

SkillUP List of Frequently Asked Questions Programmatic

This FAQ provides a learning resource for SkillUP practitioners. If you have a question which is not covered in this document, please contact Ramona Mundwiller (ramona.mundwiller@mccatoday.org) at MCCA. The question and answer will be included in periodic updates to this document.

1. Who is eligible to participate in the SkillUP program?

Missouri residents who are receiving SNAP benefits currently.

There are two types of SNAP recipients:

Able Bodied Adult without Dependents (ABAWD): An 18-49 year old Food Stamp benefit recipient and: 1) Does not have a child(ren) in the household under age 18; or 2) Is not disabled, pregnant, or required to care for an ill or incapacitated household member full-time. ABAWD Training/Work Requirement: An ABAWD must participate in an allowable Component for 80 hours per calendar month during a fixed 36-month period, or they will no longer be eligible for Food Stamp benefits after a three (3) month non-compliance period. Meeting the training/work requirement can include all components and in-kind work or a combination there of.

Volunteer: A Food Stamp participant who is not an ABAWD who elects to participate in SkillUP.

2. If a participant is receiving TANF and SNAP are they eligible to participate in SkillUP?

Unfortunately, no. If the individual is receiving TANF they are not eligible to participate.

10/11/18 – During the current fiscal year several new providers are using TANF funds to engage participants in this program. However, for the colleges the above still remains true.

3. How will we know if a person is receiving SNAP assistance?

The best way to determine this is to ask the individual while he or she is on your campus. If they have a DCN number and provide it to you, you can quickly fax a request for verification to dss.fsd.agreements@dss.mo.gov on the required form.

DCN numbers are not searchable within MoJOBS. You must have the individuals full name, DOB and address to search.

4. What type of participant eligibility documentation are we required to keep?

There are several documents that may be completed in conjunction with determining eligibility. Colleges should keep a paper file of all completed documents including the faxed eligibility verification, SkillUP first contact form, video release form among others. These documents may be reviewed during monitoring visits.

5. Is there formal guidance available from USDA or MDSS?

The SkillUP Handbook is continuously updated and can be found on the FSD website <https://mydss.mo.gov/skillup-provider-information>. It is an integral part of the program and will be called out in provider contracts.

6. What is the plan for communicating with the participating colleges?

We have created the web portal www.missouricolleges.org/skillup as both the public-facing information page about SkillUP and the central repository of grant technical assistance resources, such as documents, policies, and FAQs. Schools will be notified of all updates to documents and uploads to the repository as they occur. Grant office staff will also routinely conduct site visits throughout the state to offer further technical assistance and participate in relevant conferences.

MCCA will continue to lead periodic statewide meetings at least twice a year-in the spring and fall. These meetings will provide the opportunity to learn, share, and participate in key program implementation processes and policies related to grant performance, strategies, partner collaborations, referral processes for participants, and many other grant implementation components.

7. When can we begin registering eligible students into programs?

For colleges who have begun participating July 1, 2018, you can begin registering students immediately. For those colleges coming on board October 1, students may be registered for programs which begin on or after October 1.

8. What type of programs should we focus on for these individuals?

The goal of the SkillUP program is to train/education SNAP recipients in the short term to provide them with skills to gain employment in the long term so SNAP assistance is no longer necessary. Short term is defined as programs, whether credit or non-credit, that are a year or less in length.

Each college should have a list of these programs being offered which lead to high demand jobs. After a participant is deemed eligible, interviewed and has chosen a path based on skills and interest, it's these programs that should be discussed with the participant.

9. If the students fail a course or program what happens? Are they allowed to stay in the SkillUP program and repeat courses or change to a different program that SkillUP would pay for?

This will depend on the student and the school grant-funding levels. If your funds allow for repeat students in programs and they remain as eligible participants, the guidelines don't appear to prohibit this. Each school might want to evaluate their policy in light of our participant outcome requirements and demand for services. Several factors might need to be weighed, including the likelihood for a successful outcome if the student repeated the class, whether this class was a crucial component of a larger program of study for the student, whether another student would not be able to participate if this student was allowed to repeat the class, how this would impact our overall outcome measures, etc.

10. What is the difference between an exiter and a completer?

An exiter of the SkillUP program is an individual who did not receive a credential. A completer finished a program, received a credential and moved on to pursue employment.

11. What is our performance goal for this program?

The combined goal for all 13 participating colleges for FY19 is to enroll and complete 430 students, who would then move on to job search activities.

12. What role do the WIBs play in the SkillUP program?

The Workforce Investment Boards in each region run the career centers in those regions. The career centers play a vital role in the process of engaging individuals in the SkillUP program. Many times, the career center has the first interaction with an individual. If so, case managers at the career centers will work with the individual to complete a Wagner Peyser application, a SkillUP application, an initial skills assessment, provide an orientation to job center services, provide labor market information, begin an employment plan and complete a MoJOBS resume. The career center will also refer to the community colleges for enrollment in educational training.

Although the regional job centers have their own funding for SkillUP, it is important to maintain the relationship (and even the MOU in place) built over the past several years in conjunction with the MoWINs grants.

13. How often do we need to track enrollment?

You need to track student enrollment and report to MCCA on a monthly basis. Data collection is required by MDSS/FSD and will require input from all providers, further it is extremely important to the success of the SkillUP program.

14. What platform are we using to track participants?

All SkillUP providers must use MoJOBS, the Division of Workforce Development's program. Everyone who needs access to the program must be trained.

Each participant will have a profile in MoJOBS where all services and training activity must be documented.

Guidelines for requesting access and training will be available on the MCCA SkillUP webpage.

Because the SkillUP component is not yet fully functional within MoJOBS, colleges are being asked to provide monthly reports on the approved form that include participant DCN, name, DOB, program, date class began, current status.

15. What items can be included under Outreach expenses?

This type of expense can be allowable under the right circumstances, but you need to make sure that you are carefully following the guidelines. Outreach and any related advertising needs to be very specific in scope and intent; for example, outreach/advertising to applicants to fill personnel vacancies required as part of the grant or outreach to make contact with participants for the programs specifically funded under the grant. You cannot be promoting the college or programs in general; you need to have a convincing argument that the outreach is needed to help satisfy the requirements of the grant.

16. Why do we need to have participants sign a Video Release Form?

FSD frequently uses testimonials in their marketing efforts for the SkillUP program. In fact, colleges may want to do that as well. In order to use an image or video of a SkillUP participant, a release is necessary.

The best practice is to have this document signed during one of the initial meetings, when enrolling in class, and keep it in the student's file. This could be a requested document for review during an audit or monitoring.

17. How should we handle confidential information that needs to be emailed to OTC or MCCA?

Any file that contains participant information such as name, DOB, DCN, SSN, address etc. MUST be encrypted before sending. The file should be emailed and the password for the file MUST be sent in a subsequent email.