

**Clark County Department of Job and Family Services
Ex-Offender Job Readiness Training Program
Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Introduction

The purpose of the RFP is to solicit providers of a 3-week Job Readiness and Job Search Assistance program for services to the Ex-Offender population of Clark County. The program should include an assessment and development of an employability plan, job readiness training, transition support services, job search and placement assistance, and job retention services. It is expected that participants will be prepared for employment, then provided with assistance in searching for and obtaining a job. The goal of this program shall be to place participants in paid employment.

All trainees must meet the eligibility requirements described in the Department's current Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) Plan, a copy of which may be viewed on the Department's website, www.clarkdjfs.org. For this contract year, applicants must be from an "assistance group" with income of less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. A PRC application must be completed and final PRC eligibility must be determined by the Contractor.

Scope of Work

The Contractor shall implement a 3-week program that includes an initial assessment, employability skills and job search and placement assistance, based on the needs identified in each participant's initial assessment. The program shall have built-in flexibility to accommodate individualized plans to address individual needs. The program should also incorporate Bridges Out of Poverty concepts into the curriculum, such as teaching the hidden rules of the workplace and developing resources to break the cycle of poverty. Since the Department has no plans for the classes to be held on the DJFS campus, the Contractor must secure alternative space offsite for the training program.

The program shall include the following components:

1. Assessment

The initial assessment should include an individual employment plan that outlines the steps necessary to achieve employment, a needs assessment that identifies the participant's barriers (such as drug and/or alcohol addiction), education and literacy levels, charges/convictions, employment history, and personal goals.

2. Job Readiness Training

A. Employability Skills: These skills are the foundational skills upon which occupational or technical skills rest. As such, employability skills are not job specific but cut across all job levels and industry types. Employability skills include both thinking skills and personal qualities that are essential to successful job performance and are teachable, basic

skills necessary to getting, keeping, and doing well on a job. Employability skills include:

- (a) *Personal qualities* – Although these are not “skills,” it is important for participants to learn and possess the following qualities to be successful in the workplace: responsibility, self-confidence, integrity, adaptability, punctuality, positive work attitude, personal grooming, self motivated, and team work.
- (b) *Higher-order skills*: learning, critical thinking, creative problem solving, decision making, appropriate social skills, and time management skills.

B. Basic Computer Skills: Hands-on practical computer training should be incorporated into the curriculum to ensure that all participants possess at least basic computer skills needed to increase their opportunities for employment. Instruction should include performing basic computer operations (using the keyboard and mouse, turning the computer on and off, opening software applications, opening, minimizing and closing windows, managing files and folders, etc.). Instruction should also include using email and using the internet for job search and instruction on resume building.

3. Transition Support Services

Since transition back into the community from incarceration is a barrier for this population, the provider shall incorporate transition support services to participants, including support groups, mentoring, counseling, and referrals to other necessary services.

4. Job Search Assistance

The goal of this module is to assist participants in determining a realistic and appropriate career path, then equip participants with skills such as interviewing and resume writing that are necessary to obtain employment.

5. Job Placement

Upon successful completion of the training modules, the provider shall provide job placement assistance to participants. The provider shall use community contacts and knowledge of specific job openings to place job ready participants in paid employment.

6. Job Retention and Follow-Up

Once employment is obtained, it is expected that follow-up will be provided for at least six months to encourage job retention. In addition, since many of the participants in this training program will have substantial barriers to employment, it is also expected that the Contractor will provide a case management component through which barriers are identified and addressed.

Upon the successful completion of the program, participants would be expected to obtain paid employment, either full- or part-time.

The program should have the capacity to produce the following outcomes:

- 200 ex-offenders will be enrolled in the program;
- 120 ex-offenders will complete the workshops and develop individual employment plans;
- 50% of those who complete the program will obtain employment;
- 60% of those who obtain employment will maintain employment for at least three months.

Target Population

The target population for this program is eligible individuals, living in Clark County, who have been incarcerated. The Contractor will be responsible for recruiting participants into the program and shall establish and utilize existing partnerships with the court system, probation department, jail, child support enforcement agency and social service agencies to generate referrals to the program.

All trainees must meet the eligibility requirements described in the Department's current Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) Plan and must meet the need standard of 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. A PRC application must be completed and final PRC eligibility must be determined by the Contractor.

Reporting Requirements

The Department's Contracting Office requires monthly program reports, included with the invoice, as well as monthly PRC Soft Services Reports, and quarterly reports. The monthly program reports shall include the names of all current participants, the number who showed for the training program, the number of successful completers, the number obtaining employment, and the number reaching 6-month job retention.

The monthly PRC Soft Services Reports shall include the amount expensed during the month and the total number served. The Quarterly Reports should show progress toward achieving the measurable outcomes, which will be included in the contract once awarded.

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

Contract Period

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

Procurement Timetable

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>
April 27	RFP released.
May 4	Prospective Proposer's Conference
May 25	DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS
May 29	Proposal Review Begins.
June 4 & 5	Time reserved for possible meetings with final candidates.
June 6-8	Education & Training Committee meets to make final recommendation
June 13	Recommendations of the E&T Committee considered by WorkPlus Board
June 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.
June 15-30	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 2 – 2:45 p.m. on Friday, May 4 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.

Role of the Clark County Department of Job and Family Services

1. The Department will provide training in eligibility determination.
2. 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. *Recruitment:* Demonstrate your plan and capacity to recruit ex-offenders into the program.
4. *Services to be Provided:* Address all of the following elements of the proposed program:
 - a. Describe the contents of any assessment that is performed and the process by which it will be conducted.
 - b. Describe the contents of the employability plan that is developed as a guide for the participant in the training process. Also describe the process by which the plan will be developed.
 - c. Describe your plan and capacity to provide job readiness training, including employability skills and basic computer skills training. Include a summary of the proposed curriculum.
 - d. Describe your plan and capacity to provide transition support services. Include a description of the proposed services.
 - e. Describe your plan and capacity to provide job search assistance to participants. Include a summary of the proposed curriculum.
 - f. Describe your plan to provide job placement assistance to participants.
 - g. Describe your plan and capacity to provide job retention and follow-up services.
 - h. Describe your expectation for success rates in the areas of training completion, job placement, and job retention. Be specific with respect to attainable percentage rates in each category, i.e. state the percentage of participants you expect will complete job readiness training, the percentage of training completers you expect will obtain employment, and the percentage of participants you expect will reach six-month job retention.
5. *Collaboration with other WorkPlus partners:* Describe on-going collaboration with current partners as well as new relationships that would be developed.
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. *Reporting:* Provide assurances with regard to the ability to meet all reporting requirements.
9. *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.

The hard copy and electronic copy should be submitted before 4:00 p.m., Friday, May 25, 2007. Faxed copies are not acceptable.

Proposal Evaluation

All proposals will be forwarded to a proposal review committee comprised of members 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 as follows:

Salaries (list each 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: Contractor demonstrated prior experience in delivering the services requested.	
CONTENTS OF PROPOSAL: Contractor has created a realistic and comprehensive plan for providing each required program element. Plan and capacity to recruit ex-offenders into the program. Plan for assessments for participants. (Include comments on the process by which the assessments will be conducted.) Plan for developing employability plans for participants. (Include comments on the process by which the plan is developed.) Plan and capacity to provide job readiness training, including employability skills and basic computer skills training. (Include comments on the proposed curriculum.) Plan and capacity to provide transition support services. (Include comments on the proposed services.) Plan and capacity to provide job search assistance to participants. (Include comments on the proposed curriculum.) Plan and capacity to provide job placement assistance to participants. Plan and capacity to provide job retention and follow-up services. Expectations for success rates in the areas of 1) training completion, 2) job placement, and 3) job retention. Ability to meet all reporting requirements.	
COLLABORATION WITH WORKPLUS PARTNERS	
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.