

**Clark County Department of Job and Family Services
Work Experience Program – Food Stamp Recipients
Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Background

Individuals who participate in the Food Stamp program must fulfill a work requirement that is equal to the value of the Food Stamp benefit divided by the minimum wage. For many, paid employment satisfies this requirement. However, each month approximately 150 Food Stamp participants are unable to meet the work requirement through work alone. For these individuals, an unpaid work experience becomes necessary.

The Department seeks one or more providers of a Work Experience Program for Clark County participants in the Food Stamp 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.

Significant turnover exists in the WEP program for Food Stamp participants. Each month, approximately 250 participants are referred to the WEP provider. Approximately 50% of those who are assigned actually report to the provider for the initial orientation. Of those participants who receive WEP assignments, participation rates are as follows:

- Approximately 50% of Food Stamp participants participate in the program on a sustained basis.
- Approximately 30% of Food Stamp participants only partially complete their required number of hours at their assigned WEP site.
- Approximately 20% of Food Stamp participants complete none of their required number of hours at their assigned WEP site.

A profile of Food Stamp participants appears below:

Profile of 72 Food Stamp Participants in March, 2007	
Gender	44 are female, 28 are male
Age	10 are from age 18-25 18 are from age 26-35 25 are from age 36-45 19 are age 46 or older
Race	52 Caucasian, 20 African American
Education	15 completed less than 11 th grade 11 completed the 11 th grade 15 completed the 12 th grade, but did not graduate 28 earned high school diploma or GED 3 completed some post secondary education <i>Note: 43% have completed at least a GED</i>
Employment History	30 reported some employment in the last year 42 reported no employment in the last year
Work Activity History	21 have participated in the WEP program previously 2 have previously received job search assistance 46 have no participation in work activities
Food Stamp Assistance	6 have received food stamps from 1-3 months 5 have received food stamps from 3-6 months 20 have received food stamps from 4-7 months 18 have received food stamps from 8-11 months

	23 have received food stamps for 12 months or more
Food Stamp Sanctions	40 have never been sanctioned 15 have been sanctioned once 11 have been sanctioned twice 6 have been sanctioned 3 or more times
Felonies	66 have no record of felonies or major traffic violations 6 have a felony or major traffic violations

Preparing participants for employment Participation in the WEP program is too often viewed by participants as punishment. Few report that they acquire the 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 Food Stamp clients served, the total number of Food Stamp clients served year-to-date, and the number of new Food Stamp clients served during the month. The quarterly reports should show progress toward achieving the measurable outcomes, which will be included in the contract, once awarded.

The Employment & Benefits Division requires the submission of weekly “no-show” reports and monthly attendance reports. The weekly no-show reports must 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 monthly attendance reports must 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 (e.g., doctor’s excuse) must be attached if the participant had good cause for missing the 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 of common customers.

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 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 10:00 – 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 Food Stamp participants to meet a work requirement that averages 22-30 hours per month 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.
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. Submit reports as required by the Department.
6. 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 designate a key staff person to serve as a liaison with the Contractor to ensure that communication flows openly and that problems are addressed on a case-by-case basis.
3. The Department will remove/sanction those participants who 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 email 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 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 a 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 five 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. Attach job descriptions if available.
- 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:* 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 <i>training and support to site supervisors</i> . 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 Monthly 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.