



2024.06.18.A.2

Strategic Policy

Title:	State Workforce Development Board Emergency Response Strategy
Adopted:	06/18/2024
Effective:	06/18/2024

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The CareerSource Florida network and its federal, state and local partners play a key role in supporting businesses and job seekers affected by hurricanes, natural disasters and events in which a state and federal state of emergency may be declared. As disasters become more frequent, severe, and complex, it is critical to ensure the demands placed upon the emergency management community and workforce development system are managed strategically and workforce system operations are structured to be both flexible and maximize assistance across the CareerSource Florida network.

This strategic policy describes the role of CareerSource Florida during disasters and states of emergency and provides a framework for coordinating services with federal, state and local partners including the Florida Department of Commerce (FloridaCommerce) and local workforce development boards.

II. BACKGROUND

To adequately respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters, the Division of Emergency Management (Division) is charged with the responsibility of maintaining a comprehensive statewide program of emergency management and coordinating its efforts with the federal government, with other departments and agencies of state government and private sector organizations that have a role in emergency management. To fulfill these requirements the Division established the State Emergency Response Team (SERT) composed of agency-appointed Emergency Coordination Officers and staff from state agencies, volunteer and non-governmental organizations that operate under the direction and control of the Governor and the State Coordination Officer (SCO) from the Division.

The SERT is grouped into emergency support functions (ESFs) that conduct coordination and completion of response and recovery activities. FloridaCommerce is the lead agency for ESF 18, which coordinates local, state and federal agencies' actions that provide immediate and short-term assistance to business and industry as well as economic stabilization. ESF 18 works with business and industry to identify available resources to meet the needs of the state and its citizens, before, during and after a disaster.

CareerSource Florida works with FloridaCommerce, local workforce development boards, local workforce development areas, career centers and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined Planning Partners to monitor and respond to natural disasters and other events that impact the workforce system. This collaboration includes but is not limited to surveying the needs of businesses and job seekers; providing training and guidance; directing the timely dissemination of information; ensuring simplified access to quality services and resources; accurately assessing damage; and delivering direct support and recovery assistance to impacted communities that help businesses and their employees get back to work quickly.

III. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

It is the policy of the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors, designated as Florida's state workforce development board, that CareerSource Florida and FloridaCommerce shall collaborate systematically to direct activities and serve the needs of local workforce development boards, local workforce development areas, career centers and WIOA partners before, during and after disasters and declared states of emergency.

During disasters and declared states of emergency, local workforce development boards and local workforce development areas shall support business and jobseeker customers through a combination of activities including but not limited to:

- **Providing simplified access to career centers and dedicated staff through on-site, virtual, and electronic interactions.**
- **Providing access to career center mobile units** as directed and coordinated by CareerSource Florida and FloridaCommerce in consultation with federal and state partners.
- **Providing simplified access to quality customer service and direct services to affected workers** including job training services; filing of reemployment assistance claims; resume preparation and job-readiness workshops; job placement services; career and skills assessment services; labor market information; referrals to community programs; information on the impacts of layoff on health coverage and other benefits; community resource workshops; veterans' programs and services for those with barriers to employment; supportive services; and job fairs and other special events.
- Administration and service delivery of Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant funding covered by the Disaster/Emergency Declaration including:
 - Working with local governmental and other agencies to assess the need for temporary disaster-relief workers and developing worksite agreements

- to address these needs.
 - Working with local employers to address talent needs in the wake of the disaster/emergency; and
 - Conducting outreach and eligibility determination of individuals applying for workforce services and providing eligible participants appropriate grant services
- Providing expedited access to individuals whose employment has been either lost or interrupted as a direct result of a major disaster and instruction on navigating **the Disaster Recovery Jobs Portal** to find job opportunities or post disaster-related jobs to assist in rebuilding affected communities.
- Providing access to **Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion** activities authorized under WIOA and described in [CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy 2021.06.09.A.2 – Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion System](#) and [Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 19-16](#), to assist employers and impacted workers prior to and immediately following announcement of layoff or natural or other disaster resulting in a mass job dislocation.
- Encouraging business owners to navigate **FloridaDisaster.biz** to obtain information about preparedness resources, current disaster updates, recovery programs, and to complete the **Florida Business Damage Assessment Survey** to determine damage related to disaster impacts in Florida and understand individual business needs and to inform relief efforts.

In addition, local workforce development boards, local workforce development regions and their career center staff shall consult with local government, Chief Local Elected Officials and other stakeholders to develop streamlined strategies and policies to engage in systematic processes that accomplish the following:

- Creation of local board-led strategies and policies that ensure uninterrupted communication with federal, state and local partners and designation of trained employees to communicate with state and local partners, leadership, and board members before, during and after a state of emergency.
- Collaboration between local workforce development boards, local workforce development regions and state and local partners to develop and publish continuity of operations plans that seek to ensure the safety and availability of staff, minimize disruption of service delivery and maximize cooperation with all partners.
- Ongoing training of incumbent and new staff to ensure strong levels of awareness of operational activities before, during and after a state of emergency.
- Routine outreach including surveys to existing and potential business customers before and after states of emergency to obtain business intelligence and information about community business needs resulting from disasters and other emergencies.

This policy applies to CareerSource Florida, FloridaCommerce and all local workforce

development boards and local workforce development regions.

Local workforce development boards shall describe strategies and policies related to this policy in their local workforce development plans.

IV. AUTHORITIES

[Public Law 113-128, The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\)](#)

[Chapter 445.003 – 445.004, Florida Statutes](#)

[20 CFR Sections 679.100 - 130](#)

[Training and Employment Guidance Letter 19-16](#)

[20 CFR Part 680, Subpart C, Section 682.300 – Section 682.370](#)

[CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy 2020.06.04.A.2 – State Workforce Development Board Roles and Responsibilities](#)

[CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy 2021.06.09.A.2 – Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion System](#)

V. HISTORY

Date	Description

VI. RESOURCES

[Florida Virtual Business Emergency Operations Center - FloridaDisaster.biz](#)

[Workforce Services Quick Facts: Mobile Unit](#)

[Workforce Services Quick Facts: State Rapid Response Program](#)

[Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grants](#)

[State of Florida Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan](#)

[ESF 18: Business, Industry and Economic Stabilization Annex](#)