



Hennepin-Carver

Workforce Development Board

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Action Request: 2025-4

Topic: Youth at Work SFY26-27 and Carver County SRRT Grants

Board Meeting Date: September 10th, 2025

Item Description

The Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board has been awarded the following grant funds from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED):

- State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2026-2027 Youth at Work Competitive Grant,
- State Rapid Responses Team (SRRT) Project (Apple Valley Foods, Chaska)

Hennepin County Growth and Opportunity (Hennepin GO) submitted a proposal for the SFY26 – 27 Youth at Work Competitive Grant cycle and was awarded \$300,000 to support Career Academies and Paid Work Experiences for youth in suburban Hennepin and Carver Counties during SFY 2026 (7/1/25 – 6/30/26) and SFY2027 (7/1/26 – 6/30/27). Hennepin County will be contracting with two Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to provide four Career Academies and provide Paid Work Experiences for 10 youth during the contract period.

Carver County was awarded a non-compete project from DEED's State Rapid Response Team in the amount of \$10,000.00. These funds were allocated directly to Carver County Workforce Services to provide services to workers affected by the permanent closure and layoff of approximately 95 employees from Apple Valley Foods facility located in Chaska.

Action Needed

A motion and second to approve the Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board's acceptance of the SRRT Apple Valley Project and Youth at Work SFY26-27 grant funds and to approve Hennepin County Workforce Development staff to enter into contract negotiations with the Community Based Organizations selected to provide Youth at Work services.

Background

Youth at Work

Minnesota Statute (116L.562) authorizes the Youth at Work Equity grant program directing DEED to "award grants to eligible organizations for the purpose of providing workforce development and training opportunities to economically disadvantaged or at-risk youth ages 14-24." Youth at Work funding is available on a biennial basis and awarded to eligible organizations/applicants in a competitive request for proposal process.

The Youth at Work program identifies the following priorities, impact areas, and goals for all grantees:

- Provide summer and/or year-round work experience and introduction to career pathways for economically disadvantaged or at-risk youth, ages 14 through 24 (including those who are out-of-school and/or involved in the foster care and juvenile justice systems, residing in MFIP households, youth with disabilities, and youth from communities of color who are under-represented in the workforce; homeless and/or runaways);
- Increase exposure to in-demand jobs important to regional economies;
- Introduce and promote career pathways and skill acquisition (academic and work readiness) through project-based instruction;
- Promote mastery of work readiness competencies and 21st Century skills, as demonstrated through workplace portfolios and/or other assessments;
- Provide high-quality worksites and overall participant and employer satisfaction.

DEED SRRT New Project – Apple Valley Foods

On May 13, 2025, the State Rapid Response Team received a WARN letter from Apple Valley Foods – US Inc. informing us of the permanent closure and layoff of approximately 95 employees from its facilities located at 300 Lake Hazeltine Drive, Chaska, MN 55318.

Employees will experience permanent layoff beginning on July 11, 2025.

These employees are not represented by a union and thus do not have bumping rights. There are no trade implications at this time.

Carver County Workforce Services has been awarded a non-compete project to assist the affected workers. If any dislocated workers from Apple Valley Foods – US Inc. apply for services at your location, please refer them to the following location.

Staff Recommendation: Approve the Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board's acceptance of the SRRT Apple Valley Project and Youth at Work SFY26-27 grant funds and to approve Hennepin County Workforce Development staff to enter into contract negotiations with the Community Based Organizations selected to provide Youth at Work services