



# Incumbent Worker Training Reimbursement Application Instructions

Workforce Southwest Washington (WSW) is prioritizing its investments to advance workforce equity, ensuring its work and the work of the public workforce system focuses on equitable support of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian and other People of Color and historically-excluded communities, and is inclusive of all companies that express and demonstrate commitment to provide quality jobs.

The [Quality Jobs Initiative](#) was developed with belief in the value of work and the shared benefits afforded to workers, businesses, and our communities through good, high-quality jobs. Through partnership and intentionality, we can increase the number of quality jobs and improve the regional economy for all. This is a business imperative. Good, high-quality jobs — ones with competitive wages and benefits, predictable hours, necessary training, and opportunities for advancement— are good for business.

WSW will invest in training with companies that share its commitment to making local jobs better for people. Our goals for training for incumbent workers are:

1. Companies offer clear pathways to promotion/advancement for all workers
2. Employees receive paid training and professional development support for individual growth within their job
3. Management deploys tools and resources to manage, mentor and evaluate their employees effectively

## **Training Proposal/Application**

Training applications must showcase training that is designed to increase the competitiveness of your company and your workforce. Additionally, these funds should be used to implement a career path and training strategy that supports the retention of existing workers, and subsequently supports the recruitment and retention of new workers. This is a reimbursement program, designed to support businesses in developing their current workforce.

## **Employer Eligibility Requirements:**

1. Companies must be located in Clark, Cowlitz or Wahkiakum counties in Washington State.

2. Must demonstrate that incumbent worker training will increase ability to create or retain jobs.
3. Must be current in unemployment insurance and workers' compensation taxes, penalties, and/or interest or related payment plan.
4. Must be classified under targeted industries defined by [Workforce Southwest Washington](#) (WSW), [Columbia River Economic Development Council](#) (CREDC), and [Cowlitz Economic Development Council](#) (CEDC). These industries include:
  - a. Manufacturing (NAICS 31-33)
  - b. Healthcare (NAICS 62)
  - c. IT/Tech (NAICS 51)
  - d. Construction (NAICS 23)
  - e. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (NAICS 54)
    - i. If outside of these sectors, occupations for training must be listed as in-demand or balanced in [WSW's Occupations In Demand List 2021](#).
5. Employers are required to pay the non-WIOA (non-federal) share of the cost of providing training to their employees. The employer share is based on the size of the workforce (wages paid to the participant while in training can be included as part of that share and the share can be provided as cash or in-kind that is fairly evaluated) as follows:
  - a. At least 10 percent of the cost for employers with 50 or fewer employees
  - b. At least 25 percent of the cost for employers with 51 to 100 employees
  - c. At least 50 percent of the cost for employers with more than 100 employees
6. Training must not impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements. If training is inconsistent with a collective bargaining agreement, the appropriate labor organization and employer must provide written concurrence before the program or activity begins.
7. Companies must be participating in the Columbia-Willamette Workforce Collaborative (CWWC) Quality Jobs Initiative and have demonstrated all job quality markers OR are actively taking steps to improve job quality – effective February 2022.
8. 20 percent of incumbent trainees at each company must be from historically-excluded populations such as Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), immigrants, LGBTQ+, women, veterans, and people with disabilities.
9. Occupations to receive training will pay at least the Washington State Minimum Wage and include a comprehensive benefits package that will include, at a minimum, healthcare and paid time off.
10. Training will result in a pay increase to at or above 275 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (\$17.02 per hour).
11. If incumbent workers are promoted as a result, leaving the need to backfill positions, the public workforce system participants will be prioritized for these opportunities.

**Bonus Criteria:**

Competitive training proposals including criteria listed below will receive priority in the selection process. Proposals that meet multiple criteria will be ranked higher than proposals that meet fewer criterion:

1. From a company locating or expanding in Southwest Washington
2. Training will help retain employees
3. Proposals from Women-, Minority- or Veteran-owned businesses
4. Training is for occupations that are in critical shortage in Southwest Washington
5. Small- to medium-sized traded-sector businesses
6. Companies that have not previously received training funds through WorkSource or Workforce Southwest Washington within the last two years

**Employee Eligibility:**

1. Must be employed – an individual working a minimum of 30 hours a week.
2. Must meet the Fair Labor Standards Act requirements for an employer-employee relationship.
3. Must have an established employment history with the employer for six (6) months or more.
  - a. Note: If incumbent worker training is provided to a group of employees, not every employee in the cohort must have an established employment history with the employer for six months or more as long as a majority (51 percent or more) of the employees being trained meet the employment history requirement.
4. Employees must have a [www.WorkSourceWA.com](http://www.WorkSourceWA.com) account established no later than two weeks prior to the start of training.

Workforce Southwest Washington and WorkSource are equal opportunity employers/programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Washington Relay 711.