

Mass Workforce Issuance

Workforce Issuance No. 14-13

☐ Policy ☒ Information

To: Chief Elected Officials
Workforce Investment Board Chairs
Workforce Investment Board Directors
Title I Administrators
Career Center Directors
Title I Fiscal Officers
DCS Operations Managers

cc: WIA State Partners

From: Alice Sweeney, Director
Department of Career Services

Date: February 21, 2014

Subject: **Ready to Work Partnership Funding Opportunity**

Purpose: To notify Local Workforce Investment Boards, One-Stop Career Center Operators and other local workforce investment partners of a new funding opportunity. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Employment and Training Administration (ETA) has posted a Solicitation for Grant Applications, [SGA/DFA PY-13-07](#) for the H-1B Ready to Work Partnership (Ready to Work) grant program.

Background: The Long-term Unemployed H-1B Ready To Work Partnerships grant program (Ready to Work) will utilize approximately \$150 million in revenues from the H-1B visa program to support high performing partnerships between employers, non-profit organizations and America's public workforce system that will help provide long-term unemployed individuals with the range of services, training, and access they need to fill middle and high-skill jobs.

The Ready to Work grants will reward partnerships with the following key features:

- **Focus on Reemploying Long-Term Unemployed Workers:** Programs will have to recruit long-term unemployed workers and employ strategies that are effective in getting them back to work in middle to high-skill occupations. These strategies could include assessments, job placement assistance, training, mentoring and supportive services such as financial counseling and behavioral health counseling.

- **Work-based Training That Enables Earning While Learning** through models such as On-the-Job Training (OJT), Paid Work Experience, Paid Internships and Registered Apprenticeships: Incorporating work-based training into these projects will afford employers the opportunity to train workers in the specific skill sets required for open jobs.
- **Employer Engagement and Support in Program Design**, including programs that commit to consider hiring qualified participants. Training programs funded by these grants must address the skills and competencies demanded by employers and high-growth industries, and ultimately lead to the employment of qualified participants. Preference will be given to applicants with employer partners that make a commitment to consider candidates who participate in these programs.

The Ready to Work program is designed to provide long-term unemployed workers with individualized counseling, training and supportive and specialized services leading to rapid employment in occupations and industries for which employers use H-1B visa to hire foreign workers. A small percentage of other unemployed and/or incumbent workers may also be served through this program.

Grants will be awarded to the lead applicant of a public and private partnership of entities that includes:

1. The workforce investment system;
2. Education and training providers; and
3. Business-related nonprofit organizations, organizations functioning as workforce intermediaries for the expressed purpose of serving needs of businesses or consortia of businesses.

As a pre-condition to be considered for Ready to Work funding, there must be at least three employers or a regional industry association consisting of at least three employers who are actively engaged in the project.

The Department expects to fund approximately 20-30 grants with individual grant amounts ranging from \$3 million to \$10 million. Applications must be received no later than 4:00pm EST, **June 19th, 2014**.

Please refer to the full Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA), identified above, for complete information.