



## ***Iowa Workforce Development Virtual Access Point (VAP) Narrative and Guidelines***

Access to job search, veterans, unemployment insurance and career & education resources will be increased through the establishment of Access Points. The Virtual Assistant software application (VM Ware) in the Access Point creates extended availability and provides an organized approach for locating workforce resources.

Access Points are a valued addition to existing community resources that ensure individuals served by your organization are exposed to employment and training resources along with support during unemployment transitions. The Virtual Assistant can be an added tool to keep potential job opportunities in front of your customers.

### **Benefits/Features**

- ✓ Individuals and organizations have real time and immediate access to local job information which supports the growth and vitality of our communities.
- ✓ It is an additional resource for organizations that want to assist customers and direct them to useful and practical employment exchange information.
- ✓ The information is organized into categories which makes it more user-friendly.
- ✓ The software eases the confusion and the amount of time it takes to navigate the extensive resources that might otherwise be hard to find or go unnoticed by the customer.
- ✓ A live chat feature (instant messaging) and toll free number creates a connection to IWD subject matter experts available 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM, Monday through Friday and 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM on Saturday.

## **Role of an Access Point**

The access point system is a wonderful tool for you and your customers to gain easy entrance into IWD's robust employment and unemployment system. This is a unique way of adding an additional and valuable tool to the important work and services already offered by your organization. Through these simple steps, we can have your organization identified as a local access point in your community.

- ✓ Provide a designated area for the computer.
- ✓ Turn on computer for users each day.
- ✓ Allow an IWD re-purposed computer to be placed at the site or opt for a software download of the Virtual Assistant onto a PC that belongs to your organization.
- ✓ If IWD provides the computer, only the Virtual Assistant application is available and other software cannot be downloaded.
- ✓ If the Virtual Assistant is downloaded onto a computer belonging to the organization, it is an additional software program along with the other content on the PC.
- ✓ The amount of time spent assisting users is strictly optional and not a requirement or an expectation of becoming an Access Point.
- ✓ Access Point User Guides will be provided by IWD to explain the types of information available through the Virtual Assistant and will provide instructions on how to use each feature.
- ✓ Access Point hours are the same as the hours of the organization – there is no expectation or requirement to have access point hours beyond your normal hours of operation.
- ✓ The Virtual Assistant offers a connection for the public 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM, Monday through Friday and 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM on Saturday via the live chat feature.
- ✓ The organization must post a sign to designate Access Point computer area.
- ✓ If the IWD donated equipment is no longer usable, contact the local IowaWORKS office and they will assist you in making new arrangements.

## Virtual Assistant Screen Appearance



- Each screen has icons and links organized and categorized according to the topic of interest most important to your customers.
- Hover text easily explains important information about each icon and link.
- Live chat feature icon is available after accessing unemployment information or by clicking on the link for the help desk.
- Website links refer users to other free resources.

## **Role of IWD**

IWD is committed to making this a smooth addition to your organization's toolbox! We appreciate the commitment you have made to serve your customer and community needs – we believe this is a valuable tool that will compliment the important work you do.

- ✓ IWD will provide a re-purposed machine with software pre-loaded or the VM Ware software will be downloaded onto an existing computer designated by your organization.
- ✓ The request for PC's is dependent upon supply - IWD will work with your organization on the number of PC's requested.
- ✓ The VM Ware software can be loaded on more than one PC - there is no required limit and it is at the discretion of your organization.
- ✓ IWD will arrange the most convenient time to deliver the computer or install the Virtual Assistant software application. Your organization may also request the download instructions and do the download without the assistance of an IWD staff person.
- ✓ IWD will provide a demonstration of the Virtual Assistant and instant messaging chat feature to your organization's point of contact.
- ✓ IWD will provide regional contact information and the number of our Help Desk (515-281-3431) for IWD-IT related questions. If at all possible, organizations with IT departments should work with their own entity before contacting the IWD Help Desk.
- ✓ IWD will maintain our toll free number of 1-800-562-4692 for access point technical questions.

## **Technical Requirements**

- High Speed Internet connection.
- If there is wireless network system, a wireless card is necessary and is the responsibility of the organization.
- There is no minimum bandwidth strength required but it will determine how quickly the Virtual Assistant will load.
- At the present time, access to printing is not possible via the Virtual Assistant. A user may set up a Google.doc account which offers a free site to store pertinent information.

- The IWD system is secure and protected by a firewall.
- The firewall used by the organization can not conflict with the IWD program. It may prohibit the software download which is why a person with administrative rights should be accessible while the download is being completed.

### **Questions/Considerations Prior to Installation or Delivery**

- ✓ The Access Point must have a person with local administrator rights on the Windows PC.
- ✓ Since IWD's program is Windows based, if your organization's computer is utilizing another type of operating system a special download may be required from the Microsoft Website.
- ✓ IWD is unable to circumvent security systems to make our device work. If there are rules in place meant to prevent outside computers from being connected to the network, then it must be addressed by the organization.

For additional information or to become a Virtual Access Point, contact your Regional IowaWORKS office or you may e-mail the Statewide Coordinator, Kristi Judkins, via e-mail: [kristi.judkins@iwd.iowa.gov](mailto:kristi.judkins@iwd.iowa.gov).