

MATURE ALASKANS SEEKING SKILLS TRAINING (MASST)

Senior Community Service Employment
Program (SCSEP)

Older Americans Act Title V

MASST Participant Manual

State of Alaska

Labor and Workforce Development

Division of Employment & Training Services

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WELCOME TO THE MATURE ALASKANS SEEKING SKILLS TRAINING

The information in this booklet explains your opportunities, responsibilities, and privileges in Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training (MASST). MASST is Alaska's implementation of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) under Title V of the Older Americans Act, and it operates under U.S. Department of Labor regulations in 20 CFR Part 641. The program provides paid, part-time community service training at public or nonprofit organizations to help you build skills and recent work experience, with the goal of moving you into regular, unsubsidized employment for economic self-sufficiency.

You will review this manual at enrollment and sign a Statement of Understanding confirming you know MASST is a training-to-employment program and that you agree to actively look for work.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

MASST offers paid, part-time community service training assignments. While you train at a host agency, you update your skills and provide valuable service to your community, and MASST staff support your job search and transition to regular employment. SCSEP rules require MASST to integrate with the One-Stop (Alaska Job Center Network) so you can use career and training services while you participate in MASST.

PARTICIPANT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

From the day you enroll, you agree to actively look for work. This includes keeping your AlaskaJobs résumé posted as "Active Online," updating it regularly, responding to job referrals, and submitting proof of job search with each timesheet. You work with MASST staff to create and update your Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that lists your job goal, training you need, supportive services, and next steps toward unsubsidized employment. Your MASST assessment and IEP count for the One-Stop (Alaska Job Center), and a One-Stop assessment/IEP counts for MASST, as set in local agreements, so you do not repeat the same steps.

Attendance at all required MASST meetings and trainings is mandatory and critical to program participation. These sessions are scheduled in place of your training hours on the designated days. If you are unable to attend, you must notify MASST in advance and request approval for an excused absence. Unapproved or repeated absences may result in corrective action, consistent with program policy.

AK JOBS REGISTRATION

MASST participants maintain an Alaska Jobs account and ensure at least one résumé is "Active Online." Check your profile and résumé frequently, keep your contact information current, and respond to job referrals in a timely manner. Because MASST is a training program and not covered employment for unemployment insurance purposes, MASST wages cannot be used to establish a new unemployment insurance claim; if you already have a claim, report any MASST earnings as required by Alaska law.

ENROLLMENT, INTAKE AND ASSESSMENT

Eligibility is based on age (55+), unemployment status, and income at or below 125 percent of the HHS poverty guidelines. A person with a documented disability may be treated as a family of one for income eligibility, at the applicant's option. MASST confirms eligibility on application and at least once every twelve months. Income is calculated using whichever method is more favorable to you: either the preceding twelve months or annualized for the last six months. Certain income does not count, including SSI, 25 percent of Social Security Title II benefits, and specified veterans' or public benefits.

At enrollment, MASST completes an assessment and works with you to develop your IEP. This plan guides your training assignment and job search, and it is updated regularly.

LENGTH OF ENROLLMENT

Under federal regulation, SCSEP participation is limited to 48 months in total lifetime, whether or not consecutive, or your enrollment date. MASST will inform you of this limit at enrollment and include transition steps to unsubsidized employment in your IEP. Alaska follows a strict 48-month limit with no waivers and requires a written transition plan and participant acknowledgment.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

MASST may provide supportive services necessary to help you participate and move toward a regular job. These can include transportation help, required clothing or shoes for training, job-related counseling, and other reasonable items listed in your IEP. MASST offers an annual physical exam as a benefit. The exam is optional and not a condition of eligibility; if you decline, MASST will document your refusal within sixty workdays from the start of your assignment, as required. If you choose to take the medical exam, MASST can pay for it, and the results belong to you. MASST provides workers' compensation. Benefits are offered uniformly within the project unless the Department of Labor approves an exception.

PERSONNEL PRACTICES AND POLICIES

Payroll. MASST uses two pay periods each month, issuing payroll on the 15th and the last day of the month. To ensure on time pay, you must submit signed timesheets on the 1st and 16th. As a MASST participant, you are paid \$15 per hour for the time you spend on training at your community service assignment, and your hours may not exceed the agreed-upon limit. Paychecks include required federal withholdings and payroll taxes and are released by direct deposit.

Part-time training hours. MASST assignments are part-time. MASST schedules are designed to keep assignments part-time, so that you can seek regular employment or attend additional training outside of MASST.

Holidays. MASST is a training program. On Alaska legal holidays, participants do not train and may receive up to four (4) hours of holiday pay under MASST policy. The Alaska legal

holidays are New Year's Day (January 1); Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday (third Monday in January); Presidents' Day (third Monday in February); Seward's Day (last Monday in March); Memorial Day (last Monday in May); Juneteenth Day (June 19); Independence Day (July 4); Labor Day (first Monday in September); Alaska Day (October 18); Veterans' Day (November 11); Thanksgiving Day (fourth Thursday in November); and Christmas Day (December 25). If, in rare cases, a host agency operates on a legal holiday and a participant chooses to train rather than volunteer to take the day off, the participant is paid the regular MASST wage for the hours actually worked and agreed upon; no overtime, premium pay, or additional holiday pay is provided. Under SCSEP rules, MASST pays only for hours worked, orientation, training, and time receiving WIOA career services while assigned.

Observed dates: When a legal holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, Alaska's observance rules control which weekday is treated as the holiday; MASST follows the State Holidays calendar for observed dates each year.

Breaks and meal periods. In Alaska, employers are not required to provide rest breaks or meal periods to adult. When short breaks are provided, breaks of about 5 to 10 minutes must be treated as paid work time. A bona fide meal period of about 30 minutes or more may be unpaid only if you are completely relieved of all duty during the meal. To ensure meal periods are bona fide, please do not eat at your workstation and do not perform any work while eating; take your meal away from the work area and remain fully off duty for the entire meal period. If any duty remains, such as staying at your station, answering phones, or monitoring customers, the time counts as hours worked and must be paid.

Time and attendance. Keep accurate records at your host site. Timesheets must be signed by both your host-site supervisor and MASST staff and submitted on time.

PARTICIPANT MEETINGS

MASST holds periodic meetings or teleconferences to share program updates, provide employment information and training, and discuss program matters. Attendance is required and scheduled in lieu of your training hours on those days. If you cannot attend, notify MASST in advance so staff can document any approved exception.

IEP-RELATED TERMINATIONS

Under federal rules, refusal to follow IEP requirements without good cause may lead to termination. MASST seeks to avoid termination whenever possible and uses progressive discipline when appropriate. All terminations follow the grievance procedure and include written notice.

TERMINATION FOR CAUSE

In serious cases, such as knowingly providing false information that results in incorrect eligibility, refusal of a reasonable number of job referrals or offers consistent with your IEP and there are no extenuating circumstances, or willful violations of program rules, MASST may end participation only after sending you a written thirty-day notice explaining the

reason(s) and including your grievance rights. If you become no longer eligible at recertification, or if your initial eligibility was correctable error through no fault of your own, MASST will also use the thirty-day written notice process. Participants cannot be terminated solely due to age, and MASST does not set any upper age limit for participation.

DISCIPLINARY/TERMINATION PROCESS

MASST uses progressive discipline to help participants correct issues. Staff begin with a documented verbal warning and coaching, may issue a written warning if needed, and only then, if issues persist or the situation is serious, issue a termination letter with a thirty-day effective date and grievance instructions. If a host site requests your immediate removal from its premises, please comply right away; MASST will then assess reassignment or exit consistent with policy and the thirty-day notice requirement.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

You have the right to a fair process. MASST maintains a written grievance procedure for applicants, participants, and employees, and will explain it at enrollment and whenever a termination is proposed. This procedure covers complaints between the grantee, its staff or subrecipients, and program participants. The U.S. Department of Labor does not decide the merits of program complaints; it reviews whether the grievance procedure was followed.

For program complaints (not about nondiscrimination), start by using MASST's grievance procedure. If your complaint alleges a violation of Federal law and it is not resolved within sixty days, you may send it to the Chief, Division of Adult Services, Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20210. ETA will review substantial and credible allegations and address them. You may request alternative dispute resolution (ADR) where available.

For nondiscrimination (equal opportunity) complaints, if you believe you were discriminated against or retaliated against based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, related medical conditions, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin including limited English proficiency, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, citizenship status, or because of your participation in a WIOA Title I program, you may file a written complaint within 180 days. You may file with MASST's Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer or with the Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC), U.S. Department of Labor, Room N-4123, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20210, including electronic filing options described by CRC. If you file first with MASST's EO Officer and do not receive a Notice of Final Action within 90 days, you may file with CRC, but you must do so within 30 days after the 90-day period (within 120 days of your first filing). If you do receive a Notice of Final Action and are dissatisfied, you may file with CRC within 30 days of receiving the Notice. These timelines and filing routes are set by WIOA equal opportunity rules. Retaliation is prohibited.

MASST and its partners must provide EO notices and make them available in appropriate formats; if you need large print, interpreter services, or other assistance, please ask your MASST coordinator. Recipients must ensure communications with individuals with disabilities is effective and keep a record when notices are given in alternate formats.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO) LAWS

MASST complies with WIOA Section 188 and its implementing regulations in 29 CFR Part 38, as well as SCSEP nondiscrimination rules. If you believe you were discriminated against in any WIOA Title I-assisted program or activity, follow the complaint filing rules described above.

DRUGS IN THE WORKPLACE

MASST is committed to a safe, drug-free training environment. Participants must not use, possess, or be under the influence of controlled substances or alcohol while performing MASST training or attending MASST meetings. Violations may lead to corrective action up to termination under the thirty-day notice process and grievance rights.

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

No participant may engage in partisan or non-partisan political activity during MASST-paid time or while representing MASST. Placements in public agencies must be strictly non-political.

IMPORTANT THINGS

Keep your AlaskaJobs résumé “Active Online”, respond to referrals, and submit job-search proof with each timesheet. Submit timesheets on the 1st and 16th to be paid on the 15th and last day of the month. Attend MASST meetings, ask for help early, and communicate with your regional coordinator if barriers arise. Do not volunteer extra unpaid hours to do the same duties listed in your Training Description; those duties must be recorded and paid as MASST time. MASST assignments are scheduled to remain part-time so you can look for regular employment, and overtime is not permitted.

DEFINITIONS

Assessment means the review of your skills and needs completed at enrollment.

IEP (Individual Employment Plan) is your written plan for training and job search; MASST and One-Stop assessment/IEP documents are interchangeable.

CSA (Community Service Assignment) is your training placement at a public or nonprofit host agency.

IDL (Individual Durational Limit) is the forty-eight-month lifetime participation limit. Supportive Services are reasonable items or services that help you participate and move toward a regular job.

Employment Status clarifies that MASST participants are not Federal or State employees solely due to participation in a training program under applicable law.

Participant Manual Certification, Acknowledgment and Signature Page

Participant Name: _____ Participant ID (if applicable): _____
Primary Phone: _____ Email: _____
Region/Coordinator: _____ Host Agency/Assignment: _____
Start Date (CSA): _____

1) Manual Review & Job Search Attestation (Mandatory)

I have reviewed the MASST Participant Manual. I understand that MASST is a training-to-employment program and that I must be actively seeking employment to remain in the program. I further understand that if I fail to submit proof of my job searches with my time sheet, I may be removed from the program for not looking for work. Any questions I have should be directed to my regional MASST coordinator.

I attest that I am seeking employment.

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____
MASST Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____

Statement of Understanding — Durational Limit & Program (Mandatory) ☐ Initial

I understand MASST/SCSEP participation is limited to 48 months in the aggregate and that Alaska applies a hard 48-month limit with no waivers. I have discussed a transition plan to unsubsidized employment with staff. I acknowledge I received an explanation of the termination policy and that a 30-day written notice is required for any involuntary termination. I acknowledge I received the grievance and appeals procedure and understand how to file a grievance. (Ref: 20 CFR 641.910)

Participant Name: _____ Participant ID (if applicable): _____
Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____
MASST Staff Name: _____ MASST Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____

Receipt of Manual & Grievance Procedure Acknowledgment I confirm receipt of the MASST Participant Manual and the Grievance & Appeals procedure. I understand my rights and

responsibilities and how to request assistance. (Ref: 20 CFR 641.910)

Participant Name: _____ Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

MASST Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____

Annual Physical Exam Offer — Acceptance or Refusal (Participant Choice) ☐ Select one

I understand the annual physical exam is a benefit offered to me and is not an eligibility criterion. I may accept or refuse the exam. If I refuse, the program will document my refusal within 60 workdays of my community service assignment start date. (Ref: 20 CFR 641.565(b)(1)(ii))

☐ I ACCEPT the annual physical exam. Preferred provider/clinic (optional):

☐ I DECLINE the annual physical exam. (Refusal will be documented as required.)

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

MASST Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____

D) Media & Photo Release (Optional)

I authorize Alaska DOLWD/MASST or SERRC to use my name, image, and statements for program outreach, reports, and public information. I understand this authorization is voluntary and does not affect my eligibility. I may revoke consent in writing at any time.

☐ I CONSENT ☐ I DO NOT CONSENT

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

E) Host Agency Agreement & Supervisor Acknowledgment (Mandatory)

The host agency agrees to provide supervision, job-relevant training, and safe working conditions; to verify timesheets; and to coordinate with MASST on schedules, duties, and accommodations. The participant agrees to follow host agency policies and the training plan.

Host Agency Name: _____ EIN (if applicable): _____

Host Supervisor Name/Title: _____ Phone: _____

Host Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

MASST Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____

F) Data Sharing & WIOA Referral Consent (Optional) ☐ Select one

I authorize MASST to share my assessment/IEP and relevant enrollment information with the One-Stop (Alaska Job Center) and WIOA partner programs solely for service

coordination and employment placement. MASST will protect my personal identifiable information (PII) consistent with federal guidance. (Ref: 20 CFR 641.230; DOL ETA guidance on PII and SCSEP program notices)

☐ I CONSENT to data sharing for service coordination and job placement.

☐ I DO NOT CONSENT.

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

MASST Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____

Acknowledgment & Certification

By signing above, I certify I have read and understood each section, checked the appropriate boxes, and received copies of all referenced policies. I understand that MASST wages are earned income and that I must follow reporting requirements and program rules. I agree that this page may be retained in my participant file.

Return Instructions: Submit the signed original to your MASST coordinator. Keep a copy for your records.

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

MASST Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____