

# Action Item 3

## RAPID RESPONSE PROCESS MODIFICATIONS

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The Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 requires that up to 25 percent of the state's annual dislocated worker allocation be used for rapid response activities to respond to major layoffs and emergency situations. Pursuant to the state Workforce Innovation Act of 2000, the expenditure of these rapid response funds must be carried out in accordance with approved policies by the Agency for Workforce Innovation under contract with Workforce Florida. In order to obtain state rapid response funds, regions are required to complete and submit a *Supplemental Funding Request* form to AWI for review. Information provided by the impacted regions is used 1) to verify that there is an eligible target group of workers to be served, 2) that the number of planned participants in relation to the number of affected workers is reasonable given the circumstances of the dislocation event, and 3) that regional funds are not available to meet the expected demand.

Attached to this action item is a draft of the Agency guidance paper that identifies for regions the process through which supplemental funds may be requested. Included in this draft are two recommendations for change to the current policy:

1) As initially established by the predecessor State Workforce Development Board and subsequently approved by the Workforce Florida Board as reflected in the attached guidance paper, supplemental funding requests up to \$50,000 may be evaluated and approved for release by joint action of AWI and WFI staff without requiring formal board action. A proposal to increase the current \$50,000 threshold that joint AWI/WFI staff may approve without upfront Board approval up to \$200,000 has been received and is being offered for consideration by the Executive Committee.

2) In order to justify and substantiate the need for additional rapid response funds, regions must identify the companies and numbers of employees impacted by the dislocation event in the initial application, along with updated financial data for the region's dislocated funds. Subsequent to the award of state rapid response funds by the State Board, several regions have requested authority to modify the list of impacted companies initially identified, evaluated, and approved for receipt of the supplemental funding. The regional request may be predicated on the need to address training needs of other companies impacted by the same or similar event as identified in the initial application, or it may represent some separate event altogether. The question or issue that needs to be addressed by the Executive Committee is:

- a) whether the inclusion of these other companies and dislocations should be separately considered and evaluated as a new request with the return of unused funds from the original award back to the State Board for potential allocation to other statewide or regional initiatives, or

- b) whether a provision should be added to the existing policy to allow some level of flexibility in the existing award to provide the regions a 10%, 20%, or other designated amount that could be retained and used for these additional but possibly unrelated companies.

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### **NEEDED ACTIONS**

**Provide direction to AWI and WFI for modification to the existing Rapid Response supplemental funding process for the two areas noted.**