



<b>WS 11-29</b>
<b>November 10, 2011</b>
<b>Basic and Expanded Service</b>
<b>Expires: Continuing</b>

To: Career Offices  
Financial Aid Payment Office

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SUBJECT: Elevate America Veterans Initiative

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## Purpose

Provide instructions to staff about no-cost training made available to veterans through Microsoft's Elevate America veteran's initiative.

## Background

The Microsoft Corporation, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, is providing training and certification packages to U.S. military veterans in five areas of the country. Houston is one of these areas, and we will take part in the initiative beginning this week through June 30, 2013.

Microsoft's technology training and certification is available at intermediate and advanced levels, delivered through e-learning. We will provide additional tutoring support for customers who might need assistance at four offices.

Microsoft is providing up to 1,000 vouchers each year for two years for its courses and certification exams. Veterans will obtain vouchers by registering at a Workforce Solutions office.

We are providing a poster, fact sheet, information sheet and user guide for staff and customers and will also have information available on the web at [http://www.wrksolutions.com/jobs/Elevate\\_America\\_Veterans.html](http://www.wrksolutions.com/jobs/Elevate_America_Veterans.html).

## Eligibility and Assessment

To be eligible for the Microsoft training, customers must be:

- a military veteran or eligible spouse, and
- eligible under our rules for Financial Aid of less than \$200 (e.g., documentation for eligibility includes a completed Work Addendum with one of the veteran's categories marked and photo identification).

Microsoft is providing an optional online self-assessment tool to help customers determine the type and level of training to pursue. The tool can help assess if the individual has a basic understanding of the Microsoft Office products to begin the introductory level courses or if he or she should go back to the basic, free, digital literacy programs as a starting point.

## Customer Service Process

Interested veterans must come to a Workforce Solutions office to apply. Workforce Solutions Staff and Veterans Representatives will:

1. Provide information about the training and how to apply.
2. Determine eligibility. (i.e., obtain a completed Work Addendum and a copy of the customer's photo identification and assess eligibility using Workforce Solutions guidelines for WIA Adults and financial aid under \$200)
3. Data enter the customer in TWIST as a WIA Adult.
4. If necessary, help the customer decide on a training path. Customer can use Microsoft's basic assessment as a starting point.
5. Write the customer's name on a voucher.
6. Make a copy of the voucher showing the customer's name.
7. Provide the eligible customer with the voucher.
8. Keep copies of distributed vouchers and an updated count of vouchers distributed by the office.

## Training Vouchers

When the eligible customer chooses a training track (Window/Office or IT Professional), staff will give the customer a voucher for the specified track. Vouchers for each training track include:

- Intermediate - Windows 7 and/or Office 2010:
  1. One voucher code (multi-use key) – access to the online training courses, unlimited use for 12 months.
  2. One voucher code – access to the online CertiPrep Test Preparation course for Office 2010.
  3. One voucher code – covers the cost of the proctored Microsoft Office Specialist certification exam for Office 2010 – at a CertiPrep Testing Center.
  
- Advanced - IT Professional:
  1. One voucher code (multi-use key) – access to two elearning collections, unlimited use for 12 months.
  2. One voucher code – access to the online Measure-Up Test Preparation for IT Professionals.
  3. One voucher code – covers the cost of the proctored IT Professional certification exam for IT Professionals – at a Prometric Testing Center.

The testing facility may charge a small proctoring fee. Vouchers do not cover the test fee. The Veterans will need to pay the proctoring fee out of pocket or apply for Workforce Solutions financial aid to cover the amount of the fee.

## Using the Voucher Codes

Microsoft has a step-by-step guide for activating and using voucher codes for eLearning, test preparation and certification exams. The guide is available on our website and is included as an attachment to this issuance.

In general, to access training, the customer will visit the Microsoft website to activate his or her voucher and select the appropriate elearning course to start. The customer can access the courses for 12 months from the activation date. After completing the training, the customer may choose to use her test prep voucher code to access the online test preparation course. When the customer is ready to take the certification exam, the customer will take the certification exam voucher code to a testing facility to sit for the exam.

## Training Support

Microsoft is providing support to customers who need help with the training curriculum. We're partnering with Houston Community College and Lone Star College to provide tutors who will be available to answer questions and provide instruction by email, phone or in person. Instructors will be available for two days a week at four Workforce Solutions offices. We are finalizing those arrangements and will provide them to staff and post it to the web as quickly as possible.

## Tracking Requirements

Using TWIST, staff will document the customer's eligibility for WIA funding, open a WIA program detail and track service:

1. Create TWIST record. WIA program detail and document eligibility. (If a Veteran Representative collects eligibility documentation she or he will give it to Workforce Solutions staff for TWIST data entry.)
2. Document the customer status as a participant in the initiative.

We don't require staff to create a job search map or employment plan for the customer wanting only Microsoft's training vouchers. Workforce Solutions staff will enter a TWIST Counseling Note:

*Subject: Elevate America Veterans Initiative  
Customer is participating in Microsoft's Elevate America Veterans Initiative. An employment plan is not required for customers who want only Microsoft's training vouchers.*

3. Track Service
  - o assessment (code 08-Comprehensive Objective Assessment), and
  - o short-term educational services (code 82) with worksite code T4084-Microsoft Elevate America.
4. Customers who use the vouchers aren't required to provide certification or job placement information to Workforce Solutions. However, if the customer reports their certification or job placement information to you – enter the information in TWIST Performance Data as you do with any customer.

## Action

Career Office Contractors must:

1. Make sure that all office managers, supervisors, and staff are aware of the Elevate America Veterans Initiative and know how to help customers.
2. Make sure to display the poster in career offices.
3. Make sure offices have information packets to give to interested customers. Packets should include:
  - o Veteran tri-fold folder/brochure: *In Service to our Veterans*
  - o Microsoft's flyer: *Microsoft Elevate America*
  - o Elevate America Fact Sheet
  - o Work Addendum form
4. Keep track of vouchers distributed.

## Questions

Staff should ask questions of their supervisors. Direct questions to the Board staff through the electronic Q&A posted with the policy on the website at

<http://www.wrksolutions.com/staff/policiesandprocedures.html>.

## Attachments

- Poster - Want to boost your technology skills?
- Fact Sheet - Microsoft Elevate America (Veterans Initiative Voucher Program)
- Information Sheet – Microsoft Elevate America Veterans
- User Guide - Microsoft Elevate America