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| LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM |  
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DSS-4037EL (Rev. 9/89)

Transmittal No: 94 LCM-102

Date: August 24, 1994

Division: Office of  
Employment Programs

TO: Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: Education for Gainful Employment (EDGE) IV

ATTACHMENTS: A - EDGE IV Allocations  
B - Guidelines for Federal JOBS Reimbursement Rates  
C - Planned Expenditure of EDGE IV Funds by Provider  
D - LSSD EDGE IV Summary  
E - EDGE Provider Information Summary (SED Developing)  
F - ACCESS Agencies and Consortia

All attachments available on-line.

I. Introduction

The New York State Department of Social Services (the Department) and the New York State Education Department (SED) announce the availability of the next cycle of Education for Gainful Employment (EDGE) funding, to provide up to \$ 22 million for job placement, education, training and work related services to support your continuing implementation of the Jobs FIRST program. EDGE IV will cover the period October 1, 1994 through September 30, 1995.

Each local social services district (LSSD) should plan its own EDGE IV program in cooperation with provider agencies in the community. Please be reminded that the JOBS regulations require that administrative control of this program must rest with the social services district. Therefore, the LSSD should take the lead in this planning process to ensure that local programming is responsive to the needs of clients as defined by the local district. The EDGE IV application consists of Attachments C, D and E. The complete EDGE IV

application should be submitted by the LSSD to the Department. Two copies of the EDGE IV application should be received by the Department no later than September 2, 1994 and mailed to:

Linda Strong  
EDGE Coordinator  
New York State  
Department of Social Services  
Office of Employment Programs  
40 North Pearl Street, 7B  
Albany, New York 12243-0001

In the event there are planning issues which require special attention, SDSS and SED EDGE staff are available to meet with LSSD and providers.

If LSSDs have any questions about developing their EDGE IV application, they should contact Joseph Capobianco or Linda Strong at 1-800-343-8859, extension 4-9109, or (518) 474-9109. If local educational agencies or other providers have questions on EDGE, they should contact Gary Krzeminski in the State Education Department at (518) 474-8920.

## II. Overview - Key Features of EDGE IV

A. EDGE IV maintains some of the features of EDGE III, including:

1. EDGE IV application development and submission by LSSD.
2. Funding Sources: Title IV-F (Federal); WEP - Welfare Education Preparation (State); EPE - Employment Preparation Education (State); and the funding mechanism from SED to local providers.
3. EDGE fiscal and program reporting by provider agencies to SED.
4. Focus on entry to employment (EE) as the goal and EE targets specified. Funding availability for future years will be based upon provider agency achievement of EE targets.
5. Target populations, goal of 20 hours participation per week, client tracking and reporting of attendance and satisfactory progress.
6. Development of worksite/classroom training combinations and the use of contextualization in order to make classroom instruction more work related.

7. All ADC employable (mandatory and volunteer) recipients are EDGE eligible including those ADC employables with a high school diploma or GED. Although an individual who has a high school diploma or GED is not EPE eligible, this would not preclude them from being eligible for EDGE.
  8. All applications will be jointly approved by SED and the Department.
- B. Several new and important features of EDGE IV which distinguish it from prior cycles, include:
1. Development of program activities which support the three components of the Jobs FIRST strategy:
    - A. Diverting entry to public assistance at the front end of the application process.
    - B. Preparing for self-sufficiency by emphasizing employment related activities.
    - C. Promoting exit from welfare.
  2. Adjustment of the level of the EDGE IV funds available to provider agencies based upon EDGE III performance. Provider agencies failing to attain 50% of job entry targets will not be eligible for EDGE IV funding. Providers who achieve between 50% to 84% of job entry targets will only be eligible for 85% of their EDGE III budget.
  3. Calculation of the EDGE IV EE target based on a per capita expense of \$5,500 per EE. This EE target should be viewed by LSSDs and providers as the starting point for local planning discussions. The types of services to be offered may result in a significantly lower cost per entry to employment (e.g., job club versus job skills training). These planning discussions could result in the LSSD establishing a higher EE target than identified in Attachment A.
  4. Elimination of the written Job Placement Coordination Plan requirement.
  5. Utilization of case management services to help those EDGE participants who become employed to retain employment. Case management offers the opportunity for valuable post-employment related follow-up to those clients who are at risk of losing their employment.
  6. Addition of SED's EDGE Provider Information Summary (Attachment E) which asks provider agencies to submit more detailed program information for SED via the EDGE IV application package. The information on this summary may prove useful to LSSD staff.

7. Modification of the Planned Expenditure of EDGE IV Funds by Agency (Attachment C) form. Section II now requires the number of clients to be enrolled and target entries to employment to be identified. Section III on page 2 has been added as an agency sign-off sheet.
8. A streamlined EDGE IV application including the agreement between LSSD and each EDGE provider and the LSSD EDGE IV summary.

### III. EDGE IV Program Design

The EDGE IV program must clearly reflect the principles of the Jobs FIRST strategy.

Since the EDGE III design already moved the emphasis to job placement, the EDGE IV program is geared to the Jobs FIRST philosophy with a performance based approach. Specific areas requiring attention in the EDGE IV plan process include: assurance that employment placement services are available to all EDGE/JOBS participants; coordination of services among agencies to reduce program overlap; strengthened case management services across agencies; and improved data exchange procedures from provider agencies to local district in order to strengthen the accountability of client attendance and satisfactory progress. Work based learning comprised of Community Work Experience (CWEP) or other work related activities such as internships can be combined with basic education to emphasize work while basic skills are being improved. Finally, it is imperative that participants, staff and management understand that the purpose of participation in EDGE/JOBS is to obtain and keep a job. The experience of prior EDGE and JOBS programs demonstrated that significant numbers of participants will be placed in jobs, LDSS and providers are asked to work toward achieving best possible employment outcomes, e.g., permanent jobs which clients are likely to retain or those situations which may lead to such job opportunities.

Local districts which are currently implementing the Jobs FIRST Front Door should utilize services available through EDGE IV programs to support their Front Door model. For example, LSSDs and provider staff may offer services such as job placement and job clubs to individuals applying for public assistance who are determined to be job ready.

SSDs and provider agencies should design an EDGE IV approach which demonstrates greater participation in those JOBS components which readily promote job entry, such as job readiness training, job club, job skills training, CWEP and Work Supplementation. Please note that educational instruction may be included in the mix of services since mastery of basic skills is an important asset in job acquisition, job retention and career mobility. Just as important, however, is the fact that work is a unifying element to Basic and Occupational Education. Participants must

gain the skills necessary to get a job in the local work force, to succeed in and hold a job, and to learn on the job for future career mobility. Classroom training may or may not be necessary for such preparation.

Involvement from the business community is essential to realize more entries to employment. Employers can identify local labor market needs and entry level qualifications for new workers. A coordinated job placement strategy should be designed that maximizes the involvement of employers.

The EDGE IV allocation is predicated on EDGE III performance. As in EDGE III, each LSSD will have a target of the number of EEs to achieve. The EDGE IV cycle EE target will be calculated on a per capita expense of \$5,500 per EE. The target is based on the total LSSD allocation and each EDGE provider agency should be responsible to achieve a portion of the EE target. Local districts have discretion to determine if each EDGE provider agency will be assigned an EE target. The LSSD must assure that the EE target based upon their EDGE IV allocation is assigned whether each EDGE provider has a target or not.

EDGE IV will expand the relationship between performance and future funding by tying future EDGE funding in EDGE V to the county's ability to attain job entry targets. In the event EDGE programs within a LSSD fail to achieve their job entry targets, so that the county fails to achieve its job entry target, the LSSD will receive a reduced EDGE V allocation. Local districts have been asked to work closely with provider agencies to maximize job entries. Local districts should periodically review provider performance in order to ensure job entry targets are met. Where necessary, the LSSD may wish to restructure service provider arrangements for those agencies unable to meet job entry targets.

IV. The EDGE IV ALLOCATION

A. EDGE IV Funding Sources:

Your district's EDGE IV allocation is provided in Attachment A of this LCM. As in EDGE III, the allocation is comprised of both federal and state funds. JOBS provides the Federal Title IV-F funds. The State share is derived from two sources of State Education Department funds: a fixed State appropriation and a variable amount of EPE (Employment Preparation Education) State aid. The EDGE IV allocation is contingent upon the ability of EPE - generating agencies to target a portion of EPE funds to EDGE IV activities. Therefore, each county will be assigned an EPE target.

The EDGE IV allocations are based upon the LSSD's ADC employable caseload as of March 1994. Each local district's allocation is commensurate to its proportion of the total statewide ADC employable caseload, i.e., if the LSSD's total ADC employable individuals represents 2% of the statewide total then its EDGE IV allocation is 2% of the EDGE total. However, to avoid creating a hardship for a local district and disrupting the provision of EDGE program services, no LSSD will receive more than a 15% reduction of their EDGE III allocation. The 15% hold harmless applied to the allocation formula is a change from previous draft releases of this LCM. If you have already submitted your EDGE IV application or completed your EDGE IV planning, SDSS and SED will be responsible for modifying your EDGE IV budget to reflect the change in your county's allocation

The EDGE IV allocations will only be available to the extent that Federal IV-F funds are available.

B. Flexibility in spending EDGE IV funds:

As defined in federal JOBS regulations, the Title IV-F funds can comprise either 60% or 50% of an EDGE expenditure depending on the type of expenditure. A 60% level of federal reimbursement applies to costs of providing direct client services to EDGE components. A 50% level of federal reimbursement applies to costs indirectly related to providing these services. (A complete description of 60% and 50% reimbursable expenditures is included as Attachment B of this LCM.) EDGE expenditures may not include payments made to EDGE participants. The district's potential for a maximum EDGE IV allocation can be achieved if all costs are eligible for the 60% rate of federal reimbursement. This would be attainable by devoting all EDGE IV funds to direct EDGE program components. To the extent the provider agency elects to spend EDGE IV funds on 50% reimbursable costs, its EDGE IV allocation will be reduced. In order to insure adequate levels of direct program expenditure and to allow some flexibility as well, districts may allow as much as 8% of an agency's maximum allocation to be spent on 50% reimbursable costs. Districts and provider agencies should be advised that use of activities which are reimbursable at a 50% matching rate will reduce the overall funding availability of EDGE for the LSSD and the provider.

C. Continued EDGE V Funding

1. EDGE IV providers must meet a minimum of 70% of their EE target to be eligible for EDGE V funding.
2. Providers who achieve between 71% to 84% of their EE target will only be eligible for 85% of EDGE V funding levels.
3. Local social services districts must meet the county EE targets in order for their EDGE V allocations to remain comparable to their EDGE IV funding level.

V. The EDGE Application

Each application must include the following items:

- \_ Planned Expenditure of EDGE IV Funds by Provider (Attachment C);
- \_ LSSD EDGE IV Summary (Attachment D); and,
- \_ EDGE Provider Information Summary (Attachment E).

A. Planned Expenditures of EDGE IV Funds by Provider (Attachment C)

This form is to be completed by each EDGE IV provider agency in order to specify how EDGE IV funds will be spent. The budget should project expenditures for a one year period.

B. LSSD EDGE IV Summary (Attachment D)

The purpose of this submission is to provide a summary of your county's overall EDGE IV program. It should reflect information from all EDGE IV funded provider agencies. All questions need to be answered clearly and completely.

C. EDGE Provider Information Summary (Attachment E)

SED requires each EDGE provider to complete this form. The form must be included with the LSSD's EDGE IV application package. EDGE providers should direct any questions regarding this summary to Gary Krzeminski at (518) 474-8920.

VI. ACCESS Agencies and Consortia

The statewide EDGE IV program will continue to provide support for ACCESS Agencies and Consortia. ACCESS Agencies which receive EDGE funds provide a variety of education and training programs and services to meet the needs of EDGE clients. ACCESS Agencies provide core educational components, including adult basic education, English as a second language and high school equivalency instruction; non-degree adult occupational training in areas of labor market need; and life management instruction (e.g., employability skills, parenting, health and nutrition). At the heart of ACCESS Agencies are the services that help to meet the individual needs of adults and link separate components into a continuum of service. These services include full-time case management and counseling; comprehensive educational assessment and career counseling; on-site child care; parent education and family literacy programs; and job development and placement services.

In some areas, rather than a single agency providing these comprehensive services, a lead education agency will network with other service providers to ensure that a full range of services is available to adult students in a particular area. These initiatives are referred to as ACCESS Consortia.

ACCESS Agencies and Consortia are allocated funds from several funding sources to support the ACCESS initiative. Funds allocated to agencies specifically for ACCESS are used to provide services for adults with multiple barriers to participation in education and training programs. In addition to county EDGE grants, EDGE funds are allocated to ACCESS Agencies and Consortia to ensure that they place a priority on serving ADC recipients. These funds are used primarily to support case management, career counseling and job development/placement services.

Local districts which are currently implementing the Jobs FIRST FRONT Door should consider the services provided by ACCESS Agencies and Consortia through statewide EDGE funding to support their Front Door model. For example, assessment services provided by ACCESS Agencies may help in determining which clients are job ready. For those clients who are not job ready, ACCESS Agencies may provide career counseling, job training, work experience programs or other activities.

A list of the ACCESS Agencies and Consortia is provided as Attachment F.

As mentioned earlier, questions concerning this release may be directed to either Joe Capobianco or Linda Strong at 1-800-343-8859 or (518) 474-9109.

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Jack Ryan  
Assistant Commissioner  
Office of Employment Programs