Guidance for Engaging SkillUP Participants during COVID-19

Colleges across the state have moved to remote and virtual operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of these circumstances, SkillUP navigators and coordinators (aka case managers) are unable, in many instances, to meet with participants face to face. The following guidance is meant to assist them in enrolling participants in the SkillUP program during the pandemic and should be used in concert with each college’s policies currently in place.

Interview:

If case managers are unable to meet with the participant in person, they are highly encouraged to use Zoom, GoogleMeet, Microsoft Teams or another video platform. The telephone is also an option. Using only email is not acceptable.

During this interview, the MoJOBs application should be completed. If the case manager is engaging via a video platform, an option would be to share his/her screen with the participant to ensure a complete understanding of the questions being asked, and to keep the participant engaged.

Along with completing the MoJOBs application, there are required paper documents to be completed and signed by the participant.

Paperwork:

In order to not create additional barriers for participants, using PDF fillable documents is encouraged. Completing required documents while virtually meeting with participants is also encouraged, as opposed to sending blank documents out for completion without the assistance of the case manager. If this is done, a follow up meeting should occur to review the documents.

It is acceptable for case managers to use the completed PDF documents to complete portions of the MoJOBs application.

Items to note:

Do not print any forms that contain participant information at your home. Saving the completed documents to your colleges’ cloud drives is appropriate.

Do not complete the paper documents at your home. Paper documents that contain personally identifiable information should never be completed and kept at your home(s), unless appropriate precautions are taken i.e. lockbox available for storing documents.

All forms do need to be printed and placed in each participant file prior to the annual monitoring review.

Obtaining signatures:

There are forms that require the participant’s signature, and below are options to achieve this if the participant will not be able to enter the college campus:

1. Email the completed documents to the participant and ask him/her to digitally sign and return. This is probably the most difficult option, but if participants are skilled in how to do this and have Adobe, it is highly encouraged.
2. Email the completed documents to the participant for review. Ask them to reply that they have reviewed, attested to the accuracy of the information and approve the form. Keep the email reply with the completed document.
3. If you are working from your office, printing the documents and mailing them to the participant is appropriate. Include a return envelope with postage to ensure you will receive the documents back.
4. If you are unable to achieve any of these options, note on each document that there was verbal agreement by the student via the phone or video interview.