

Clark County Department of Job and Family Services
Work Experience Program – OWF Participants
Request for Proposals (RFP)

Background

The purpose of the RFP is to solicit a provider of a Work Experience Program for Clark County participants in the Ohio Works First (OWF) program. The provider(s) selected by the Department will (a) offer a program that prepares participants for employment; (b) prepare accurate and timely reports; and (c) work effectively as a partner in the *WorkPlus* system.

Some OWF participants, as a condition of receiving benefits, are required to work a specified number of hours, determined by the Department, at non-profit sites. The work requirement ranges from 20-30 hours per week of *Core* and/or *Non Core hours*¹ for single parent households and 30-50 hours per week of Core and Non Core hours for two parent households. In most (but not all) cases, these individuals have already received both *employability skills training* and *job search assistance*. However, many times these participants are still not deemed to be “job ready” or have been unable to find full- or part-time employment. It is hoped that by receiving additional unpaid work experience, these individuals will secure employment.

Profile of 72 OWF WEP Participants in March, 2007	
Gender	63 are female, 9 male
Age	26 are from age 18-25 27 are from age 26-35 12 are from age 36-45 7 are age 46 or older
Race	52 Caucasian, 20 African American
Education	8 completed less than 11 th grade 3 completed the 11 th grade 4 completed the 12 th grade but did not graduate 57 earned high school diploma or GED 2 completed some post secondary education <i>Note: 79% have completed at least a GED.</i>
Employment History	47 reported some employment in last year 25 reported no employment in the last year
Work Activity History	48 have participated in the WEP program previously 30 have previously received job search assistance
OWF assistance	25 have received cash assistance for ten consecutive months or less 21 have received cash assistance for 11 – 20 months 14 have received cash assistance for 21 – 30 months 9 have received cash assistance for 31 – 36 months 3 have received cash assistance for more than 36 months <i>Note: Approximately 60% have been participating in the WEP program for one year or more.</i>
OWF Sanctions	36 have never been sanctioned 18 have been sanctioned once 10 have been sanctioned twice 8 have been sanctioned three or more times

¹ **Core hours:** employment, WEP, On-the-job training, community services, job search/job readiness, vocational educational training, or providing child care for an individual in community service. **Non Core hours:** job skill training directly related to employment, education directly related to employment (non-degreed ind.), or attendance at secondary school/GED program.

Felonies	64 have no record of felonies or major traffic violations 8 have a felony or major traffic violations
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Preparing participants for employment: Participation in the WEP program is too often viewed by participants as punishment. Few report that they are acquiring skills needed for employment. Some are not motivated to seek employment. Others lack prospects for improving their job readiness to the extent required to make employment possible. Even so, the Department seeks a provider who will create a positive atmosphere that values the potential contribution of each WEP participant. In such an environment, the most basic job readiness skills will be encouraged and reinforced.

Reporting: The Contracting Office requires the submission of both monthly reports attached to the invoice, as well as quarterly reports. The monthly report should include the names of OWF WEP individuals served, total number of OWF WEP clients served during the month, number of new OWF WEP clients, and the number of OWF WEP clients who recorded no work hours during the month. The quarterly reports should show progress toward achieving the measurable outcomes, which will be included in the contract, once awarded. In addition, the Contractor must submit monthly PRC Soft Services reports which reflect the dollar amount expensed and the number of OWF participants served.

The Employment & Benefits Division requires submission of weekly “no-show” reports and bi-weekly attendance reports. The weekly no-show reports shall include a list of participants who did not attend orientation, noting the participant’s name and social security number, as well as the DJFS caseworker to which the participant is assigned. The bi-weekly attendance reports shall include the participant’s name, the number of work hours recorded for each day, the signature of the site supervisor, and a good cause statement (ex. doctor’s excuse) must be attached if the participant had good cause for missing required work hours.

Finally, events such as enrollment, termination, and referrals must be reported in G*Stars, the online customer tracking system of the *WorkPlus* Center.

Collaboration: The WEP provider is a partner in the *WorkPlus* System. While co-location at the *WorkPlus* Center is not required, at least a part-time presence must be maintained. It is also expected that a representative of the WEP provider will participate as a member of the Partner Council and the Business Services Team. It is increasingly expected of partners that they demonstrate the ability to work with other partners to meet the needs customers shared in common.

Contract Period

A contract will be negotiated for the period beginning July 1, 2007 and ending June 30, 2008. Two extensions of one-year each may be then negotiated without the release of another RFP.

Procurement Timetable

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>
March 15	RFP released.
March 23	Prospective Proposers' Conference
April 13	DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS
April 16	Proposal Review Begins
April 23-27	Time reserved for possible meetings with final candidates
May 1-4	Education & Training Committee meets to make final recommendation
May 9	Recommendations of the Education and Training Committee considered by <i>WorkPlus</i> Board
May 14	Letter of intent to award contract issued by the Clark County Department of Job and Family Services. Request for authorization of a contract submitted for approval to the Board of Clark County Commissioners. All applicants notified.
May 15 – June 30	Final contract negotiated with the Department.
July 1	Service provision begins.

The Department reserves the right to revise this schedule after providing reasonable notice.

Prospective Proposers' Meeting

A meeting of prospective proposers has been scheduled for 10 – 10:45 a.m. on Friday, March 23 at the Clark County Department of Job and Family Services, 1345 Lagonda Ave., Springfield, Ohio. The meeting will be held in the Snyder Room in Building B.

Deliverables

Through the establishment of a “Work Experience Program,” the Contractor will provide opportunities for OWF participants to meet a work requirement ranging from 20-50 hours per week for each participant. It is expected that the Contractor will:

1. Provide work experiences to accommodate a specified number of participants each month. These work experiences incorporate job readiness training that prepares participants for employment. The Contractor must ensure that 65% of participants complete the assigned number of work participation hours. (The numerator shall be those OWF participants assigned to a WEP site for the full month.)
2. Provide a process through which participants can be oriented and assigned to a work experience that is appropriate for each individual.
3. Develop and implement a program to ensure that the supervisors of the WEP participants are trained to accomplish program goals.

4. Provide information and referral services with the goal of helping WEP participants overcome barriers to employment.
5. Provide intensive job development and job coaching to include the following for each participant:
 - a. Provide recovery services to include immediate follow-up, either in person or by telephone, for all “no shows.”
 - b. When the work site or the Contractor identify problems (e.g., barriers discovered that make the client unable to participate at their work assignment), consult with the Department’s case manager to develop a remediation plan, which may result in adjustments to the client’s Self Sufficiency Plan.
 - c. Participate as a member of the Business Services Team to assist the participant in finding employment.
6. Submit reports as required by the Department.
7. Collaborate with *WorkPlus* partners to assist participants in finding employment and/or overcoming barriers to employment.

Role of the Clark County Department of Job and Family Services

1. The Department will perform and provide to the Contractor an initial assessment of each participant referred to the WEP program. The assessment will include the following: family composition, employment history, aptitudes/skills, employment goal, child care needs and arrangements, transportation needs and arrangements, felonies or major traffic violations, highest grade completed, reading and math levels, and medical history (when available).
2. The Department will assign 8 OWF caseworkers to serve as a liaison with the Contractor to ensure that communication flows openly and that individual problems are addressed on a case-by-case basis.
3. The Department will remove/sanction those participants who repeatedly fail to perform in accordance with minimum acceptable program standards.
4. The Department will perform both program and fiscal monitoring functions.

Program Proposal

Potential service providers should develop and submit a proposal that addresses each of the following:

1. *Identifying Information:* The name of the proposing organization, address, name of contact person, telephone number, and e-mail address should be clearly identified.

2. *Previous Experience:* The proposer's previous experience in providing similar or related services should be demonstrated.
3. *Services to be Provided:*
 - a. Describe the work experiences that will be provided. Include a statement of the measurements that will be used to document acquisition of job readiness skills.
 - b. Describe the worksite(s) that will be utilized. If sites at locations other than the proposer's agency are to be utilized, include a listing of such sites or an explanation of the process through which such sites will be secured.
 - c. Indicate the number of participants that can be served. (While the Department will give priority to the proposer that demonstrates an ability to serve *all* participants referred by the Department, proposals that seek to serve a lesser number, or specific population, of participants will also be considered. It is possible that more than one proposer will be selected.)
 - d. Describe the process through which WEP participants will be assigned to worksites, understanding that the participant must be on the job within 5 working days of receipt of the referral from the Department.
 - e. Describe the process through which "emergency referrals" can be accommodated, understanding that approximately five times each month a referral will be received for which expedited (less than 72 hours) placement must be made.
 - f. Provide a description of the activities in which participants will be engaged, demonstrating what skills will be acquired by the participants. If job descriptions are available, attach a representative sample.
 - g. If worksite supervisors are not employees of the proposer and are not paid for their services, describe the process through which the proposer will ensure that the supervisors add value to the participants' work experience.
 - h. Describe the process for resolving problems and issues that may arise at the worksites.
 - i. Describe the proposed staffing plan and attach job descriptions.
4. *Reporting:* Provide assurances with regard to the ability to meet all reporting requirements.
5. *Collaboration:* Demonstrate your commitment to collaborating with other *WorkPlus* Center partners to help job-ready WEP participants obtain employment.
6. *Other pertinent information:* This section may include additional information not requested elsewhere.

7. *Budget:* A budget utilizing the format that appears as Appendix I must also be included. Contribution of other funds or in-kind support is encouraged and should be documented in the budget.
8. *Assurances and Certifications:* The proposer must provide assurances regarding the items contained in Appendix III.

Proposal Submission Requirements

One copy of the proposal should be submitted to:

Geoffrey Steele
Assistant Director
Clark County Department of Job & Family Services
1345 Lagonda Ave.
Springfield, OH 45503
Telephone: (937) 327-1717

In addition, an electronic copy of the proposal should be sent to Erin Thomas-Brodine at ebrodine@clarkdjfs.org. No attachments will be accepted in the proposal packet that cannot be emailed. The hard copy should duplicate the electronic copy in its entirety. One hard copy should be submitted before 4:00 p.m., Friday, April 13, 2007. Faxed copies are not acceptable.

Proposal Evaluation

All proposals will be forwarded to a proposal review committee comprised of a representative of the Education and Training Committee of the WorkPlus Board and staff from the Department. Proposals will be rated utilizing the rating sheet which appears as Appendix II. Face to face meetings with some proposers may be requested. The recommendation of the proposal review committee will be forwarded for consideration by the WorkPlus Board and final approval by the Clark County Board of Commissioners.

Limitations

This RFP does not commit the Department to award a contract or to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of a proposal. The Department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, to negotiate services and cost with applicants, and to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP.

The Department will review each proposal with respect to price, applicant's administrative and programmatic capabilities, and conformance to the RFP criteria. The Department may reject all responses if proposed rates are unreasonable or if the applicants do not meet the RFP acceptance criteria.

All proposals submitted in response to the RFP will become the property of the Department.

Appendix I

Budget

Please submit a budget that includes all expected costs. Include other funding or in-kind support, if applicable. Suggested budget line items are, but not limited to, as follows:

Salaries (List each budgeted position and % of FTE separately)

Fringe Benefits

Consultants/Professional Fees/Purchased Services

Telephone

Occupancy (rent/utilities)

Printing/Publications/Postage

Staff Training/Travel/Mileage Reimbursement

Consumable Supplies and Equipment

Insurance

Memberships/Professional Fees

Administrative/Indirect Expense (Methodology for assigning administrative or indirect costs must be described.)

Appendix II Proposal Evaluation Sheet	
PROPOSING ORGANIZATION:	REVIEWER'S COMMENTS
EXPERIENCE: Proposer demonstrated prior experience in delivering the services requested.	
CONTENTS OF PROPOSAL: Proposer created a realistic and comprehensive plan for executing each deliverable. DELIVERABLE: Proposal for <i>Work Experience sites</i> provides a number sufficient to meet the need and provides a broad array of opportunities that prepares participants for employment. DELIVERABLE: Ability to provide orientation and make timely and appropriate WEP assignments. DELIVERABLE: Ability to provide training and support to site supervisors. DELIVERABLE: Ability to provide intensive job coaching and development services to OWF participants. DELIVERABLE: Ability to provide information and referral services with the goal of helping WEP participants overcome barriers to employment. DELIVERABLE: Ability to meet all reporting requirements. DELIVERABLE: Process through which the Contractor will collaborate with other <i>WorkPlus</i> Center partners to help job-ready WEP participants obtain employment.	
ASSURANCES:	
BUDGET: Budget is realistic and maximizes use of limited resources.	
REVIEWER'S NAME:	DATE:

Appendix III Assurances

As part of the proposal, the potential Contractor must provide assurances that:

1. It shall procure and maintain the insurance and bonds specified below:
 - a. Worker's Compensation Insurance as required by Ohio law and any other state in which work will be performed.
 - b. Commercial General Liability insurance for a minimum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence with an annual aggregate of at least \$2,000,000, including coverage for subcontractors, if any are used.
 - c. Umbrella or Excess Liability insurance (over and above Commercial General Liability) with a limit of at least \$2,000,000.
 - d. Auto Liability Insurance covering all owned, non-owned and hired vehicles used in connection with the work of Clark County, or its departments, with limits of at least \$300,000 (Combined Single Limit) or, \$100,000 per person and \$300,000 per accident for Bodily Injury and \$100,000 per accident for property damage.
 - e. Professional liability or errors and omissions insurance (if applicable) for a minimum of \$1,000,000 per incident.
 - f. The Board of Clark County Commissioners must be named as "Additional Insured" on the policies listed in paragraphs b, c, and d above.
2. The Contractor agrees that it will submit to the Department the latest completed financial audit of all funding sources used in the project as prepared by a Certified Public Accountant or auditor approved by the State as part of the Single Audit Act.
3. The Contractor agrees to complete and submit a Declaration Regarding Material Assistance questionnaire.

Appendix IV Bi-Weekly Attendance Report

WEP Attendance Sheet: (Month/Year) _____ **DJFS CM#:** _____

Start Date: _____

Date	Hours Scheduled	Hours Worked	Comments**
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			
31			
TOTAL HOURS:			

Participant: _____

SS#: _____

Address: _____

Phone#: _____

Job Site: _____

Site Address: _____

Site Supervisor: _____

Site Phone#: _____

Required Hours (monthly): _____

WEP Case Manager: _____

Site Supervisor Signature/Date

WEP Participant's Signature/Date

***Remember, if this participant is a full time (40 hours a week) client, the site supervisor must complete the OWF Monthly Summary Report each month and attach it to this sheet.**

****For more comments, please attach separate sheet.**