

Ohio Incumbent Workforce Training Voucher Program

Guidelines

The Ohio Incumbent Workforce Training Voucher Program is an employer-driven program designed to provide direct financial assistance to train workers and improve the economic competitiveness of Ohio's employers. The Voucher Program is designed to offset a portion, via reimbursement, of the employer's costs to upgrade the skills of its incumbent workforce. The Voucher Program will provide reimbursement to eligible employers for specific training costs accrued during the course of training. Eligible employers must demonstrate that by receiving funding assistance through the Voucher Program that their business will not only obtain a skilled workforce but will improve their company processes and competitiveness.

Program Eligibility:

To be eligible for financial assistance, the following requirements must be met by both the employer and employee.

EMPLOYER ELIGIBILITY – an eligible employer must operate as a for-profit entity in a state-designated targeted industry with a facility located in Ohio that has been in continuous operation for the 12 months immediately prior to the application submittal.

Targeted industries are:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Aerospace and Aviation
- Automotive
- BioHealth
- Corporate Headquarters
- Energy
- Financial Services
- Food Processing
- Information Technology and Services
- Polymers and Chemicals

Each employer (identified by Federal Employee Identification Number/FEIN) will be eligible for up to \$500,000 in assistance per fiscal year. The Voucher Agreement and any Supplements to the Master Voucher Agreement issued to an employer during the fiscal year, aggregated throughout all of its state of Ohio locations, will be included in this calculation. **Please note that only one application per employer will be accepted per program year. If an employer has multiple sites, those sites must work together to submit the one application.**

EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY – an eligible employee is someone who is directly employed by the company at a facility located within Ohio and meets all of the following requirements:

- Employed in any of the following business functions: production, back office operations, information technology, logistics, or research and development.
- Earning an hourly wage of at least 150 percent of the federal minimum wage (\$10.88 as of January 1, 2012) plus benefits;
- An Ohio resident;
- At least 18 years of age; and
- Working at least 25 hours per week;

Note: an employee who is employed in a retail/service function is not eligible for the Voucher Program.

Each employee is eligible for up to \$4,000 in reimbursable funds per fiscal year. This amount may be utilized for a single training or span multiple training classes, depending upon the costs.

Eligible Training

Training opportunities that expand and improve employee's workforce skills and develop his or her opportunities for growth or promotion within the company are eligible for the Voucher Program. Employee training needs and the subsequently identified training opportunities/courses are to be determined by the employer and/or employee (with employer approval). The training provider is to be selected independently by the employer and/or employee (with employer approval) and may be a public, private, or in-house trainer.

Please note that training will only be considered if submitted at least 30 days prior to the start date of training to allow time for the Ohio Development Services Agency to review and process. While the effective date of the Agreement will be the Application approval date, any costs incurred or monies expended by the Applicant on the Project prior to final approval and the execution of the written Agreement, is done at the Applicant's own risk. Applicant's decision to go forward does not obligate the state of Ohio to provide state assistance that has not received all required approvals or has not been memorialized in a written Agreement between the Applicant and the state of Ohio.

Training must begin within 180 days (six months) from the application submission date or June 30, 2013 whichever date is first. Training must be completed by June 30, 2013.

Trainings may be conducted at the employer's facility, at the training provider's facility, on-line, or at a third-party site.

Eligible training will relate to the employee's current position or for future advancement within the company. Training activities may include:

- Classes, either non-credit or credit, at an accredited education institution;
- Training that leads to an industry recognized certificate;
- Training provided in conjunction with the purchase of a new piece of equipment;
- Upgrade of computer skills (e.g. Excel, Access);
- Training for the ICD-10-CM/PCS diagnostics classification system (regardless of whether the employee works for a for-profit or non-profit employer);
- Training from a national, regional, or state trade association that offers an independently certified training curriculum and testing; and
- Training for improved process efficiency (e.g. ISO-9000, Six Sigma or Lean Manufacturing).

Ineligible training activities include (but are not limited to):

- Training that is already being reimbursed by another State or Federal training program (e.g. Ohio Workforce Guarantee, National Emergency Grant, etc.);
- Continuing Education Units (CEUs) required for continued professional certification;
- Soft Skills (e.g. diversity, ethics, HR law, management and leadership, sexual harassment, etc.);
- Training which is reimbursed/required by other public agencies or departments (e.g. OSHA, Worker's Compensation);
- General Equivalency Diploma (GED);
- Profit-oriented courses (e.g. sales, marketing research, and Dale Carnegie trainings);
- Conference fees;
- Wages of trainees while being trained; and
- Travel costs.

Eligible Training Costs

The employer may request reimbursement for up to 50 percent of the employer's cost to train an employee and may be used for any of the following purposes:

- Tuition;
- Instructor or trainer fees (for in-house trainings);
- Instructional materials including manuals, text books, and handouts/duplicated materials (calculated at .05 per copy). Please note that these costs must be prorated per employee and will be capped at 10 percent of the cost of training per employee per training.

Available Funding

This program is operated as a reimbursable program, in that the Ohio Development Services Agency will reimburse the employer for up to 50 percent of the cost of the training (up to \$4,000), after 1) the employer pays the full cost of the training and 2) the employee successfully completes the training.

The invoice for reimbursement may only be submitted after an employee has successfully completed the approved training.

While the effective date of the Agreement will be the Application approval date, any costs incurred or monies expended by the Applicant on the Project prior to final approval and the execution of the written Agreement, is done at the Applicant's own risk. Applicant's decision to go forward does not obligate the state of Ohio to provide state assistance that has not received all required approvals or has not been memorialized in a written Agreement between the Applicant and the state of Ohio.

Funding approvals for this program will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Once the training funds are completely committed, the Ohio Development Services Agency will hold subsequent applications in a "queue", in the event that additional program funds become available.

Funding for this program is limited and is only available through June 30, 2013.

Additional Information

The on-line application for the program can be found on the Ohio Means Jobs website at:
<https://ohiomeansjobs.com/omj/employer/home.do>

Additional program information, including post-approval documents and processes, can be found at the following website: www.development.ohio.gov/bs/bs_wtvp.htm