



# GREATER NEW BEDFORD WORKFORCE BOARD

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **MassHire Greater New Bedford Unveils Upcoming Workforce Initiative to Support Veterans and Their Spouses in Transition to Civilian Careers**

**New Bedford, MA** – The MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Development Board announced today a new \$350,000 grant providing comprehensive transitional support to veterans and their spouses that will begin in 2025. The Veterans/Spouses Transitional Assistance Grant (VSTAG), funded by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, will provide additional funds to improve veterans' access to tools and resources necessary for a successful transition to civilian life. Services may include training and supports that align with professional growth goals for in-demand careers, enabling veterans to compete for well-paying jobs in line with labor market demands.

This new initiative will serve to expand upon existing services currently offered through the MassHire Greater New Bedford Career Center for Veterans and their families. The new grant will complement the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) currently available to qualified disabled veterans through our Veterans Employment Representative, Matt Sutton. This new initiative will provide enhanced support to all former service members and their spouses in securing sustainable and fulfilling employment.

The project will operate in Greater New Bedford, which is home to approximately 22,722 veterans who often face significant barriers to employment. A service related disability is reported by nearly half of these veterans, and 5% of them have experienced poverty. The project recognizes that both veterans and their spouses often encounter role adjustments, social isolation, and employment difficulties because of frequent relocation, and gaps in civilian work experience. To address these challenges, the initiative will offer essential services, including workshops in resume writing, interviewing skills, career readiness, and access to occupational training in

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high-demand fields, such as healthcare, manufacturing, IT, and renewable energy. These efforts will focus on empowering veterans and their spouses to build financial independence.

The project will be administered by the MassHire Greater New Bedford Career Center, which will handle referrals, intake, case management, and job search assistance. This project will have a dedicated Case Manager that will complement the services currently available through the DVOP program. The Case Manager will conduct individualized employment assessments to help participants develop personalized employment plans tailored to their goals. The Career Center's Business Services Unit will assist with job placement by leveraging partnerships with local companies to ensure a smooth path to employment in the region.

"This project is about more than job placement; it's about empowering veterans and their families to succeed in civilian life," said Duarte Silva, Interim Chair/Vice Chair of the Board at MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Development Board. "By equipping them with targeted skills and support, we're fostering resilience and stability in our community and creating pathways to meaningful careers."

The initiative also emphasizes supporting underserved populations within the veteran community, including women veterans, veterans with disabilities, and minority veterans. Post-placement, case managers will continue to track participants' employment outcomes to ensure long-term success, aligned with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) performance standards.

Starting in March 2025, veterans and their families in the Greater New Bedford area are encouraged to contact the MassHire Greater New Bedford Career Center for more information on eligibility and enrollment. This initiative reaffirms the community's commitment to honoring the service of veterans by empowering them to lead productive and prosperous lives post-service.

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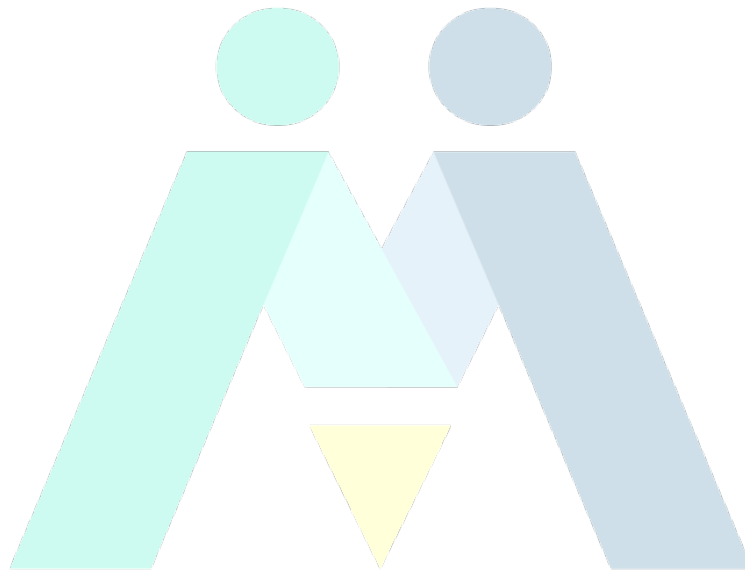
### **About the MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Board**

The MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Board is a business-led, policy-setting board that oversees workforce development initiatives in the ten-community region stretching from Dartmouth to Wareham, MA. Appointed by New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell, the Board is composed of business, civic, education, labor, and community leaders.

MassHire Programs & Services are funded in part by U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Employment and Training Administration grants as well as non-federal funded grants. (Additional details

furnished upon request.)

The Workforce Board oversees workforce development efforts in Acushnet, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Freetown, Lakeville, Marion, Mattapoisett, New Bedford, Rochester, and Wareham. The Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board is one of 16 similar Boards in Massachusetts. Workforce Investment Boards direct federal, state and private funding for educational and occupational skills programs.



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