload your completed application to your MyMassGov account or mail it to the DUA at least 4 weeks before your program starts (review and approval can take 3-4 weeks).

The DUA manages and administers TOP (Section 30). Please keep in mind, the MassHire Career Centers are separate from the DUA. If you're collecting Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits and looking to apply for TOP (Section 30), you do NOT need to go through a MassHire Career Center.

Please contact the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) Training Opportunities Program (TOP) Unit with additional questions: 617-626-5521

What if I’m not eligible for WIOA or TOP?

Even if you are not eligible for these options, you can pursue training on your own. Please know you will have to pay out of pocket or find alternative financial support, like FAFSA.

How to find job training programs:

- Visit the MassHire [JobQuest](#) “Locate Training” page
- Google “training programs [specific skill or industry]”
- Explore opportunities through professional associations
- Check with your local community colleges