



Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board

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Action Request: 2023-8

Topic: Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Program Requests for Proposals

Board Meeting Date: November 14, 2023

Item Description

The Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board contracts with Community-Based Organizations to deliver Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funded Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Services, and State-funded Dislocated Worker and Youth Services in Suburban Hennepin County. The current Adult and Dislocated Worker service providers are Hired, Avivo, and Goodwill Easter-Seals. The current Youth service providers are Tree Trust, Brooklynk, and Ka Joog. Carver County staff provide these services within Carver County. The current Hennepin County grants end June 30, 2024.

Action Needed

A motion and second to approve the purpose, scope and timeline of the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Services Request for Proposals as presented by staff.

Background

Hennepin County, with the Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board, is requesting proposals for career development services in suburban Hennepin County funded by the federal **Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA)** as well as the **State Dislocated Worker Program** and the **Minnesota Youth Program** by the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED).

The Adult and Dislocated Worker programs serve adults 18 years and older who have been dislocated from work, are unemployed, or underemployed facing barriers to employment including but not limited to homelessness, low-income, justice-involved, or basic skills deficient. The services provided include individualized career and pre-vocational services, individual plan development, education and training services, attainment of recognized credentials and person-centered support services.

The WIOA Youth and Minnesota Youth programs serve disconnected and/or at-risk young people ages 14 – 24 that are experiencing significant barriers to employment, including but not limited to: justice-involved youth, youth involved in or exiting the foster care system, pregnant or parenting youth, dropouts, homeless youth or runaways, immigrant and refugee youth, and low-income youth. Per WIOA law, 75% of WIOA youth funds must be allocated to serving out-of-school youth (OSY). Services include formal and informal assessments, individualized plan development, work experiences (including apprenticeships and internships), education and training services, counseling and mentoring, and comprehensive support services.

Hennepin County Workforce Development staff provide technical assistance, strategic planning, resources and support to providers while monitoring grant spending and program compliance. Hennepin County leadership is particularly committed to reducing and eliminating disparities affecting low-income residents and especially residents of color. Employment is a key disparity domain in these efforts alongside housing, health, transportation, income, and justice that must be addressed to increase opportunities and access for residents we serve. Reducing any individual disparity can

leverage positive change and help reduce disparities in other areas. Workforce Development staff approach the work from this lens and bring county values and resources in addition to the federal and state funding to workforce development efforts that address these disparities.

The purpose of the **Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board (HCWDB)** is to ensure workforce services are provided within the service area via a coordinated intentional way therefore providing a pipeline of skilled workers to meet business demand. They partner with Hennepin & Carver Counties, Adult Basic Education, DEED Job Service, DEED Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Community Based Organizations serving populations with barriers to employment, Post-Secondary institutions, Labor Unions, and business representatives. Conversations with board members over the past month have informed many of the values that will provide direction for the resources and strategies of providers.

Values: To determine the agencies that have the highest quality services to offer participants and align with the values and goals of the Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board, we would like to know how sub-grantee candidate(s) would:

- Serve BIPOC residents, immigrants and refugees, and English Language learners in culturally competent ways
- Strategies to reach and recruit Out-of-School or disconnected youth, including youth with significant barriers to employment such as justice-involvement, foster care youth, youth that are pregnant or parenting, youth with disabilities, low-income youth, and more.
- Services that are customized to participants' individual needs, interests, and skill levels
- Engage participants and the larger community to assess needs and develop programming
- Identify high-disparity geographical areas using relevant data and develop strategies to target service delivery
- Incorporate new and current technology and data in services
- Identify and incorporate employer needs in services to reflect industry demand

Program design and operating guidelines: The scope of services within this Request for Proposals outlines several key program design elements and service provider expectations. Based on WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth policies as well as State Dislocated Worker and Minnesota Youth Program guidelines, elected sub-grantee(s) will:

- advertise, conduct outreach, and recruit program eligible youth and adults
- provide and analyze formal and informal assessments
- develop individualized employment plans with every enrolled participant
- connect program participants to work-based learning opportunities, occupation-focused training/educational programs and other pre-vocational services based on individual need
- provide comprehensive career counseling, mentorship, and guidance
- assist participants with job search efforts
- provide necessary support services to enable successful program engagement
- offer and provide follow-up services to ensure employment retention

Questions & Evaluation: To determine the ability of selected provider(s) to execute services for adult participants in alignment with the values and goals of the HCWDB and Hennepin County, provider candidates will be evaluated based on their responses questions covering the following topics:

- Organization overview and relevant experience
- Service design and approach to delivering services
- Cultural understanding, language capabilities, and resources to serve unique needs of ethnically, culturally, and socioeconomically diverse clients
- Outreach and recruitment strategies
- Ability to leverage other program resources
- Initiatives to support racial equity
- Staff expertise and organizational capacity
- Partnerships and collaboration with local employers, and other service providers in the local area

Funding: The Workforce Development Board receives funding annually; state and federal appropriation levels are determined by DEED based on a formula that considers several economic factors. The following amounts are estimates based on recent funding levels. These estimates do not include the Hennepin County administration allocation, Hennepin County staff allocation, and Carver County allocation through the Joint Powers Agreement.

WIOA Adult: \$443,430*

WIOA Dislocated Worker: \$978,725*

State Dislocated Worker: \$1,652,220

WIOA Youth: \$460,158

MYP: \$269,220

*Provider(s) have the flexibility to transfer funding resources between the WIOA Adult & WIOA Dislocated Worker programs depending on the needs of the labor force.

Schedule:

RFP Element	Date
Release RFP to public to accept proposals	No later than November 17, 2023
Virtual Pre-Proposal Conference	Week of December 4, 2023
Proposal due date	December 21 2023 by 12:00 PM CST
Proposal reviews & evaluations	December 22, 2023 – January 12, 2024
Recommendation of award to HCWDB	January 31, 2024
Effective start date of contract(s)	April 1, 2024 (WIOA Youth), July 1, 2024 (All other programs)

Staff Recommendation

Approve

Attachments:

Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs RFP One-Pager

Youth Programs RFP One-Pager