

*Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Elder Affairs*



**Massachusetts' Senior Community Services  
Employment Program (MA-SCSEP)**

**OPERATIONS MANUAL**

**For**

**Sub-Grantees**

**April 19, 2012**



## **Foreword**

This Operations Manual provides official guidance for the operation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Senior Community Service Employment Program (MA-SCSEP) funded by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA).

The manual is based on the following legislative and regulatory mandates:

- Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended,
- 20 CFR Part 641 Senior Community Service Employment Program; Final Rule 2010
- Department of Labor Older Worker Bulletins, and the
- EOEA Grant Agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor.

The operational policy, procedures, and standards outlined in this manual are to be followed and enforced by all sub-grantees. This manual is effective as of 2012. It supersedes any other editions and update memoranda. In case of any perceived discrepancy between this manual and other materials, EOEA staff should be consulted for clarification.

When legislative or policy changes require that the manual be updated, EOEA will send all SCSEP sub-grantees a memorandum announcing the change(s).



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## **Section 1**

### **Introduction**

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a federally funded employment and training program for individuals 55 years of age or older with an income no greater than 125% of the Federal Poverty Limit (FPL). The SCSEP is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). The Executive Office of Elder Affairs operates the Massachusetts SCSEP program (MA-SCSEP) in all counties of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts except for Franklin, Nantucket, Barnstable and Dukes counties. There are also four (4) National SCSEP grantees operating programs in Massachusetts.

#### **1.1 MA-SCSEP Sub-grantees**

As of July, 2011, the three state regional SCSEP sub-grantees are:

1. Citizens for Citizens, Fall River, MA, (CFC) serving Bristol, Hampden, Hampshire, Middlesex, Norfolk, and Plymouth Counties.
2. Elder Services of Berkshire County, Pittsfield, MA (ESBC), serving Berkshire County.
3. Operation Able of Greater Boston, Boston, MA, (ABLE), serving Essex, Middlesex, Suffolk and Worcester counties.

#### **1.2 Program Goals**

The MA-SCSEP has the following primary goals:

- to help mature workers find unsubsidized employment
- to upgrade job skills of the mature person for successful unsubsidized job placement
- to help the mature person get involved in his/her community
- to help mature workers to achieve financial well-being

#### **1.3 Service Area**

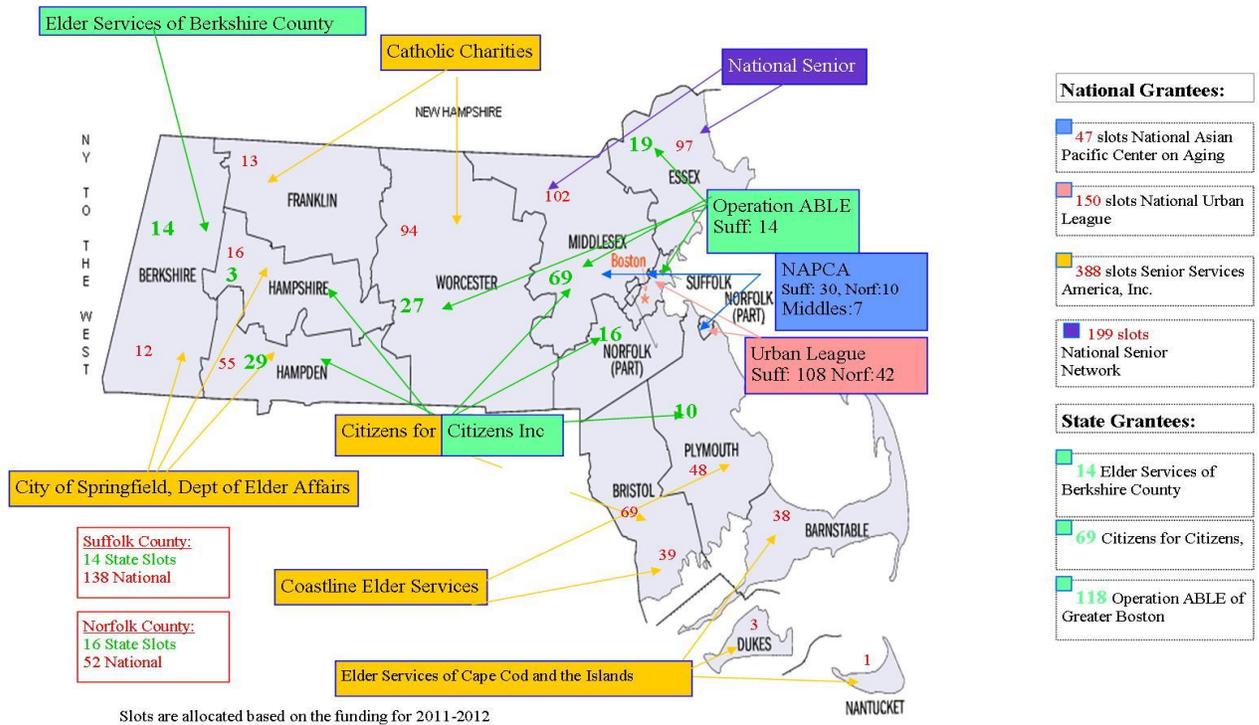
Total number of slots: for PY11 – 201 authorized slots

Slot allocation is negotiated and can change at any time of the year.

Current Slot Distribution:



Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs  
Senior Community Service Employment Program





## **Section 2**

### **Recruitment and Outreach**

#### **2.1 Purpose**

The purpose of recruitment is to ensure that the maximum number of eligible individuals have an opportunity to participate in the SCSEP.

#### **2.2 Requirements**

The Sub-grantee must make every effort to provide equitable services among the segments of the population eligible for participation in the SCSEP. These efforts must include outreach to broaden the composition of the pool of applicants to include members of both sexes, individuals from various racial and ethnic groups, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and those who meet the DOL definition of most in need. Most-in-need means participants with one or more of the following characteristics:

- have a severe disability;
- are frail;
- are age 75 or older;
- are age eligible but not receiving benefits under the Title II of the Social Security Act;
- reside in an area with persistent unemployment and have severely limited employment prospects;
- have limited English proficiency;
- have low literacy skills;
- have a disability;
- reside in a rural area;
- are veterans;
- have low employment prospects;
- have failed to find employment after using services provided under title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 280 et seq.);
- are homeless or at risk for homelessness.



## 2.3 Recruitment Goals

Sub-grantees must develop specific goals for service to various groups and state these goals in the SCSEP sub-grant application submitted to EOEA. The goals should quantify the following:

- number of total applicants expected
- number of eligible applicants expected
- number of participants needed to keep all SCSEP positions filled
- recruitment target for individuals from minority groups in the project's service area
- recruitment target for veterans
- recruitment target for individuals with disabilities
- recruitment target for those defined as most-in-need.

**To ensure that these goals are achieved,** Sub-grantees will use the following outreach and recruitment methods:

1. provide information about SCSEP on their agency web-site
2. establish collaborative relationships with agencies providing services to older persons, to persons with low incomes, to persons with disability, and to persons of various race/ethnic backgrounds;
3. notify One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) when vacancies exist;
4. develop close working relationships with other Workforce Investment Act (WIA) employment and training programs, local WIBs, OSCCs, vocational education programs, dislocated worker programs, and adult education programs.
5. place flyers, brochures, posters, and other advertisements in public places where older individuals tend to congregate;
6. use low or no cost media advertising, such as public service announcements on radio and TV, community service announcements, and human interest articles in local newspapers; and
7. make presentations to groups of older people or the general public to spread the word about opportunities available through the program.



## **2.4 Monitoring of Recruitment Goals**

The DOL requires that EOEA periodically monitor the performance of grant-supported activities to assure that project goals related to the recruitment of minorities are being achieved, and that all requirements of the Older Americans Act and its rules and regulations are being met.

The EOEA State Director will monitor the achievement of recruitment goals during visits with the Sub-grantee. EOEA staff will assist with plans to correct deficiencies in meeting recruitment goals. At no time should vacancies exist in the program when funding is available to provide training opportunities for older workers.



## Section 3

### Eligibility Determination

#### 3.1 Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for participation in the SCSEP, an individual must meet each of the following criteria for age, income, employment status, and place of residence.

- Age - Each individual must be 55 years of age or older. No upper age limit can be imposed for initial enrollment or continued enrollment.
- Income - The family income of an applicant or participant must not exceed 125 percent of the federal poverty levels established and periodically updated in March of each year.
- Employment Status – Must be unemployed at the time of application, and while enrolled in the program.
- Residence - Each individual must reside in Massachusetts in the Sub-grantee's service area while enrolled in the program. (Residence means an individual's declared dwelling place or address. Local projects may not impose a length of residency prior to enrollment in SCSEP). Individuals that move out of the Sub-grantee's service area will be discharged from the program.

#### 3.2 Computing Income

An applicant's family income is computed by calculating the "includable income" received by the applicant during the 12-month period ending on the date an individual submits an application to participate in the SCSEP, or by calculating the annualized income from the 6-month period ending on the application date.

**Special Rule Concerning Individuals with Disabilities:** An individual with a disability shall, for income eligibility determination, be considered as "a family-of-one."



### **3.3 Income Inclusions and Exclusions**

The following lists describe the types of income which must be included or excluded when determining eligibility for SCSEP participation. These lists may not cover all types of income encountered during the application, recertification, or re-enrollment processes. Sub-grantees should contact EOEAA for clarification and/or a policy decision when income cannot be attributed to one of the sources below.

**Inclusions** - The following types of income shall be counted for the purpose of determining annual family income for the SCSEP:

(See Section 3.4 for the Definition of Family Income).

#### **Includable Income**

- Earnings
- 75% of Social Security
- Survivor benefits
- Pension or retirement income
- Interest income
- Dividends
- Rents and royalties from estate and trusts
- Education assistance (grants, fellowships)
- Alimony
- Financial assistance from outside of the households
- Other income

#### **Excluded Income**

- Social Security Disability Income (SSDI)
- Social Security Income (SSI)
- Unemployment Compensation
- 25% of benefits received under Title II of the Social Security Act



- Payment made on behalf of veterans or former members of the Armed Forces under law administered by the Secretary of Veteran Affairs
- Public Assistance: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC), Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled, and Children (EAEDC)
- Income from other employment and training programs
- Disability benefits
- All forms of child support
- Workers' compensation
- The first \$2,000 of certain per capita fund distributions that are made to an Indian pursuant to the Indian Claims Act, P.L. 93-134 and P.L. 97-458
- Any other income exceptions required by applicable Federal law – e.g., stipends from programs funded by the Senior Corps of the Corporation for National and Community Service
- Capital gains received (or losses incurred) from the sale of property, including stocks, bonds, a house, or a car (unless the person engaged in the business of selling such property, in which case the CPS counts the net proceeds as income from self-employment)
- Withdrawals of bank deposits
- Money borrowed
- Tax refunds
- Gifts
- Lump-sum inheritances, insurance payments, gambling and lottery earnings

### **3.4 Definition of Family Income**

“Family income” is defined by the Current Population Survey in their annual poverty guidelines.

For determining family income of a SCSEP applicant, a family is defined as:

- A husband, wife and dependent children; or
- A parent or guardian and dependent children; or



- A husband and wife.
- Any person with a disability is treated as a ‘family of one’ for income eligibility determination purposes under the SCSEP program.

### **Exception to Standard Definition of Family**

- **When the applicant is claimed as a dependent on the federal income tax return of another family member** with whom he or she resides, the Current Population Survey (CPS) definition of family must apply.

The family is defined by the CPS as:

- A family is a group of two or more people related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together; all such people (including related subfamily members) are considered as members of one family.

Note: As in the standard definition above, a person with a disability may be treated as a “family of one” for income eligibility determination purposes.

#### CPS Definition of Subfamily

- **Subfamily.** A subfamily is a married couple with or without children, or a single parent with one or more of their own never-married children under 18 years old. A subfamily does not maintain its own household, but lives in the home of someone else.
- **Related subfamily.** A related subfamily is a married couple with or without children, or one parent with one or more of their never-married children under 18 years old, living in a household and related to, but not including, the person or couple who maintains the household. One example of a related subfamily is a young married couple sharing the home of the husband’s or wife’s parents.
- **Unrelated subfamily.** An unrelated subfamily (formerly called a secondary family) is a married couple with or without children, or a single parent with one or more of their own never-married children, or a single parent with one or more of their own never-married children under 18 years old living in a household. Unrelated subfamily members are not related to the householder. An unrelated subfamily may include people such as guests, partners, roommates, or resident employees and their spouses and /or children. An unrelated subfamily is NOT included in the determination of income eligibility for SCSEP.



### 3.5 SCSEP Participant Form

All applicants to the SCSEP are required to complete the **SCSEP Participant Form**. The first four (4) pages are completed by the Employment Specialist. Participants review the information and sign the form. These pages gather demographic information as well as information needed to determine the applicant’s eligibility. Pages 5 and 6 are completed by the Sub-grantee’s Employment Specialist. This information indicates the status of the applicant’s eligibility and enrollment to the program.

There are also situations where additional documentation is required to determine an applicant’s eligibility. This documentation can be in the form of:

- Official documents and business records;
- Detailed case notes; or,
- A signed attestation form.

A detailed description of acceptable documents can be found in the [SCSEP Data Collection Handbook](#).

When documents cannot be provided or detailed case notes are not available, the applicant will be required to sign an Attestation Form. Attestation forms are included in the Appendix for the following circumstances:

*Note: The attestation form number coincides with the field number on the SCSEP Participant Form.*

Form Name	Form #
Homeless	P8
Date of Birth	P10
Number in Family	P11
Employed Prior to Participation	P13
Total Includable Family Income	P14
Limited English Proficiency	P22
Low Literacy Skills	P24
Veteran (or eligible spouse of veteran)	P25
Disability	P26
At Risk of Homelessness	P27
Failed to Find Employment After Using WIA Title I	P29
Low Employment Prospects	P30



In addition to maintaining a paper personnel file for each applicant, all Participant Form data must be entered in the SPARQ system, the data performance reporting information system. Each required piece of information is numbered on the SCSEP Participant form and coincides with a field in SPARQ for data entry.

### **Additional Participant Form Instructions:**

#### **Field #8a Urban / Rural**

To accurately determine that an applicant resides in a rural or urban area, enter the zip code in the Rural Urban Commuting Area (RUCA) look-up table in SPARQ. Alternatively, use the census tract look-up provided in SPARQ to determine if the participant's residence is considered rural. If the census tract is used, grantees must document steps taken to make that determination.

### **3.6 Eligibility Certification Form**

**The Eligibility Certification Form** must be completed for each Participant at the time of the Participant's original enrollment or at Re-enrollment.

The Eligibility Certification Form identifies the documentation collected to determine the Participant's age, income, residence, veteran's status and family size. This form must be kept in the Participant's personnel file.



## **Section 4**

### **Enrollment of Participants**

#### **4.1 Participant Personnel Records**

The Sub-grantee's Employment Specialist will create an official personnel file for each enrolled Participant. The SCSEP Participant Form and supporting documentation described in Section 3 will be kept in this file. The file also contains records and documents concerning employment such as the initial assessment, an application and/or resume, references, a community assignment description, physical health form (in an envelope marked confidential), evaluations, individual employment plan, leave records, etc. The **Complete File Checklist** must be updated as forms/documents are added to the file. The personnel file is confidential and must be kept in a locked file for four (4) years following a participant's exit. The personnel file may be reviewed by the Participant at a time mutually convenient to the Participant and the Employment Specialist. Participants may not remove any records from the file without authorization from the Employment Specialist and/or the Sub-grantee's Executive Director.

#### **4.2 Initial Assessment**

Within five (5) days of being accepted to the Program, the Sub-grantee's Employment Specialist will work with the Participant to complete a SCSEP Assessment Form. This assessment gathers information about the applicant's skills, interests, work history, physical capabilities, preference of occupational category and potential for performing proposed community service assignment duties. This assessment identifies additional training the Participant may need to obtain prior to unsubsidized employment and is also used to determine the most appropriate Host Agency (HA) assignment.

#### **4.3 Individual Employment Plan; Registration with One Stop Career Centers**

Within three (3) weeks of program enrollment, an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) is completed, approved and copies retained by the SCSEP Employment Specialist, Participant and the Host Agency Supervisor.



Also within three (3) months of program enrollment the Participant is required to be registered with the local One Stop Career Center. Proof of this registration must be retained in the Participant's personnel file.

The Individual Employment Plan (IEP) reflects the skills, training and employment goals of the participant, the steps they will take to achieve their goals and the anticipated target dates for completing those goals. It must be reviewed and updated four times a year. Should the Participant refuse to positively respond to two (2) or more referrals made in response to their mutually agreed to IEP, the Participant may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. IEP related referrals include job openings, training opportunities, community service assignments, One Stop Career Center registration, job search training and other employment services and general support service assistance.

SCSEP regulations also require that Sub-grantees formally review and update the IEP progress for each participant quarterly.

The SCSEP enrolled Participant holds the responsibility to actively lead their job search for unsubsidized employment with the assistance and support of their Host Agency Supervisor, Regional SCSEP Employment Specialist and the Job Developer. **Within three (3) months of program enrollment, it is the Sub-grantee's responsibility to ensure the Participant has:**

- a current resume in both hard copy and electronic format;
- an e-mail address; and
- the ability to submit an on-line job application.

#### **4.4 Job Search Agreement**

To continue participation in the SCSEP, Participants hold the responsibility to continually seek unsubsidized employment. Participants must undertake / perform a minimum of 4 activities each month, 1 directly involving an employer such as mailing/faxing/submitting resumes with cover letters to employers or going on interviews. Other activity examples are attending job fairs, attending job counseling session/meeting and participating in training programs or classes. **The**



**Job Search Agreement** must be signed by the Participant and kept in the Participant's personnel file.

The **SCSEP Placement Policy** documents the program's expectations. This policy should be reviewed at least semi-annually between the Participant and SCSEP Employment Coordinator.

#### **4.5 Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI)**

Participants must agree to have a [Criminal Offender Record Information](#) (CORI) check to ensure they are appropriate for serving in their community service assignment. The CORI check is performed for all new participants prior to assignment to a Host Agency. All CORI investigations that show findings of criminal records shall be reviewed immediately by a Sub-grantee staff member certified by the Criminal History Systems Board in Massachusetts to receive such information. The Criminal History Systems Board is the authority that disseminates CORI information to authorized persons. Said Sub-grantee staff must work with the Host Agency to determine if CORI results can be a barrier to placement.

The CHAPTER 6, 172C CORI REQUEST FORM is used to request the CORI information from the Criminal History Systems Board. A copy of this form and the results of the investigation must be kept in the separate locked file.



## **Section 5**

### **Community Service Assignment**

#### **5.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the SCSEP is to prepare participants for unsubsidized employment while providing services to the community, either through the expansion of existing services at the Host Agency, or the establishment of new programs and services.

#### **5.2 Policy Requirements**

No participant may be enrolled in the program at any time without a community service assignment and a completed Community Service Assignment Form.

All community service assignments must be developed with regard to the participant's skills, abilities, and interests as stated in the participants IEP, and with the intent of preparing the participant for an unsubsidized position.

Community service assignments can be at federal, state, and local public agencies or in other non-profit organizations. In the past, public agencies have included but are not limited to the following:

- local one-stop career centers which are operated by government agencies;
- health departments, community health centers, community mental health centers, and community hospitals;
- welfare departments, child and youth services, and adult services;
- State employment security offices, vocational counseling and rehabilitation programs, and social service programs;
- public schools and adult education programs;
- recreation departments, community development agencies, and housing authorities;
- police departments, juvenile courts, and circuit courts;



- Federal agencies in local communities, extension services, and local tribal government agencies.

Non-profit organizations may be used as Host Agencies for community service assignments as long as they:

- Are recognized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as meeting the requirements of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 which exempts the organization from taxation; and,
- Are not a political party.

Further, Faith-based organizations may be Host Agencies. However, see [TEGL 29-07](#) for the specific rules on working with faith-based organizations.

**The Sub-grantee must obtain a copy of the IRS letter which grants the prospective non-profit organization 501(c)(3) status.**

The agency the Participant is assigned to becomes the Host Agency. See Section 6 for information about Host Agency responsibilities.

### **5.3 Evaluation Criteria**

Community service assignments must be evaluated for using the following criteria at least every 6 months:

- The appropriateness of the training assignment tasks with respect to the participant's skills, abilities, and interests as documented in the Participant's IEP.
- The contribution the assignment will make to the development of the participant's occupational skills.
- The likelihood that the participant will obtain unsubsidized employment after twelve (12) months in the training assignment.
- The amount and level of training actively being provided by the training agency staff.
- The opportunities the assignment will provide for career advancement.



- The innovative nature of the services to be offered.

Assignments should be rotated every 12 months so the Participant gets training in new areas. An extension for placement at one Host Agency can be provided if, but only if, approved by EOEA

#### **5.4 Safe Working Conditions**

It is the Sub-grantee's responsibility to ensure that the Host Agencies provide a safe work environment.

The Sub-grantee must survey the work site and complete the top portion of the **Host Agency Safety Checklist**. The Host Agency supervisor will complete the bottom portion after safety procedures are reviewed with the Participant. This checklist must be kept in the Participant's personnel file.



## Section 6

### Responsibilities of the Host Agency

#### 6.1 The Role of the Host Agency

A Host Agency is a public agency or a private non-profit organization that provides training in the job skills being sought by the Participant, as specified in their IEP. Host Agencies are required to provide adequate supervision and a safe work environment.

The Host Agency's responsibilities to the Sub-grantee and assigned Participant are:

- To develop and document a meaningful part-time community service assignment for the Participant that matches the Participant's work/career goals and complies with the Individual Employment Plan;
- To provide adequate orientation and skills training to enable the Participant to do the job effectively;
- To provide adequate supervision of the Participant regarding job responsibility, performance, staff integration and job safety.
- To cooperate with EOEA and the Sub-grantee in offering job skills development opportunities;
- To enable the Participant to seek and obtain unsubsidized employment;
- To develop the capacity within the Host Agency to offer the Participant unsubsidized employment.
- To abide by the Maintenance of Effort provision of the SCSEP regulations which requires the Participant to be utilized in addition to the regularly funded staff. **A Participant can not be used replace an employee due to a lay-off or to displace a current employee with reduced hours.**
- To provide telephone, office space, consumable supplies to perform the job. In addition, the Host Agency may supply in-kind support such as transportation assistance, uniforms, etc.



- To cooperate in a timely manner with EOEAA and/or the Sub-grantee in filling out the necessary paperwork for the program. This will include, but not be limited to, timesheets, the Placement Agreement and Participant Evaluations.
- To provide mileage reimbursement to the Participant if travel for work is required.
- To keep the Sub-grantee informed in a timely fashion of any major personnel issues or safety problems that the Host Agency may have with the Participant.

## **6.2 Orientation**

### **Participant Orientation**

As new Participants begins their training, it is the Host Agency's responsibility to conduct an orientation. The orientation should include information about what the Host Agency does and who it serves. In addition, the Host Agency supervisor will review the tasks the Participant will be responsible for as well as the training plan.

### **Host Agency (HA)**

Sub-grantees must have close working relationship with the Host Agencies. The Host Agency Agreement must be signed at the time of HA recruitment. All HAs must have most recent MA-SCSEP Operations Manual for Host Agencies. The Host Agency Orientation Checklist must be completed by the supervisor and signed by the Participant. A copy must be sent to the Sub-grantee to maintain in the Participant's personnel file.

## **6.3 Participant Evaluations**

Each Participant shall have an evaluation by their Host Agency Supervisor three (3) months after enrollment into the program and then again by their twelve (12) month anniversary (and/or after transfer to a new Host Agency assignment).

The purpose of these evaluations are to:

- determine the appropriate placement of the Participant on Host Agency assignments;
- obtain constructive feed-back regarding the Participant's assignment performance;
- identify areas for improvement and skills training to improve their performance in current duties or expanded duties; and,



- discuss the prospects of unsubsidized employment for the Participant at the Host Agency.

The Host Agency supervisor will give a copy of the **Participant Evaluation Form** to the Participant and send a copy to the SCSEP Employment Specialist for the Participant's personnel file.

#### **6.4 Payroll**

The Host Agency Supervisor must fax or mail the **Participant's Time Sheet** to the SCSEP Employment Specialist or previously identified department. It is the Sub-grantee's decision to mail or hand deliver checks to the Host Agency Supervisor or Participant or institute an automatic checking account deposit system. If there are any delays in check distribution, the Host Agency Supervisor and Participant must be notified immediately by the Sub-grantee.

#### **6.5 Travel Reimbursement and Insurance**

Host Agencies will reimburse Participants for work-related travel. If it is necessary for Participants to use their own vehicle, and it is approved by the Host Agency, travel costs must be reimbursed at the Host Agency's approved rate. All work-related mileage must be submitted by the Participant to their Host Agency Supervisor on the Agency's approved mileage forms. Participants who must drive in the course of fulfilling their work assignment responsibilities must furnish a copy of their current driver's license and automobile insurance coverage to the SCSEP Employment Specialist to be kept in their personnel file.

#### **6.6 Safe Working Conditions**

Host Agencies are required to provide a safe work environment for SCSEP Participants. To ensure this requirement is met, Host Agencies must:

- **promptly correct** any unsafe working area or unhealthy condition to which a participant is exposed;



- **immediately report** any accident or injury that involves a SCSEP participant to the SCSEP Sub-grantee (**NOTE: Failure to report a participant's accident or injury may make the training site ineligible for continued participation in the SCSEP**);
- **promptly prepare** a written accident report and send it to the SCSEP Sub-grantee;
- **include** all SCSEP participants in any safety training given to regular staff members-- especially training on how to use safety equipment, first aid kits, and fire extinguishers.

After reviewing safety procedures with the Participant, the bottom portion of the Host Agency Safety Checklist must be completed by the Host Agency Supervisor and signed by the Participant. A copy of this form must be sent to the Sub-grantee to maintain in the Participant's personnel file.

### **6.7 Reporting Assignment Related Accidents.**

If a Participant is involved in an accident or sustains an injury while working, even though it may seem at the time to be of a very minor nature, they must report the situation immediately to their Host Agency Supervisor and SCSEP Employment Specialist (within 12 hours), and complete the report form covering such matters. This is essential if the participant wants to protect his/ her medical and compensation rights and benefits. Participants should inform the medical care provider that the injury may be covered under Workers' Compensation. Inform the Employment Specialist if the injury results in any time lost from work. Participants should contact the Host Agency Supervisor immediately and the Host Agency Supervisor will contact the SCSEP's Employment Specialist.

### **6.8 Drug-Free Workplace**

EOEA and MA-SCSEP Sub-grantees absolutely prohibit the use, consumption, sale, purchase, transfer or possession of any illegal drug by any employee or Participant of SCSEP during working hours, while representing SCSEP Sub-grantees, while on the premises or at Host Agencies.

In addition, SCSEP employees and SCSEP Participants are strictly prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol during working hours.



## **Section 7**

### **Participant Wages, Hours and Fringe Benefits**

#### **7.1 Wages**

Participant wages must be at least the Federal or State minimum wage, whichever is higher.

#### **Status of Participants**

Individuals who participate on any SCSEP project funded by Title V of the Older Americans Act (OAA) are not Federal or State employees at any time during their program participation.

#### **Wages Paid to Participants Attending Orientation or Training**

SCSEP participants attending orientation or training shall be paid SCSEP wages.

#### **7.2 Hours and Days of the Work Week Schedule; Make Up Hours**

The basic work week for each Participant is 20 hours from Monday through Friday (1,300 hours annually). This does not include the lunch period. The length of an unpaid lunch period should be based upon the Host Agency's Personnel Guide that is shared with the Participant during orientation.

The Participant is expected to report to work on time and leave at the agreed to time noted during the orientation session. The scheduling of the twenty hour work week must be acknowledged and agreed to by the Participant, the Host Agency Supervisor and the Sub-grantees Employment Specialist. Work hours will normally fall within the usual daytime business hours of the Host Agency.

The Participant can make up missed work hours per agreement with the Host Agency Supervisor. The make up hours have to be completed during the following two (2) week pay period and should not be extended past this period.



Note: Due to budgetary constraints, the 20 hour per week may be reduced as noted in the back of the Eligibility Certification form. Sub-grantees must notify EOEA prior to reducing Participant hours. When hours are reduced, all participants are similarly impacted.

### 7.3 Fringe Benefits and Payroll Deductions

The following is a list of fringe benefits and payroll deductions available to SCSEP Participants:

- **F.I.C.A.** – The Sub-grantee contributes to the Social Security System for all Participants in accordance with the payroll tax provisions of the OASDI program.
- **Workers’ Compensation** - Participants are protected by Workers’ Compensation, which covers injuries received at work.
- **Holidays** – The Participant must be paid for scheduled work hours during which a Host Agency is closed for a Federal holiday. Each Host Agency Supervisor has the responsibility of notifying (in writing) the SCSEP Employment Specialist and Participant as to the actual dates of recognized paid Federal holidays at their agency. Federal holidays include:

New Year's Day
Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.
Washington's Birthday
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Columbus Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day

If the host agency is closed on additional holidays (e.g. the day after Thanksgiving), or inclement weather, the participant shall have the opportunity to make up those hours in the same pay period.



- **Optional Physical Examination** - Each eligible program applicant has the option to have a physical examination prior to being assigned to a Host Agency and later on an annual basis. If the Participant makes the decision not to have a physical examination, the Participant is required to sign an examination waiver. The Sub-grantee must retain this form in the Participant's personnel file. The results of the health check up are not shared with the Host Agency Supervisor or SCSEP Employment Specialist. The Participant may voluntarily disclose the results to assist the Employment Specialist in making appropriate placement assignments.
- **Leave Without Pay**  
A written request for leave without pay of **2 (two) weeks or less** should be granted to a participant when circumstances warrant it.
- **Approved Break Policy**  
Leave without pay, of no more than two weeks, will be granted to a participant if requested. The participant's community service assignment slot will be held open until their approved break ends. There is no guarantee that the participant will be placed back with the same host site agency. An approved break is to be documented in detail in the participant's file, case notes and entered into their IEP and into SPARQ.

The sub grantee will place an individual on the program waiting list if the break is longer than two weeks. Exceptions will be made for those providing proof of illness or care giving in accordance with the Family Medical Leave Act.

Sub-grantee staff will obtain appropriate return to work documentation prior to the participants return to the community service assignment if the break is due to illness. The documentation is to be part of the participant's permanent file and noted in case notes that it was received.

#### **7.4 Unallowable Benefits**

The following benefits are not to be compensated with SCSEP funds:

- Retirement system or plan contributions
- Pension benefits



- Annual leave
- Accumulated sick leave
- Bonuses

### **7.5 Time Sheets**

**Time sheets** for the preceding weeks of work must be signed by both the Participant and the Host Agency Supervisor. It is the responsibility of the Participant to submit the time sheet to the Host Agency Supervisor at a previously identified time and date for each pay period.



## **Section 8**

### **Participant Training and Monitoring Meetings**

#### **8.1 Training**

SCSEP Participants receive various types of training to assist them in performing their community service assignments and in finding employment. In most cases, training develops new skills, and upgrades existing skills. It also helps develop effective and good work habits and job search skills. Annual training hours for formal training outside and in addition to their Host Agency assignment are capped at 500 hours per participant in the SCSEP Program.

Examples of other types of training a Participant can receive while participating in this subsidized program are: English as a second language, literacy training, basic skills training leading to a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) and vocational/occupational skills training that results in unsubsidized employment.

Training waiver funds may be used to cover the cost of other formal training when approved by EOEAA. Participants are paid their hourly rate for the time spent in training.

#### **8.2 Individual Monitoring Meetings**

The Employment Specialist will conduct monitoring meetings at the Host Agency location with each Participant on a quarterly basis. These scheduled Individual monitoring meetings can be with just the Participant or with both the Participant and the Host Agency Supervisor. The meetings help confirm the initial Assessment of the Participant, update the Individual Employment Plans and construct new detailed Action Plans and IEPs that will increase the likelihood of the Participant of moving from the federally subsidized SCSEP to achieving unsubsidized employment.

The Participant's IEP is updated with what was discussed and agreed to at the meeting.



These quarterly monitoring meetings are mandatory. The Participant will be sent a corrective action letter and may be eventually terminated for not attending, not participating or generally not cooperating in these scheduled meetings.

### **8.3 Group Training Meetings**

Group Training meetings are an important part of the program. These meetings should be conducted by Sub-grantees on a monthly basis. The purpose of the meetings is to:

- Maintain consistent and constant contact with the participants;
- Provide program information;
- Provide additional training on specific topics

Sample topics:

- Working on your resume – AARP tool Kit
- Empowerment workshops
- Learning LinkedIn.

Group meetings take the place of the Participant's work for that particular day, and the Host Agency must make arrangements to allow the Participant to attend these meetings. Staying at the Host Agency to work will be considered an unexcused absence from these meetings. Unexcused absences will result in corrective action and possible termination from the program.

Group Training meetings should be conducted by Sub-grantee's Program Manager or his/her designee.



## **Section 9**

### **New Assignments / Rotation of Participants**

#### **9.1 Host Agency (HA) Reassignment**

The community service assignment at a Host Agency site permits the effective development of the Participant's skills, interest and aptitudes. This development must be constructed to lead to an unsubsidized job placement for the Participant at the HA. Or, the Participant can be reassigned to another Host Agency site with a stronger possibility of hiring of the Participant.

After twelve (12) consecutive months in the same assignment, it is strongly encouraged to transfer Participants to another Host Agency if they have not been hired by the Agency or have not secured an unsubsidized position. However, EOEAA can approve an extension to allow the Participant to stay at the same agency when the Host Agency (through the Employment Specialist) submits a letter identifying a new assignment description to upgrade the Participant's skills along with a training plan of action and timeline, and/or a hire date.

The new and future Host Agency should be selected after a careful evaluation of the participant's progress and IEP goals.

#### **9.2. Factors to Consider**

The Sub-grantee's HA monitor is responsible for assessing the participant's progress at the Host Agency and making recommendations about Host Agency transfers. The following factors should be evaluated:

- The requirements of the participant's training assignment;
- The training being provided to the participant;
- The level of the participant's skills and abilities;



- The possibility of upgrading the participant's assignment at the current site;
- The participant's general job performance, age, and health;
- The location of the Host Agency in relationship to the participant's residence;
- The participant's progress toward meeting his or her IEP goals;
- The amount of support and encouragement provided by the Host Agency supervisor to motivate the participant to reach his or her training and employment objectives;
- The possibility that the Host Agency will hire the participant, and;
- The possibility of additional training at the current Host Agency.

After evaluating these factors and discussing the suitability of the current training assignment with the participant and the HA supervisor, the Host Agency monitor will prepare a report that should include a recommendation that the participant either remain in the current assignment, be upgraded at the current Host Agency, or be transferred to another training assignment.

The participant evaluation and analysis should be completed in the 11<sup>th</sup> month of the Participant's assignment. Should an extension be necessary in the best interest of the Participants and in accordance with their IEP, a request must be submitted to EOEAA for the approval, detailing the needs. The approval process takes 2 weeks.

### **9.3 Implementing a Host Agency Transfer**

When a Host Agency transfer is approved, the following procedures apply:

- Sub-grantee will schedule a conference with the participant to determine the most suitable Host Agency and a tentative date for the transfer.
- Sub-grantee must identify new Host Agencies that are within a reasonable commuting distance of the participant's home. New Host Agency must offer increased opportunities for skills development and unsubsidized employment.
- The participant and the Host Agency shall be notified in writing at least 30 days prior to the transfer.
- All objections to the transfer must be made in writing before the date of the transfer.



- Sub-grantee shall notify the participant's existing Host Agency and the new Host Agency of the transfer date.
- Documentation of the transfer should be filed in the participant's record.
- Sub-grantee and the new Host Agency supervisor will provide the participant with an orientation to the new work training assignment.
- A new SCSEP Community Service Assignment Form is completed and entered into SPARQ. This form must also be kept in the Participant's personnel file.
- To facilitate a smooth transition from one Host Agency to another, additional support services or referrals to other community agencies should be provided when needed.
- Sub-grantees are required to provide transition planning and assistance to all participants who are exiting the program. For those unlikely to obtain a job prior to exit, the grantee must provide assistance with identifying and obtaining other transitional services that will support self-sufficiency and help maintain the participant's quality of life.



## **Section 10**

### **Two (2) Year Durational Limit**

#### **10.1 Durational Limit Requirement**

Participants enrolled in the MA - SCSEP have a two (2) year durational time limit to participate in the program and secure an unsubsidized job placement. The Sub-grantee Employment Specialist tracks and reports on the two (2) year durational time limit for all participants. EOEAA will monitor the reports and will not approve any extensions over and above the two (2) year limit.

This program participation durational limit is a requirement of the federally funded SCSEP grant and it is designed to assist the maximum number of individuals to participate in this subsidized training program and achieve their goal or securing unsubsidized employment.

#### **10.2 Procedures for implementing the 24 months Durational Limit**

**1. Grantee Durational Policy.** Sub-grantees must have a copy of EOEAA's durational limit policy that has been approved by DOL.

**2. Informing Participants of Policy.** All new participants must be informed of the durational limit policy at the time of enrollment, and all current participants must be informed of the new policy when approved by DOL. In addition, the grantee must inform all participants who are within 12 months of reaching their personal durational limit of how they are impacted by the policy and when transitional planning will begin. These participants are identified in the Waiver of Durational Limit (WDL) report in SPARQ.

**3. Updating Waiver Factors.** Sub-grantees must regularly run the WDL report to ensure that all participants due to reach their durational limit within the year have had their waiver factors updated within the program year.

Waiver factors are defined the following way:



- Severely disabled
- Frail
- Old enough for but not receiving Social Security Title II
- Having Low literacy skills
- Severely limited employment prospects in areas of persistent unemployment
- Limited English proficiency
- 75 or older

**4. Ensuring the Accuracy of Durational Calculations in SPARQ database.** Errors in SPARQ data can affect the accuracy of the individual durational limit. A Sub-grantee's errors for an exited participant can affect the time of participation with another grantee with which the participant is now enrolled.

**6. Exiting Participants for Durational Limit.** Participants must be exited on their durational limit date as listed in the WDL report. Participants must be given 30 days' written notice of their termination and must be informed that the termination is subject to appeal under the grantee's grievance policy. A copy of the grievance policy should be attached to the termination notice. Element 6(v) on the Exit Form, Durational Limit, should be checked as the reason for exit.



## **Section 11**

### **Participant Reassessment and Income Recertification**

#### **11.1 Participant Reassessment**

Assessment of participants is a continual responsibility of the Sub-grantee. A formal re-assessment of each participant's progress toward the goals set in the IEP is required at least **once every six (6) months**. The first one is the initial assessment (Refer to Section 4); all subsequent assessments are "reassessments".

Monitoring participant achievements and challenges on a monthly or a quarterly basis will enhance both participant development and the review. Ongoing assessments should seek to make the best use of SCSEP resources by determining how participants can be motivated to higher levels of achievement.

The reassessment is done to document training that the Participant has received from the Host Agency or other sources. The reassessment will also document skills that the Participant has gained and is also an opportunity to identify any new barriers to employment and identify supportive services the Participant may benefit from. The reassessment form must be signed by both the Sub-grantee and the Participant and kept in the Participant's personnel file.

Use the **Reassessment Form** to document participant's reassessment.

#### **11.2 Income Recertification**

SCSEP Sub-grantees are required to re-certify each Participant's income annually and maintain adequate documentation to support the recertification. This recertification must be completed each May. The income documents required for recertification are the same as those collected when a Participant is initially applying to the program.

Refer to sub-section 3.5 # 14 Total Includable Family Income.



Participants found ineligible because of income are given written notice of termination and terminated thirty (30) days after the notice. It is recommended that the terminated Participant work closely with the SCSEP Employment Specialist, the local One Stop Career Center and Temporary Placement Agencies in their search for employment.

The **Recertification section of the SCSEP Participant Form (page 7)** must be updated with the current information.



## **Section 12**

### **Termination and Resignation from SCSEP**

#### **12.1 Termination Policy**

MA-SCSEP Sub-grantees are required to give all MA-SCSEP participants a written copy of the Executive Office of Elder Affairs' SCSEP termination policy during initial enrollment, along with a verbal explanation of the policy. This policy must be applied fairly and consistently in terminating SCSEP enrollment for all participants. Participants cannot be terminated due to age, as there is no upper age limit for participation in SCSEP. Participants should only be terminated when it is clear that a program violation has occurred (see 12.2) and a record of the issue or incident is properly recorded in the participant's file.

All participants must receive a written SCSEP Termination Notice 30 days prior to the date of termination. All participants should be informed of their right to appeal any termination. The SCSEP Termination Notice must inform participants that the termination is subject to the EOE's Termination Policy and Procedures, and a copy of the Complaint Resolution Committee and Grievance Procedures must be attached to the Sub-grantee's Termination Notice.

#### **12.2 Termination Reasons**

Listed below are reasons for termination and standard termination procedures for SCSEP participants:

##### **1. Termination Due to provision of False Information.**

If, at any time, the Sub-grantee determines that an individual was incorrectly declared eligible as a result of false information knowingly given by the participant, the Sub-grantee must give the participant immediate written notice with an explanation and must terminate the participant 30



days after receipt of the notice. The participant will be removed immediately from the host agency and placed on leave without pay during the 30-day notice period.

## **2. Termination Due to Incorrect Initial Eligibility Determination.**

If, at any time, the Sub-grantee determines that it incorrectly determined a participant to be eligible for the program through no fault of the participant, the Sub-grantee will give the participant immediate written notice explaining the reason(s) for termination and will terminate the participant's enrollment 30 days after it has provided the participant with written notice. The participant will be allowed to continue the host agency assignment with pay during the 30-day notice period.

## **3. Termination Due to Income Ineligibility Determined at Recertification.**

If, at any time, the Sub-grantee finds a participant to be no longer eligible for enrollment, provider will give the participant written notice explaining the reason(s) for termination and will terminate the participant 30 days after it has provided the participant with written notice. The participant will be allowed to continue the host agency assignment with pay during the 30-day notice period.

## **4. Termination Due to achieving 24 Month Individual Durational Limit.**

A participant will be terminated when he or she meets the 24-month maximum participation duration date. The Sub-grantee must send a notification of termination letter at least 30 days before the 24 month maximum participation date. The participant will be able to continue participating in the program until the date of exit.

## **5. Termination Due to Becoming Employed During Enrollment.**

To qualify for enrollment in the SCSEP a participant must be unemployed. All participants are informed that they may not be employed while participating in the program and that they must notify the Sub-grantee immediately upon becoming employed. A participant who is discovered



to be employed while enrolled without having notified the Sub-grantee of the employment will have their enrollment terminated immediately from the program. If this occurs, the participant will be placed on Leave without Pay immediately. The Sub-grantee must send a 30 day letter of termination to the participant.

## **6. Termination for Cause**

There are several reasons to terminate a participant “for-cause.” When warranted, a participant may be terminated for certain behaviors and/or conduct. The following are specific reasons; however, other similar reasons that demonstrate willful misconduct or an intentional disregard of program rules may cause involuntary termination. Examples of permitted reasons for termination include:

- Falsification of official records, such as timesheets
- Intentional disclosure of confidential or private information obtained from the host agency, grantee, or Sub-grantee
- Theft
- Physical violence or intentional destruction of property
- Obscene, abusive, harassing, or threatening language or behavior
- Sexual harassment of colleagues or others
- Causing an imminent threat to health or safety
- Non-compliance with drug and alcohol free policy, which prohibits participants while performing their host agency assignment or while carrying out objectives required by the IEP
- Frequent tardiness or absences exceeding 3 times during a 30 day period without good cause
- Failure to regularly attend or properly justify absence from the group training meetings or individual monitoring meetings conducted by the MA-SCSEP provider.



### **12.3 IEP related termination reasons**

If a participant fails, without good cause, to cooperate fully with the Sub-grantee to accomplish the goals of his or her IEP strategy, an IEP-related termination “for-cause” may be in order. All IEP-related violations should be considered on a case-by-case basis. A Notice of Intent to Terminate must be submitted by Sub-grantee for approval to the SCSEP State Director prior to any IEP-related terminations. Examples of lack of compliance with the IEP without good cause include refusal to:

- Accept training opportunities outlined in the IEP
- Accept a new community service assignment to enhance skill development in support of IEP goals
- Accept supportive services that will enhance his/her ability to participate in a community service assignment consistent with the IEP
- Participate in sub-recipient offered services such as job search, skill training or resume writing

The IEP-related termination option should be used as a last resort. Before considering termination proceedings, the Sub-grantee should make every effort to find out why a participant is not cooperating to meet their employment and training goals. A participant must be given a chance to correct the offending action.

Written notice shall be given to the participant, citing a specific incident in which the participant did not fulfill his or her IEP responsibility. The notice should list the specific event, cite the jointly signed IEP agreement, and provide a period of 30 days to take corrective action.

### **12.4 Termination Procedures**



**Step one: Documented Verbal Warning.** The Sub-grantee verbally warns the participant and documents the verbal warning in case notes of the participant's file.

**Step two: Written Warning.** The Sub-grantee will complete a written warning and send it to the participant. A copy of the written warning will be put in the participant's file.

**Step three: Corrective Action.** The Sub-grantee will complete and send to the participant a 30-day Corrective Action Plan. The Corrective Action Plan must be discussed in person and signed by the Sub-grantee and the participant. To follow up on the Corrective Action Plan, the Sub-grantee will issue and request a weekly progress report from the participant.

The Corrective Action Plan, minutes from all meetings with the participant and copies of weekly reports must be included in the participant's file.

**Step four: Termination.** If a participant fails to comply satisfactory with the 30-day Corrective Action Plan, the Sub-grantee will provide a MA-SCSEP Termination Notice to the participant informing him or her of the reason(s) for termination and the effective date, which must be a minimum of 30 days after the issuance of the notice. This notice will specifically reference the infraction and include the person's right of appeal in accordance with the Complaint Resolution Committee and Grievance Procedures. The Sub-grantee will meet with the participant to:

- Review the SCSEP Termination Notice.
- Inform the participant of his or her last day at the Host Agency, or inform the participant that he or she is being placed on a 30 day unpaid leave of absence until the exit date. During this time SCSEP staff is available to assist the participant in job search activities.
- Inform the participant of the right to appeal by implementing the Complaint Resolution Committee and Grievance Procedures.
- Have the participant sign the exit paperwork.
- Have the participant sign the last time sheet.
- Place a complete set of case notes in the participant's file.



### **12.5 SCSEP Termination Notice**

A SCSEP Termination Notice is completed for each participant whose enrollment is ended. It must state the participant's right of appeal and a copy of the Complaint Resolution Committee and Grievance Procedures must be included with the SCSEP Termination Notice. The signature of the Sub-grantee program director or designee is required on each termination notice. A copy of the SCSEP Termination Notice shall be a part of the participant's record.

**Sub-grantee must inform EOEA on all involuntary terminations for-cause.**

### **12.6 Resigning from SCSEP**

If a Participant decides to leave the program for any reason, two week's notice shall be given, and a written letter of resignation must be submitted to the Employment Specialist and copied to the Host Agency Supervisor. A copy of the Participant's resignation letter must be kept in the Participant's personnel file.



## **Section 13**

### **Volunteering and Political Activity**

#### **13.1 Volunteering**

Each Participant is prohibited from volunteering at the assigned Host Agency for work that is the same as or substantially the same as the work defined in the Participant's written assignment.

#### **13.2 Political Activity**

Participants may participate freely in the political process with the following exceptions:

- A Participant may not engage in political activities (partisan or non-partisan) on the job.
- A Participant may not present him/herself as a spokesperson for the SCSEP while engaged in partisan political activity on his or her own time.
- Some Participants who are assigned to Host Agencies which are financially aided programs, whether by federal, state or local government agencies, may have additional restrictions.



## **Section 14**

### **Leave for Jury Duty / Witness or Death**

#### **14.1 Sick leave**

Sick leave that is not part of an accumulated sick leave program. If the participant is to be out due to health reasons or other personal reasons for longer than 3 days, the Sub-grantee may place the participant on approved leave. The leave will be documented in the case notes and into the appropriate fields in SPARQ. If the participant is out for 3 days or longer, the sub grantees may require a doctor's note indicating that the participant is able to return to the training site.

#### **14.2 Jury Duty/Witness**

Leave for jury duty shall be provided in accordance with State jury system and local laws. Participants shall receive regular pay for the first 3 days for service as a juror. The State will compensate the Participant from the fourth day on. A copy of the juror selection notification must be provided to the Employment Specialist prior to the first day of jury service.

Participants who are scheduled to serve as witnesses can make up the time. The Supervisor will notify the Employment Specialist of the approved make-up time arrangement.

#### **14.3 Bereavement Leave**

Participants shall be granted a leave of absence with pay for a maximum of four days upon evidence satisfactory to Sub-grantee of the death of a spouse, child, step-child, parent, step-parent, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, spouse's parent, a person for whom the employee is the legal guardian, a person for whom the employee is primarily responsible for making funeral arrangements or a person living in the employee's household. This leave may be used, at the option of the employee, within thirty (30) calendar days from said death. In extraordinary



circumstances, at the discretion of the Sub-grantee, bereavement leave may be used after thirty (30) calendar days from the date of death.

Upon evidence satisfactory to the Sub-grantee, a participant shall be granted one (1) day of leave without loss of pay to attend the funeral of the brother, sister, grandparent or grandchild of the employee's spouse.



## **Section 15**

### **Grievance Procedures**

#### **15.1 Requirements**

The following policy must be fully adopted by all MA-SCSEP Sub-grantees. If this policy is not fully adopted by MA-SCSEP Sub-grantees, then the Sub-grantee must submit a policy implementing the same governing elements as provided below for the approval by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

MA-SCSEP Sub-grantees are required to give all MA-SCSEP participants a written copy of the Executive Office of Elder Affairs' SCSEP Grievance Procedures during the initial enrollment, along with a verbal explanation of the policy. This procedure must be applied fairly, consistently and uniformly. All grievances and rendered decisions must be kept on file. In notifying the complainant of a final decision, the Sub-grantee must advise the complainant of their right to further appeal.

Note: This policy does not cover allegations of discrimination which should be directed to the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Labor; 200 Constitution Avenue, NW; Washington, D.C. 20210. The complainant should file a written complaint within (90) days in the case of an alleged act of discrimination.

#### **15.2 Grievance Procedures**

MA-SCSEP Sub-grantees are committed to a safe training environment. Any SCSEP participant who believes that he/she has encountered differential, irregular or illegal action at a Host Agency must be directed to take specific actions and follow these steps:

**Step 1. File the written complaint** - The complainant should first file a written complaint with the MA-SCSEP Sub-grantee within thirty (30) days after the alleged act occurred.



- 1) The grievance should clearly explain the circumstances around the incident and the incident itself.
- 2) The grievance should be detailed, include date, time, location and names of people directly involved or witnessing the incident.

**Step 2. Informal Hearing** - After receiving a written grievance, the MA-SCSEP Sub-grantee shall make every effort possible to settle the problem, following these steps:

- MA-SCSEP Sub-grantee must document the receipt of the written grievance.
- MA-SCSEP Sub-grantee must conduct an interview with the parties concerned. During the interview the following information must be gathered and documented in writing:
  - Date of the incident or incidents and parties involved.
  - Description of the problem: action, decision or condition giving rise to the incident as seen by the complainant.
  - Other pertinent information that might be necessary to resolve the grievance.
- MA-SCSEP Sub-grantee shall render a written decision based on the information gathered during the above mentioned interviews within five business days from the date the initial interview was held. Such written decision shall include an account of all follow-up steps taken by the MA-SCSEP Sub-grantee to resolve the matter, and a list of advice or recommended solution(s) given to the parties involved regarding the merits of the complaint and how to remedy the situation.
- Inform the complainant that if he/she is not satisfied with the decision, he/she has the right to appeal it.
- If grievance can be resolved, the MA-SCSEP Sub-grantee shall document the resolution in writing and submit copies of the documentation to the parties involved. The parties must sign and date the agreement.
- If the complainant accepts this decision, the procedure is complete.
- If the complainant does not accept this decision, and files an appeal, then the grievance is brought up to the next level of review, which is described below, until it reaches the final steps in the process.



**Step 3. Second hearing** - If the first informal hearing does not resolve the issue, a second process shall be followed:

- All interested and involved parties shall present the grievance to the MA-SCSEP Sub-grantee in writing.
- Copies of all written grievances statements shall be made available to both sides.
- The SCSEP Sub-grantee shall form an ad hoc Complaint Resolution Committee with 3 members.
- Both parties shall be informed within five business days in writing when the committee will meet for the purpose of hearing the complaint, and the exact time and place of the hearing. At the hearing before the Complaint Resolution Committee, the complainant shall have the opportunity to present witnesses in his/her behalf, if appropriate, and shall have the opportunity to ask questions of the person or persons whose actions are alleged to have caused the complaint.
- The Complaint Resolution Committee shall consider the facts and make the decision within five days after the day of the hearing. The decision shall be made by a majority vote based on information in the file, written statements, and the testimony given at hearings. The decision shall be submitted in writing to the parties involved within five business days after a decision is made.
- Minutes shall be made of each hearing. The minutes, along with the written statements and other documentation presented at the hearing, shall be maintained in the Sub-grantee's files for at least three years after the final disposition of the grievance. If the complaint has not been resolved through the combined processes outlined above, the MA-SCSEP Sub-grantee shall inform the complainant of the process and procedure for appeal to the MA-SCSEP Sub-grantee – the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, 1 Ashburton Place, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02108.

### **15.3 Procedures for Appealing to the state office**

- An appeal may be filed within five working days after a written decision is sent with the Executive Office of Elder Affairs' Office of the General Counsel, 1 Ashburton Place, 5th



floor, Boston, MA 02108. The subject of the appeal can either be an alleged wrong decision (substance) or an inadequate compliance with hearing procedures (process).

- The MA-SCSEP Sub-grantee shall prepare for the Executive Office of Elder Affairs a report summarizing the complaint, the informal and formal investigation, and the disposition of the complaint and/or the written decision of the MA-SCSEP Sub-grantee's Complaint Resolution Committee.
- The Executive Office of Elder Affairs' Office of the General Counsel shall review the results of the complaint resolution procedure of the Sub-grantee. The General Counsel, or his/her designee, may seek or obtain additional information and shall affirm or amend the decision in writing within 15 business days. The decision of the Executive Office of Elder Affairs' Office of General Counsel is final. If the complainant alleges a violation of federal law (other than civil rights law) not resolved within 60 days they should follow the procedure listed below:

Violations of the Law and Discrimination:

- Complainants alleging violations of the law, other than those alleging discrimination, which are not resolved within 60 days as a result of the combined complaint resolution procedures of the MA-SCSEP Sub-grantee and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, may file an appeal with: Division of Older Worker Programs, Employment and Training Administration; U.S. Department of Labor; 200 Constitution Avenue, NW; Washington, D.C. 20210. If the complaint alleges discrimination, it should be directed to the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Labor; 200 Constitution Avenue, NW; Washington, D.C. 20210.
- Once complete, the Executive Office of Elder Affairs maintains the complaint and decision in the files.
- If, in the course of the complaint resolution process, a participant is placed on approved break for administrative reason or removed from the payroll pending the results of the Complaint Resolution Committee or subsequent appeals process, and such determination is made in the participant's favor, the participant may extend their services to make up for lost hours during the appeal process and shall be restored to an active status.



## **Section 16**

### **Unsubsidized Employment Acquisition**

EOEA requires Sub-grantees to work diligently to help job-ready participants to find jobs in the private and public sectors. Diligent action helps participants with career advancement and increases the number of individuals who may be enrolled and served by the program.

#### **16.1 Requirements to Count a SCSEP Placement**

The SCSEP Regulations published by the U.S. Department of Labor on April 9, 2004 (at 20 CFR Part 641) define an unsubsidized placement in §641.140 as full or part-time paid employment in the public or private sector by a participant for 30 days within a 90-day period without the use of SCSEP funds under Title V of the OAA or any other Federal or State employment subsidy program, or the equivalent of such employment as measured by the earnings of a participant through the use of wage records or other appropriate methods.

#### **16.2. Placement Goal**

EOEA has an unsubsidized job placement goal that is communicated to Sub-grantees prior to the start of each program year. This goal is a percentage of the total number of participants that must be placed in unsubsidized jobs. The number of placements needed by each Sub-grantee is determined by multiplying the number of SCSEP positions allocated to each Sub-grantee agreement with EOEA by the set percentage target.

If a Sub-grantee does not reach the goal during an annual program performance period, the Sub-grantee must submit a plan for corrective action. The plan must clearly describe the steps which will be taken to ensure that the goal will be met in the future.



### 16.3 Methods to Achieve Placement Goal

Sub-grantees can use the following methods to reach the placement goal:

- **Contacting private or public employers** for the purpose of job development;
- **Encouraging Host Agencies** to hire participants as regular employees;
- **Providing assistance** to participants seeking unsubsidized employment through job search skills training, job clubs, and job referrals, and by arranging job interviews;
- **Coordinating** with State employment agencies/Job Service offices, One Stop Career Centers, and other employment and training programs; and
- **Reaching out** to the employment community through advisory councils, public service announcements, flyers, brochures, job fairs and hot lines.

### 16.4 Reporting Unsubsidized Placements

Placements must be reported to EOEA each month as they occur. A placement must be entered into the SPARQ database when it occurs. However, the placement will not be counted until 30 days of employment in the first 90 days after program exit is verified and entered in the database. The Sub-grantee will use the **Unsubsidized Employment and Exit Form** to record placement information.

If a participant is placed after he or she exits the program, the placement may still be counted by the project **if the placement provided 30 days of employment within 90 days after program exit.**

If the former participant cannot be confirmed as still employed after 30 calendar days, the placement should be reported as other terminations in the current quarter. If the former participant can be confirmed in the subsequent quarter as still employed after 30 calendar days, the placement may be counted on that quarterly report.

### 16.5 Unsubsidized Employment Follow-Up

Follow-up services are required to ensure the success of the placement and to maintain high employment retention rates for the program. A member of the MA-SCSEP Sub-grantee staff



must contact the former participant and his/her employer **30 days after placement**, again **at 180 days after program exit**, and again **after the end of the third quarter after program exit**. It is also strongly recommended that contact be made weekly or every 10 days during the first month to ensure there will be a placement after 30 days, and again at two or three months to ensure six months retention. If problems arise, they often occur during this time frame. Regular follow-up can identify problems and give staff an opportunity to initiate actions to deal with them before a former participant is terminated or leaves a job.

Follow-up contacts may be made by telephone, mail, or e-mail. During the follow-up contact, the SCSEP Employment Specialist will:

- **determine** if both the former participant and the employer are satisfied with the placement;
- **identify** any current or potential problems that could result in a termination of the former participant; and
- **offer** job counseling or referrals to community agencies, when appropriate, to resolve any issues.

The **SCSEP Participant Unsubsidized Placement Follow-Up form** generated by the SPARQ database should be used to document follow-up contacts.

## **16.6 Re-enrollment After Placement**

Former participants who lose their unsubsidized positions through no fault of their own or due to illness may be re-enrolled into SCSEP, provided that the re-enrollment occurs **within one year** of termination from the program, and that they meet **all required eligibility factors**. Former participants who lose their unsubsidized positions through no fault of their own within 30 days of program exit should receive priority for reenrollment.



## **Section 17**

### **On-the-Job Experience (OJE)**

#### **17.1 Background**

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder (Elder Affairs) Affairs requested authorization from the US Department of Labor to include the On-the-Job Experience (OJE) Training Option in its employment and training program for SCSEP participants. Elder Affairs sees great potential for the OJE component as a means of encouraging employers to hire older workers and realize first hand the benefits derived from employing this population group. The reimbursement features of OJE are along the same lines as other On-The-Job Training Options in Department of Labor funded programs – to reimburse employers for a temporary period for the costs of developing employee skills needed to perform a specific job.

#### **17.2 OJE Employers**

The employers Sub-grantees proceed with must demonstrate, through interviews, that they are committed to hiring OJE participants and can see the mutual benefits in participating in the projects. The general characteristics of these employers will include:

- A commitment to hiring older workers
- A willingness to develop a formal training program geared to the needs of the OJE participant
- A commitment to tracking on the OJE participants' skills attainment in line with the OJE Employer Agreement provisions.
- A commitment to hire the participant at the start of the OJE arrangement
- Demonstrated adherence to all applicable safety and health requirements
- A commitment of continuing to employ the participant after the OJE training period is completed



### **17.3 Recordkeeping**

OJE records are maintained in the same manner as records for regular participants. Each participant has a folder in which pertinent documents relating to his/her application, eligibility determination, assessment results (initial and updates), IEP (initial and updates), host agency assignment, OJE contract, OJE training plan, and progress reports through monitoring will be kept. All other necessary documentation such as employer timesheets or invoices must also be kept in the participant folder. Participant folders are reviewed during on-site monitoring visits from MA SCSEP staff.

### **17.4 Employer Reimbursement/Participant Wages**

The reimbursement model allows the participant to be in an actual employer-employee relationship during the experience. This model puts a greater level of commitment on the employer since the participant is actually on the employer's payroll. The MA SCSEP reimburses the employer from SCSEP's Employee Wages and Fringe funds, for skill development costs. Sub-grantees determine whether to use the option of 100% reimbursement for up to a four-week OJE or up to 50% reimbursement for an OJE period of not more than twelve weeks. OJE employers are expected to pay the prevailing wage for the position the participant is hired for.

### **17.5 Safety and Healthy Work Conditions**

OJE participants are monitored on the same basis as regular SCSEP participants working at community host sites. Program staff routinely includes health and safety issues. Since the participants will be in unsubsidized jobs after the OJE, MA SCSEP staff will ensure former participants have an open door to raise issues about safety and health issues. Participants may be considered for re-enrollment if they report unsafe or unhealthy conditions. Such reports would be crucial factors in considering employers for future OJE contracts with that employer.



## **17.6 Worker's Compensation**

Since the reimbursement model calls for the participant to be hired by the employer at the start of the OJE, the participant will be covered by the employer's workers compensation policy as would any other employee.



## **Section 18**

### **Program Management Requirements**

The responsibilities of the Sub-grantee with regard to the recruitment, enrollment, training and assignment of eligible participants are addressed in previous sections of this Operation Manual. This section addresses additional requirements to ensure the successful administration of the MA SCSEP.

#### **18.1 Sub-grantee Staffing**

The Sub-grantee must maintain an adequate number of staff to administer the Program effectively. The recommended staffing formula is based on 5 FTE per 30 slots (1FTE Program Coordinator to manage day-to-day program operations, additional SCSEP staff: 1FTE employment specialist, 1FTE job developer, 1 FTE host agency liaison, 1FTE payroll clerk)

SCSEP Sub-grantees infrastructure:

- A central office within the local region with these features:
  - Accessible by public transportation (optional)
  - Provide transportation (to meetings and/or job) (optional)
  - Adequate rooms for meetings, training programs (required)
  - A computer lab with internet access (required)
  - Paper file storage system (required)
  - Handicap accessible (required)
- Experience in workforce development for population with barriers to employment (required)
- Existing pipelines with local employers (required)
- Ability to conduct multiple in-house job search and on the job skills-based training programs (required)



- Built relationships with WIA partners (required) that include but not limited to formal MOUs with local WIBs, community colleges, One Stop Career Centers, co-location at One Stop Career Centers, and other WIA resources.
- An understanding of cultural competency;
- Staff on site for supervision, and understanding of the public benefits options;
- Fiscal operations established to efficiently manage employee payroll and all other program data reports (required);
- Volunteer Department (an available pool of volunteers to provide one-on-one coaching for SCSEP participants, run Job Clubs, act as job coaches) (optional, yet strongly preferred);
- Marketing Department/Person (optional, yet strongly preferred)
  - Facebook/blog/e-newsletter to reach current/potential host employers
- Fundraising Expertise with Plan to support SCSEP program (required).



Sub-grantees are also encouraged to consider assigning SCSEP participants to administrative positions such as Job Developers and Employment Specialists.

The Sub-grantee must provide EOEA a list of staff, their job titles and the areas/ regions they are responsible for. EOEA must be notified of any staff changes. If staff is reduced due to budget constraints, the Sub-grantee must document how a job function or region will be covered with the reduction.

### **18.2 Data Collection and Reporting**

The Sub-grantee must ensure that accurate data is submitted in a timely manner to SPARQ database, as required by EOEA and the [Department of Labor](#) (DOL). In addition, the Sub-grantee must ensure that the staff responsible for capturing and recording data is familiar with the latest instructions for data collection, including DOL issuances such as Older Worker Bulletins, TEGLs, the [Data Collection Handbook](#), [the Data Validation Handbook](#) and internet postings.

### **18.3 Over Enrollment**

The Sub-grantee is responsible for managing over enrollment to minimize impact on Participants and avoid layoffs. EOEA may require Sub-grantees to develop and implement a corrective action plan to bring the number of enrolled Participants to the appropriate level.

### **18.4. Performance Accountability Requirements**

The policy requires that a Performance Accountability System hold each Grantee (National Sponsors and States) responsible for attaining quality levels of performance with respect to core performance measures.

For each Grantee, the Secretary of labor is authorized to establish performance measures designed to promote continuous improvement in performance. Performance measures consist of indicators of performance and levels of performance applicable to each indicator.



## Core Performance Indicators Measures

SCSEP has six core performance measures that are defined below:

**Community Service Hours**– The number of hours of community services in the reporting period divided by the number of hours of community service funded by the grant minus the number of paid training hours in the reporting period

**Entered Employment** – Of those not employed at the time of participation, the number of participants employed in the first quarter after the exit quarter divided by the number of participants who exit during the quarter

**Employment Retention** – Of those participants who are employed in the first quarter after the exit quarter, the number employed in both the second and third quarters after the exit quarter divided by the number of participants who exit during the quarter

**Average Earnings** – Participants who are employed in the first, second and third quarters after the quarter of program exit, total earnings in the second and third quarters after the exit quarter, divided by the number of exited participants during the period

**Service Level** – The number of participants who are active on the last day of the reporting period or who exited during the reporting period divided by the number of modified community service positions

**Service to Most-in-Need** – Average number of barriers per participant. Barriers are defined as follows:

- severe disability
- frail
- age 75 or older
- old enough for but not receiving SS Title II
- severely limited employment prospects and living in an area of persistent unemployment
- limited English proficiency
- low literacy skills
- disability
- veterans
- low employment prospects
- failed to find employment after using WIA Title I



- homeless or at risk of homelessness

Service to the Most-in-Need is determined by taking the total number of barriers reported during the reporting period divided by the number of participants who are active on the last day of the reporting period and those who exited during the reporting period

### **Additional Performance Measures**

Retention at 1 Year – Of those participants who are employed in the first quarter after the exit quarter: the number of participants who are employed in the fourth quarter after the exit quarter divided by the number of participants who exit during the quarter

Customer Satisfaction:

- Average ACSI for employers
- Average annual ACSI for participants
- Annual average ACSI for host agencies

Any other indicator of performance that the Secretary determines to be appropriate to evaluate services and performance

The core indicators of performance and additional indicators of performance are applicable to each grantee without regard to whether the grantee operates the program directly or through Sub-grantees or agreements with other entities. Each program year, the Department of Labor will determine if Grantees have met the established level of performance.

### **Determining Success**

At the beginning of each program year the Department of Labor proposes a performance level for each core indicator, taking into account any statutory performance requirements, the need to promote continuous improvement in the program overall and in each grantee, the grantee's past performance, and the statutory adjustment factors.

Success will be based on an aggregate calculation of performance. The aggregate is calculated by combining the percentage of goal achieved on each of the 6 individual core indicators to obtain an average score. A score of 80 – 100 percent meets the performance level. A score of 100+ exceeds the performance level. All measures are equally important and there will be no



weighting one over another. Sub-grantees must balance program priorities to meet the performance level in all performance measures.

### **Consequences for Poor Performance**

Once baseline performance levels are determined, the Secretary of Labor will take corrective action if a State Unit on Aging does not attain levels of performance.

If the State grantee does not meet performance measures in the State grantee for one program year, DOL will provide technical assistance and the Secretary will require the state to submit a Corrective Action Plan not later than 160 days after the end of the Program Year. The corrective action plan must detail the steps the State Unit on Aging will take to meet the expected levels of performance in the next program year.

If DOL determines that the State grantee fails to meet the expected levels of performance for 3 consecutive program years, DOL will require the Governor to conduct a competition to award the funds allocated to the State under §506 (e) of the OAA for the first full program year following DOL's determination. The new grantee will be responsible for administering the SCSEP in the State and will be subject to the same requirements and responsibilities as had the State Unit on Aging.

DOL will annually evaluate, publish and make available for public review, information about the actual performance of each grantee with respect to the levels of performance, compared to expected levels of performance and the actual performance of each grantee with respect to the levels achieved for each of the additional indicators of performance. The results of DOL's annual evaluation will be reported to Congress.

### **18.5 Reporting to EOEA by Sub-grantees**

MA-SCSEP Sub-grantees provide the following reports to EOEA.

#### **Program Year Workplan**

Every year EOEA establishes program performance goals and measurable objectives for all Sub-grantees. These are based on the DOL's performance measures. They also reflect changes in the Labor Market Information, regional job trends and past year successes.



The Sub-grantee’s workplan is submitted once a year at the beginning of fiscal year and is a part of the contract. The workplan needs to outline specific steps to increase job placement, and meeting the program performance goals. Sub-grantee’s workplan needs to be detailed; it has to be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely. For each of six program performance goals, action steps and specific initiatives must be detailed by Sub-grantee, with assigned staff, a timeline and budget. A workplan is a living document, it is updated and revised quarterly. Quarterly revisions must be submitted electronically to the EOEA 30 calendar days after the quarter end.

Sample workplan template:

**PY11 Workplan for *Agency Name***

To be completed by: MA-SCSEP subgrantee  
 Deadline:

Done?	Objective 1.	Due By:	Staff Assigned	Budget	Results	Notes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Planning					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Preparation					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 1.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 2.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 3.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 4.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 5.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paperwork					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Follow-up					
Done?	Objective 2.	Due By:	Staff Assigned	Budget	Results	Notes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Planning					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Preparation					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 1.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 2.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 3.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 4.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 5.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paperwork					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Follow-up					
Done?	Objective 3	Due By:	Staff Assigned	Budget	Results	Notes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Planning					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Preparation					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 1.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 2.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 3.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 4.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Task 5.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paperwork					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Follow-up					

**Bi-weekly Payroll Reports**

Participant wage (no fringe benefits) spending data is submitted to EOEA electronically bi-weekly on the first work day following the payroll day.



### **SPARQ data reports**

These reports are on-going. Participants' data must be entered into SPARQ on a weekly basis. Every Monday, data must be checked for rejects and warnings. Sub-grantees must follow all EOEA communications regarding SPARQ quarterly shutdown schedule and data maintenance dates.

SPARQ quarter-end processing typically is scheduled for 30 calendar days after the quarter ends. Year-end data processing is scheduled 90 days after the year ends.

### **18.6 Program Monitoring**

The Sub-grantee shall have adequate administrative and accounting controls, personnel standards, evaluation programs and other policies as may be necessary to promote the effective use of funds and to comply with SCSEP regulations.

In addition, Sub-grantees are required to:

- Maintain Community Service Assignment at the total assigned authorized slot level
- Place participants in unsubsidized employment each year as established by the negotiated performance standards
- Keep spending on budget at the monthly-authorized spending levels

EOEA monitors Sub-grantees annually through Data Validation and Program Monitoring on-site visits.