

**2011-2012
INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING PROGRAM GUIDELINES
FOR
THE STATE OF FLORIDA**



July 1, 2011
Revised May 23, 2011

**Incumbent Worker Training Program – 2011/2012
Guidelines & Application Instructions**

WHAT IS FLORIDA'S INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING PROGRAM?

When workers lack needed training and businesses experience skill gaps, the company's ability to compete, expand, and retain workers can be compromised. Florida's Incumbent Worker Training Program, funded by the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA), and administered by Workforce Florida, Inc. addresses such needs. The purpose of the program is to provide grants to employers to assist with certain expenses associated with skills upgrade training for full-time employees of the company. The program helps established Florida businesses provide training and education for current workers, which may result in improved employee productivity, reduced employee turnover and increased business competitiveness. The total amount of funding available for all training projects in 2011/2012 is \$5 million. Training projects funded may begin on the approval date and may have 12 months from the approval date to complete training.

WHAT IS AN INCUMBENT WORKER?

An incumbent Worker is:

- ◆ A paid employee of the applicant business, or a person working for the business as a staffing agency employee, working at least 37.5 hrs per week,
- ◆ At least 18 years of age,
- ◆ A citizen of the United States or a non-citizen whose status permits employment in the United States,
- ◆ A Florida resident, and
- ◆ Employed on or before the signature date of the application.

Volunteers and board members of businesses are not eligible for training under this grant.

For the purpose of these funds, any incumbent worker to be trained must be a Florida resident working at a physical location in the state of Florida or working for a staffing agency and placed at a physical location in Florida prior to or on the date of the application.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

Florida **for-profit businesses/entities** that have been in operation for a minimum of one year prior to the application date.

- ◆ Must demonstrate financial viability by- ***Providing the most recent filed IRS Form 941 if your business is a corporation or a most recent filed copy of your 1040 Income Tax Return with Schedule SE if your business is a Sole Proprietorship [see application checklist for details]. Additionally, you must provide a letter of (Tax) Clearance from the Florida Department of Revenue dated within 45 days of your application.***
- ◆ Must comply with the non discrimination and equal opportunity provisions of Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and with 29 C.F.R. Parts 37.
- ◆ Must have at least one full-time employee (must be Florida Resident AND W-2 employee).
- ◆ Can only be considered for an award every other program year.

WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

The following businesses are not eligible to apply for the funds under this program:

- ◆ Not-for-profit agencies
- ◆ Retail establishments
- ◆ Entities whose administrations are comprised only of volunteers
- ◆ Training providers on behalf of providing funds to companies
- ◆ Workforce Development Boards and their administrative entities
- ◆ Labor unions
- ◆ Federal, state, county, or city governmental entities
- ◆ Businesses that received an IWT award last program year

CAN A BUSINESS APPLY FOR AN IWT GRANT IF IT IS ELIGIBLE FOR OTHER TYPES OF TRAINING RESOURCES, SUCH AS EMPLOYED WORKER TRAINING (EWT) OR QUICK RESPONSE TRAINING (QRT)?

A business can apply for local Employed Worker Training Grant through its local Regional Workforce Board and the Quick Response Training Grant (QRT); however these grants can not subsidize the other's training. For the Florida Incumbent Worker Training Program businesses that are a recipient or sub recipient of Federal funding of \$500,000 or more in a fiscal year will be required to furnish an independent financial and compliance audit. The company is responsible for the cost of the audit and IWT funds cannot be used to cover these costs.

WHAT KINDS OF TRAINING CAN BE FUNDED BY THE IWT GRANT AND WHO CAN PROVIDE THE TRAINING?

The following are some types of training that can be funded:

- ◆ Occupational skills training designed to meet the special requirements of a business or a group of businesses and conducted with employer commitment to continue to retain all trained individuals upon successful completion of the training.
- ◆ Educational training including: CEUs, workplace literacy, and soft skills.
- ◆ Training in strategies to improve efficiency of business operations.
- ◆ Computer software training.

Training, such as CPR and First Aid courses, Diversity or Sexual Harassment, and English as a Second Language cannot be funded.

Funds awarded for a project can be expended on training activities that take place anywhere in the world. Training can be provided through Florida's public or private educational institutions, private training organizations, trainers employed by the business, or a combination of training providers. Private post secondary institutions and private training providers may be utilized upon a review that includes, but is not limited to, accreditation and licensure and prior approval by Workforce Florida, Inc. Training can also be conducted at the business's facility, at the provider's facility or at a combination of sites.

WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT FOR WHICH A BUSINESS CAN APPLY?

IWT funds are limited, and are therefore awarded on an "as funds are available" basis. For the year beginning July 1, 2011, the maximum amount is \$50,000 per grant. Businesses with locations in multiple counties of the state will be treated as a separate company for the purposes of the IWT Program. If a company has 2 locations in the same county

and they have separate FEIN numbers they are considered to be separate businesses. If they share the same FEIN they will be considered one company and will therefore have to join their training efforts.

CAN A BUSINESS APPLY FOR A GRANT THAT WILL SERVE DIFFERENT, MULTIPLE BUSINESSES WITH COMMON TRAINING NEEDS?

Yes, businesses can partner and apply for a **consortium training grant**. The businesses pursuing this approach must consult with the IWT Program Manager, who will help coordinate this type of the application. The proposal for the common training must:

1. Serve employees of at least two (2) different businesses. A non-business entity can apply on behalf of the businesses, as the Administrative Entity can also be the training provider.
2. Include a consortium application for each participating business (this application must be requested of the IWT Program Manager)
3. Include training descriptions and outcomes that address the employees from all businesses impacted by the proposed common training.
4. Be a collective group of businesses which are seeking the same training.

A consortium application must be completed for each business that is part of the consortium training. A consortium is not limited to the \$50,000 maximum if the training needs represent more and the cost per trainee is comparable to like training. In addition, a business that participates in a consortium can also apply for an IWT grant for the individual business training needs in the same year or subsequent year. For the year beginning July 1, 2011, Administrative Entities will be limited to two consortium grants per fiscal year. **Please contact the IWT Program Manager if interested in pursuing a consortium project.**

WHAT COSTS CAN BE REIMBURSED BY THE IWT PROGRAM?

Allowable Training Costs

- ◆ Instructors'/trainers' salaries- trainers can be employees of the business that is seeking training with a \$35/hr* cap
- ◆ Tuition
- ◆ Other Costs-photo copies or slides at \$.03 per copy, training DVD's or tapes
- ◆ Textbooks/manuals-limited to course study
- ◆ Curriculum Development- up to 4 hours of every initial hour of training (with a \$35/hr* cap for any curriculum developed by an internal employee)

Approved budget items are reimbursed upon presentation of adequate documentation of the training and evidence that the training expenses incurred have been paid. **Businesses will be required to provide a minimum of 50% of the requested direct training costs, i.e. instructor's wages/tuition, curriculum development, and textbooks and manuals. Some exceptions may apply.** *Please note that if the instructor is a business employee, the business will be required to provide a minimum of 50% of the \$35/hour cap

Non-Allowable Training Costs

- ◆ Employee/trainee wages and fringe benefits
- ◆ Compensation or consultant fees not directly related to the provision of training
- ◆ Costs incurred prior to the approval date of the application
- ◆ Capital improvements
- ◆ Travel or food
- ◆ Membership fees/dues
- ◆ Conference registration fees or food associated with conferences
- ◆ Test/Exam Fees
- ◆ Company web site design and development, web site hosting, and maintenance, software upgrade, advice on computer selection for purchase and upgrade
- ◆ Purchase of employee assessment systems or systems usage licenses
- ◆ Equipment

HOW DOES A BUSINESS SUBMIT AN APPLICATION?

DOWNLOAD and complete the IWT Program Application. Any information or documentation that cannot be supplied in the provided space should be identified by the relevant question number and attached to the back of the application form. Submit one original and three (3) copies of the signed completed application to:

**The Incumbent Worker Training Program, Workforce Florida, Inc.,
Attention: Sarah Fixel
1580 Waldo Palmer Lane Suite 1, Tallahassee, FL 32308**

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION AT LEAST 45 DAYS PRIOR TO THE DESIRED START DATE OF YOUR TRAINING. This does not however guarantee that the approval date will be on or before your training start date. If you have any questions or need assistance in completing the application, please contact **Sarah Fixel**, IWT Program Coordinator, Workforce Florida, Inc. at 850-921-1119 or email with any questions to: sfixel@workforceflorida.com

EMAILED OR FAXED APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

IS IT REQUIRED THAT THE APPLICANT USE THE APPLICATION FORM PROVIDED?

Yes. The application is provided in both a PDF and a Word document. However, the application cannot be e-mailed. You must submit your information on the current year's application. **No spreadsheets will be accepted.**

WHAT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST THE BUSINESS?

The IWT Staff is available to provide technical assistance throughout the process-from the application stage throughout contract execution, monitoring and fiscal closeout.

CAN AN ENTITY APPLY FOR TRAINING ON BEHALF OF THE BUSINESS (ES)?

An individual or organization may assist a business or group of businesses in the application process; however, that individual/organization may not be compensated with grant funds

WHEN CAN A BUSINESS APPLY FOR AN IWT GRANT?

As long as funds remain, available applications will be accepted. When funds are no longer available a notice will be posted on the Workforce Florida Inc.'s IWT web page.

WHAT CRITERIA IS USED TO REVIEW AND FUND APPLICATIONS?

The application with check list items must be reviewed by the IWT Program Manager to ensure that:

1. The proposed training is reimbursable training.
2. The program objectives and outcomes (avert layoffs, build the businesses' competitiveness, upgrade skills, develop transferable skills, increase portability, etc.) are clearly stated.
3. The application clearly describes the training to be delivered and clearly states the training objectives.
4. A credit report reviewed using Credit.net database for a credit score of C or better or a Credit Advisor Report from D&B indicating a paydex score of 73 or higher. Scores less than 73 or C will not be funded. Workforce Florida does not have an agreement with D&B; therefore, this Credit Advisor Report will have to be pulled and paid for by the business. If there is no Credit Advisor Report with paydex score or credit.net score, the business will have to request a Letter of Credit from a bank in which they have been doing business with for at least the last six (6) months, which lists the pay history and the type of credit facility they have with the bank.

The Program Manager then scores the applications using criteria listed in the guidelines of which a minimum of 12 points is needed for funding recommendation. Once the application has been reviewed and scored and approved by the Program Manager it is then submitted for approval to the Program Director and Vice President of Business Development and Opportunities Unit.

IS A BUSINESS GIVEN ANY SPECIAL CONSIDERATION IF IT IS LOCATED IN A RURAL COUNTY?

Yes. If a business is located in a rural area of critical economic concern (RACEC), rural county, distressed area, Enterprise zone, Brownfield or Hub zone or has 25 or fewer employees it is eligible for up to 75% reimbursement. In addition, priority is given to businesses in a qualified targeted industry (see list on website); businesses whose grant proposals represent a significant upgrade in employee skills, and businesses whose grant proposals represent a significant layoff avoidance strategy.

HOW WILL I KNOW IF MY BUSINESS'S APPLICATION IS APPROVED?

The IWT Program Manager will notify the business of action taken on its application. The IWT Program Manager will begin the process of developing a contract between WFI and the business, or administrative entity (in the event of a consortium), to be executed within 45 days of the date of the notice of award. The contract will set forth all processes and expectations for administering, implementing, and completing the training. If the contract is not executed within the aforementioned 45-day time frame, the grant award becomes null and void unless permission is granted by Program Manager. **Training, which began prior to the approval of the application, will not be reimbursed.**

Each project will be monitored and evaluated by the IWT Program Staff.

HOW LONG DOES A BUSINESS HAVE TO CONDUCT THE TRAINING?

Training must be completed within 12 months from the date of approval. The first reimbursement can be requested once the contract has been executed by WFI's President. All grant projects shall be performance based with specific measurable performance outcomes-including the completion of the training project and number of employees trained.

CAN THE CONTRACT BE EXTENDED?

There is no provision in the contract for extensions. A business is expected to have carefully assessed its training needs so that it will apply only for the funds needed for training that can be completed in a twelve (12) month time frame.

ONCE THE BUSINESS HAS BEEN AWARDED AN IWT GRANT, CAN IT CHANGE THE TYPES OF TRAINING OR USE OF FUNDS APPROVED IN THE GRANT?

The business is expected to assess its immediate training needs and apply only for the amount of funds needed to meet those needs within a 12-month time frame. The application is approved based on the training outlined in the proposal. If the approved training needs change, a substitution can be requested on the provided form to change the course or the training provider. There is a maximum of three substitution requests per lifetime of the grant. The Program Manager will evaluate the request and the business will be notified via email of the approval or denial of the substitution.

WHAT INFORMATION IS A BUSINESS REQUIRED TO SUPPLY TO THE IWT PROGRAM OFFICE ON THE EMPLOYEES TO BE TRAINED?

The information at a minimum will include:

- ◆ Legal Name of Trainee
- ◆ Social Security Number
- ◆ Verification of Citizenship status
- ◆ Hourly Wage

ARE ANY REPORTING OR COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS EXPECTED OF THE BUSINESS?

Yes, they are as follows:

- **6-Month Status Report:** Businesses are required to submit a 6-month status report regarding their usage of funds and training plans for the remainder of the grant period. Failure to submit this report to the Program Manager on or before the 6-month mark may render the contract null and void. The IWT Program Office will advise of the specific requirements of this report, to include content, time frame, and other matters with information to be included with a copy of the executed contract.
- **Final Report:** At the completion of the grant a final report on the training is due no later than 60 days from the end of training. The IWT Program Office will provide this report to you at the time of your final reimbursement request. Once this is received, the final reimbursement will be released. (Businesses will also need to keep accurate records of the project's implementation process to certify that all information provided for the purpose of requesting reimbursements and reporting training activity is accurate and true for a period of at least five (5) years.)
- **Quarterly Touchpoints:** Businesses are required to submit monthly reimbursement requests as their training program progresses; however, if no training has occurred, then on a quarterly basis, businesses are expected to have some form of communication with the IWT Program Office, which may include course substitution requests, e-mails or phone calls. If the IWT Program Office has not received communication from your business, the Program Manager will reach out to your business directly to receive an update on your training program.

HOW DOES THE REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS WORK?

Businesses may request reimbursements as frequently as needed during the 12-month period. For most efficient processing, companies are required to request reimbursements on a monthly basis. Reimbursements will be made in direct correlation with the business's training progress. The percent of funds reimbursed must stay equal to or less than the percent of trainees that have been trained to date. Further instructions will be made available to the business upon contract execution.