



**NEW YORK STATE**  
**OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY**  
**ASSISTANCE**  
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 ALBANY, NY 12243-0001  
**David A. Paterson**  
*Governor*

**Informational Letter**

**Section 1**

<b>Transmittal:</b>	10-INF-08
<b>To:</b>	Local District Commissioners
<b>Issuing Division/Office:</b>	Center for Employment and Economic Supports
<b>Date:</b>	May 7, 2010
<b>Subject:</b>	Elevate America Program
<b>Suggested Distribution:</b>	Employment Coordinators
<b>Contact Person(s):</b>	Deborah McMahon (518) 408-4764 or <a href="mailto:Deborah.McMahon@otda.state.ny.us">Deborah.McMahon@otda.state.ny.us</a>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<a href="#">Attachment 1-Step by Step Instructions for Microsoft Learning</a>
<b>Attachment Available On – Line:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Filing References**

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
		385.6 385.7 385.9		Temporary Assistance and Food Stamp Employment Policy Manual Sections 385.6, 385.7 and 385.9	

## Section 2

### I. Purpose

The purpose of this Informational Letter (INF) is to inform social services districts that New York State, in cooperation with Microsoft Corporation's *Elevate America* Program will distribute free vouchers for select e-learning courses and certification exams. Elevate America is intended to support individuals who want to acquire, develop, or improve technology skills necessary to obtain, retain, and succeed at employment in today's workplace, especially those individuals who are unemployed or dislocated workers.

### II. Background

The New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) issued Workforce Development System Technical Advisory #10-4 to announce the availability of 71,000 vouchers from Microsoft Corporation that will be distributed through One-Stop Centers, Displaced Homemaker Centers and a network of other State agencies. These include 31,500 vouchers for Microsoft Windows and Office online training, 31,500 vouchers for Microsoft Business Certification Exams and 8,000 vouchers for advanced technical professional-level online training. The New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) has received 500 vouchers from NYSDOL to enable public assistance and food stamp applicants and recipients to access Information/Business Workers e-learning courses at no cost. Courses offered with these vouchers include:

- Windows Vista
- Word (2003/2007)
- Outlook (2003/2007)
- Excel (2003/2007)
- PowerPoint (2003/2007)
- Access (2007)

These vouchers each have access codes to allow a single Microsoft course selection. Access codes must be activated by **June 24, 2010**. Once activated, individuals will have twelve (12) months from the date of activation to complete the e-learning courses available to them under their voucher. The vouchers are for Microsoft Windows editions of the programs and cannot be used with Apple computers.

Microsoft also makes two introductory courses available free of charge on the internet at [www.microsoft.com/elevateamerica](http://www.microsoft.com/elevateamerica). When the Microsoft Elevate America Web Site appears click **Getting Started** on the top bar and under **Resources That Can Help You Today** section follow the instructions to the Get started learning now. A web page listing the available training appears. Click the training entitled Digital Literacy Training for Individuals New to Computing. These courses should be helpful in developing skill level readiness for the Information/Business Workers e-learning courses. The introductory courses are:

- Digital Literacy Training for Individuals New to Computing
- Windows Vista and Office 2007 Essentials

NYSDOL has also provided OTDA with 500 certification exam vouchers that will allow individuals to take certification exams for computer programs included in Office 2007, such as Word 2007 and Excel 2007. Each certification exam voucher covers a test for a specific Microsoft Office program listed on page 2. Each certification exam voucher must be used by **June 24, 2010**. OTDA can request additional vouchers if needed.

### **III. Program Implications**

Social services districts are encouraged to inform public assistance and food stamp applicants and recipients who may benefit, based on the individual's assessment and employment plan from participation in e-learning of this time limited opportunity, to obtain vouchers in order to develop skills in the Microsoft programs listed on page 2 that may help an individual obtain employment.

Individuals will need to have or establish an e-mail address to set up a Microsoft account to use the vouchers provided. Additionally, OTDA is required to track the access code numbers assigned by name and e-mail address. Therefore, individuals who express interest in receiving a voucher(s) under the Elevate America Program will need to provide their name and a valid e-mail address to their worker. District staff should contact Deborah McMahon at (518) 408-4764 or e-mail [Deborah.McMahon@otda.state.ny.us](mailto:Deborah.McMahon@otda.state.ny.us) to provide the name and e-mail address of interested public assistance and food stamp applicants or recipients to request an access code to activate a voucher made available to OTDA. OTDA will assign and provide an access code for the worker to provide to the individual for each voucher requested. Each access code enables an individual to activate one online training course. Given the time limited availability of these vouchers, districts will be limited to no more than six e-learning vouchers and six certification exam vouchers per participant, but the number of vouchers requested should be consistent with the individual's assessment and employment plan. Interested individuals may also contact the local One-Stop Center directly, to inquire about the availability of vouchers to participate in the Elevate America Program.

#### Activating vouchers for e-learning courses

Individuals who do not have access to a personal computer may take the access code to the One Stop Center or another computer with internet access (Internet Explorer 6.0 and higher), such as in public libraries and SUNY ATTAIN labs. SUNY ATTAIN has 38 locations throughout New York State. Please see the ATTAIN website - [http://www.attain.suny.edu/labs\\_list.php](http://www.attain.suny.edu/labs_list.php) for address and contact information. SUNY ATTAIN labs will offer on-site instructional support as well as assistance with setting up e-mail addresses and Microsoft accounts for individuals who do not own or have access to computers. When requesting vouchers, district staff should notify Deborah McMahon if the individual intends to utilize a local ATTAIN lab. This will ensure that ATTAIN staff is able to anticipate upcoming referrals and thus provide effective service to the client. As previously noted, these vouchers are time limited and **must be activated by June 24, 2010**. Once activated, individuals will have 12 months from the date of activation to complete the e-learning courses available to them under their voucher.

Step by Step Instructions for activating the e-learning voucher are available to users through [www.microsoft.com/About/CorporateCitizenship/us/CommunityInvestment/learning/business\\_workers\\_LP.msp](http://www.microsoft.com/About/CorporateCitizenship/us/CommunityInvestment/learning/business_workers_LP.msp). There are also instructions attached to this document.

### Using exam vouchers

Participants using exam certification vouchers should be advised that the voucher **must be used by June 24, 2010** and instructed and assisted to:

1. Locate a testing center: <http://www.certiport.com/Portal/Pages/LocatorView.aspx>.  
Note: SUNY ATTAIN labs are certified Certiport testing centers.
2. Schedule an exam by phone to take the exam at the testing center by June 24, 2010.  
Note: Some of the testing sites may charge a “proctor’s fee.” Efforts should be made to take the exam at a testing center that does not charge a fee, such as a SUNY ATTAIN lab, if available. Participants should inquire about this fee when calling to schedule an exam. The payment of the “proctor’s fee” necessary for a public assistance recipient to take the exam could be authorized via WMS as a supportive service, or as a participant reimbursement for a food stamp work registrant or volunteer who is not receiving assistance funded by the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.
3. Go to the testing center with the exam voucher.
4. Register and take the exam, which may take 1-2 hours.

According to the information available, participants will receive their exam results and score upon completion of the exam. In addition, they will receive an acknowledgement e-mail from Microsoft upon exam completion. Individuals who pass the exam will receive a letter and certificate in the mail from Microsoft.

### Timeframe Limitations

The program exam vouchers must be used by **June 24, 2010**. Because the timeframe for use of free exam vouchers is limited, individuals with solid basic computer literacy skills may be most able to benefit from the free certification option.

### Documenting hours of participation in e-learning

Hours of participation in the course identified above made available through the Elevate America Program may be countable as job skills training for public assistance recipients. However, the amount of time spent online in instruction under the Elevate America Program is not tracked by the computer system. Social services districts would need to be able to either directly, or through program providers document hours of participation, including the time spent taking the exam, in order to report for work participation rate purposes.

#### **Issued By**

**Name:** Russell Sykes  
**Title:** Deputy Commissioner  
**Division/Office:** Center for Employment and Economic Supports

Following is a step-by-step guide for using your E-Learning. Please note there are separate instruction steps depending on which type of E-Learning you want to use, i.e., New to Computing, Business/Information Worker, and IT Professionals.

## For Users New to Computing

1. At your computer, access the Internet.
2. In the address bar at the top, enter [www.microsoft.com/elevateamerica](http://www.microsoft.com/elevateamerica) and press ENTER on your keyboard.
3. The Microsoft Elevate America Web site appears. Click **Getting Started** on the top bar.
4. Under the **Resources That Can Help You Today** section, click **Get started learning now**.
5. A Web page listing the available training appears. Click the training link that you want to use.

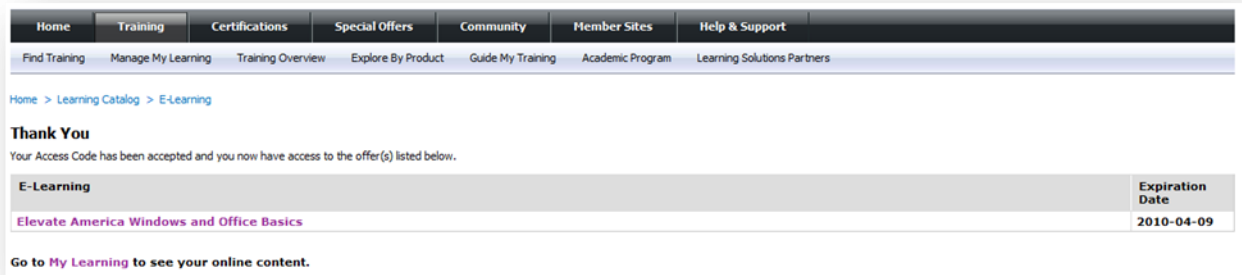
**From this point forward, your instructions change depending on which training you choose.**

6. **Digital Literacy Training for Individuals New to Computing:** Your courses are ready. No voucher is required. Simply choose a language, and follow the instructions.

You may be prompted to allow pop-up windows. Ensure that your speakers are not muted and the volume is turned up. You may also view a transcript of the course narrative by clicking **Show Transcript** on the upper right side of the screen.

**Windows Vista and Microsoft Office 2007 Essentials:** You will need to redeem your free e-learning offer by using the following access code: 9039-EAWOB-9882 (also listed on the webpage).

- a. Clicking the link sends you to an e-learning access code entry page.
- b. You may have a pop-up window that asks if it can automatically sign you in with your Windows Live ID. Click **Accept**.
- c. Check the box to accept the Microsoft Software License Terms (also called the End User License Agreement), and then enter the access code into the specified box and press ENTER.
- d. You are sent then to a Thank You page, which confirms you have access to the Windows and Microsoft Office Essentials courses. Click **Go to My Learning to see your online content**.



- e. This will take you to a personalized space that stores all of the learning content you have saved.
- f. Click on the course you want to start.

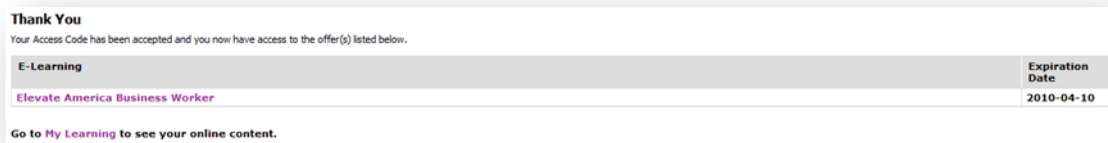
Each time you wish to return to your e-learning, follow these instructions:

1. Start by accessing the Internet. Type [www.microsoftlearning.com](http://www.microsoftlearning.com) into the address bar and press ENTER on your keyboard.
2. On the right, click **Returning users** and sign in as instructed.
3. Click **My Learning** in the upper-left corner to bring you to a personalized space that stores all of the learning content you have saved. Click on the course you want to start.

If you need assistance at any time in the registration process or during your e-learning, call 800-636-7544 from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. You will be asked for an "MCP" number, but ignore that request; you don't need this number. For assistance, you also can send an e-mail to [e-learn@microsoft.com](mailto:e-learn@microsoft.com).

## For Business Workers

1. In an internet browser, go to Microsoft Elevate America Web site at [www.microsoft.com/elevateamerica](http://www.microsoft.com/elevateamerica). Click *Redeem your voucher* under the **Redeem a Voucher** box in the center section in the middle of the page.
2. Under **I Already Have a Voucher**, click the link that says *I have a voucher for Microsoft Office or Windows product training*.
3. This will direct you to a new web page that provides instructions to redeem your free E-Learning.
4. You will initially need to redeem your free e-learning. Click the link "**Redeem Your Free E-Learning**". This sends you to an e-learning access code entry page. Please note that the term Access Code and Voucher Code refer to the same thing.
5. You may have a pop-up window that asks if we can automatically sign you in with your Windows Live ID. Click to accept.
6. Check the box to accept the End User License Agreement, and then enter the access code into the specified box and click *Enter*.
7. You will be sent to a Product Selection page. Choose the e-learning collection you wish to use. Simply scroll down and find your course, click the check box next to it, and click Submit at the bottom of the page.
8. You are sent to a Thank You page, which confirms you have redeemed an e-learning collection. Click **Go to My Learning to see your online content**.



9. You are ready to begin your courses! Click the Collection or Course link. If you chose a Collection, you will be directed to a page that lists the collection of courses that have been unlocked with your access code.

You will see a box at right that says "Buy This Collection". **Please ignore this collection price and do not click on the Add to Cart button.** While this reflects the actual value of the collection you are receiving for free, it is a program error which will be corrected soon. If your Learning Plan has a single course, you will be directed to a course overview page.

10. To begin a course, instead simply click on a course link listed on the left side of the page under the heading **This offer includes the following**.
11. This will bring up a course overview page. To launch the course, click the **Begin This Course** button on the right.

If you do not have access to a purchased version of the Microsoft Office 2007 system, a 60-day free trial of the software is available at the following Web site: <http://us1.trymicrosoftoffice.com/default.aspx?culture=en-us>.

Each time you wish to return to your e-learning, follow these instructions:

1. Start by accessing the Internet. Type [www.microsoftlearning.com](http://www.microsoftlearning.com) into the address bar and press ENTER on your keyboard.
2. On the right, click *Returning users* and sign in as instructed.

3. Click *My Learning* in the upper-left corner to bring you to a personalized space that stores all of the learning content you have saved. Click on the course you want to start.



## For Technical Professionals

1. In an internet browser, go to Microsoft Elevate America Web site at [www.microsoft.com/elevateamerica](http://www.microsoft.com/elevateamerica). Click *Redeem your voucher* under the **Redeem a Voucher** box in the center section in the middle of the page.
2. Click the link that says *I have a voucher for technical professional or developer-level training*.
3. You will be sent to an e-learning access code entry page. Please note that the term Access Code and Voucher Code refer to the same thing.

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Learning Manager interface. At the top, there is a blue header with the Microsoft logo and 'Learning' text. Below this is a navigation bar with tabs for 'My Learning' and 'Learning Catalog'. A secondary navigation bar contains links for 'Home', 'Training', 'Certifications', 'Special Offers', 'Community', 'Member Sites', and 'Help & Support'. The main content area is titled 'Enter Access Code' and includes a checkbox for accepting the End User License Agreement, an 'Access Code:' input field, and an 'Enter' button.

4. You may have a pop-up window that asks if we can automatically sign you in with your Windows Live ID. Click to accept.
5. Accept the End User License Agreement by clicking the check box, and then enter the access code into the specified box and click *Enter*.
6. You will be sent to a Product Selection page. Choose the e-learning collection you wish to redeem. Find your course, click the check box next to it, and click *Submit* at the bottom of the page.
7. You are sent then to a Thank You page, which confirms you have redeemed an e-learning collection. Click **Go to My Learning to see your online content**.

The screenshot shows the 'Thank You' confirmation page. It features a table with the following information:

E-Learning	Expiration Date
Elevate America Business Worker	2010-04-10

Below the table, there is a link that says 'Go to My Learning to see your online content.'

7. This will take you to a personalized space that stores all of the learning content you have saved.
8. Click on the Course title that you would like to launch and then click the **Begin This Course** button at right.

Each time you wish to return to your e-learning, follow these instructions:

1. Go to [www.microsoftlearning.com](http://www.microsoftlearning.com).
2. On the right, click *Returning users* and sign in as instructed.
3. Click *My Learning* in the upper-left corner to bring you to a personalized space that stores all of the learning content you have saved. Click on the course you want to start.

## User FAQ

**Q: After I've activated my voucher, on some pages, it looks like I am being asked to pay for the courses I have selected. What does this mean?**

A: On a few pages in the Microsoft Learning system, you may see a dollar amount shown. This dollar amount indicates the total value of the collection of courses you are pursuing as part of your Microsoft Learning. While it may appear to be indicating payment is required, it is not. As long as you redeemed your voucher at the beginning of the process, you can ignore that item and proceed to your individual courses to begin your training.

**Q: I'm in "My Learning" but am not sure where to start or what to click on.**

A: Your course(s) will be listed in the center of the webpage. Click on a link for the course you wish to start and follow the instructions provided to start the course.

**Q: I'm a returning user. Where do I go to continue my learning?**

A: To return to your learning, simply go to [www.microsoftlearning.com](http://www.microsoftlearning.com). On the right, click *Returning users* and sign in as instructed. Click *My Learning* in the upper-left corner to bring you to a personalized space that stores all of the learning content you have saved. Click on the course you want to start.

**Q: I'm just getting started using computers. Where do I begin?**

A: The following web page will provide you the information and instructions you need to get started:  
[http://www.microsoft.com/about/corporatecitizenship/us/communityinvestment/learning/new\\_users.aspx](http://www.microsoft.com/about/corporatecitizenship/us/communityinvestment/learning/new_users.aspx)

**Q: I'm an IT professional or developer. What resources are available to me?**

A: Access to the full Microsoft Learning library of e-learning courses is provided for you when you collect an access code voucher from your participating government agency. Go to the following Web page for more information and instructions:

[http://www.microsoft.com/about/corporatecitizenship/us/communityinvestment/learning/tech\\_professionals.aspx](http://www.microsoft.com/about/corporatecitizenship/us/communityinvestment/learning/tech_professionals.aspx)

**Q: Where do I go to activate my e-learning voucher?**

A: Follow the instructions provided to you via the Web pages listed in the initial instructions. This same set of pages will provide you details on how to redeem your Certification Exam voucher.

**Q: What is the difference between an Access Code and a Voucher Code?**

A: There is no difference in these terms. Both refer to an e-learning activation code which will allow you to redeem a free e-learning course.

**Q: How long will I be able to use my e-learning courses?**

A: Once you activate your e-learning, you will have 12 months of access to the courses.

**Q: How many courses can I take with my e-learning voucher?**

A: Your e-learning voucher will allow you to redeem either one course or one collection suite of courses depending on your learning goals.

**Q: How many exams can I take with my certification exam voucher?**

A: Your certification exam voucher will allow you to redeem one free exam. If you fail your first exam you can retake that exam once using the same voucher number you used for the first attempt. The retake exam must also be taken before the voucher expires.

**Q: What do I do if I get stuck?**

A: If you find you need customer support, please contact the Microsoft Regional Support Center by phone at (800) 636-7544, or email [e-learn@microsoft.com](mailto:e-learn@microsoft.com). More support information is available at the following Web site: <http://www.microsoft.com/learning/support/northamerica.mspx>.