

**Bridging the Opportunity Gap:
Department of Youth Services (DYS) Job Readiness
and Employment Program**

A Request for Proposals Issued by:
Commonwealth Corporation

in partnership with the
Massachusetts Department of Youth Services

November 20, 2006

Table of Contents

Purpose	1
Background.....	1
Eligibility for Grant Award.....	3
Funding Levels.....	3
Use of Funds	3
Coordination with Agencies and Organizations	4
Examples of Project Services	4
Required Proposal Contents.....	5
Instructions for RFP Submission.....	6
Evaluation of Proposals and Grant Award Process	6
Grantee Requirements.....	7

Attachments

Proposal Cover Sheet
Project Budget Sheet
Activity Sheet/Template
List of DYS Community Re-entry Center Contacts

Contact For More Information:

Janet Daisley
Center for Youth Development and Education
Commonwealth Corporation
355 Bridge Street, Suite 4B
Northampton, MA 01060
Phone: (413) 582-9054 extension 107
Fax: (413) 582-9068
E-mail: JDaisley@commcorp.org

Bridging the Opportunity Gap: DYS Job Readiness and Employment Program

Purpose. The Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp) invites proposals from youth-serving organizations, including the sixteen Local Workforce Investment Boards in Massachusetts, One-Stop Career Centers, community-based and/or non-profit organizations (including but not limited to DHS Community Re-entry Center vendors) to undertake activities that create opportunities for effective career readiness that provide “bridges” to employment services for youth in the custody of the Department of Youth Services.

This Request for Proposals has been designed to accomplish three primary goals:

- Funds are being offered to provide direct services that meet the career readiness, pre-employment and employment needs of youth in the custody of DHS;
- Grants will focus the delivery of services to youth in DHS custody (and who are currently reporting to a DHS Community Re-entry Center), using youth asset-based strategies and personnel that have demonstrated success working effectively with this population;
- Grant activities will focus attention on developing or strengthening collaborations and partnerships between existing agencies and organizations that have expertise with youth job readiness and youth training and/or employment and have a proven track record of working successfully with youth in DHS custody.

Background. There are approximately 2,750 youth in care in DHS on any given date. While DHS provides treatment to approximately 1,500 adjudicated youth, DHS is also responsible for providing education and career development services to DHS youth in their home community (through Community Re-entry Centers). CommCorp is currently partnering with the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services to improve educational and career services, both during the period of custody and in transitioning a youth back to the community. On a state level, we have begun to emphasize strategies that serve eligible DHS youth more effectively, including services that are available through the Workforce Investment Act and other youth programming.

CommCorp, in partnership with the DHS, is seeking proposals to pilot innovative approaches to providing job readiness, job training and employment services that engage and motivate youth and are tailored to the unique needs of youth who are in DHS custody and currently being served by DHS Community Re-entry Centers. CommCorp is encouraging applicants to think creatively about how to design and deliver services with organizations and agencies that are well versed in serving the racial, ethnic and cultural background of the targeted youth population. Of particular interest are proposals that blend the services and skills of

organizations with in-depth expertise in job readiness and employment along with services that are delivered in a supported, youth friendly manner.

To support this approach, CommCorp encourages organizations to submit proposals that include a range of coordinated job readiness, training and pre-employment-related services including:

- Strategies for recruiting and retaining youth in identified program activities;
- Strategies for recruiting program personnel who have a demonstrated interest in working with youth in DYS custody;
- Personal motivation and life skills training;
- Career and job readiness curriculum that is oriented to learning needs of youth;
- Leadership skills development;
- Tutoring in basic literacy and numeracy required for pre-employment experiences and job placement;
- Pre-employment experiences (for instance, structured internships, job shadowing or job mentoring);
- Placement in vocational and occupational learning opportunities;
- Placement and support in employment opportunities;
- Any other strategies to prepare youth for employment; and.
- Use of appropriate interest inventory, vocational aptitude or assessment tools (including the Massachusetts Work-based Learning Plan) for all internship and employment experiences.
- Linkages to the workforce investment board region's Pathways to Success by 21 initiative

The program design should also include strategies to provide individualized support for each participating youth that results in a connected approach with the families and guardians of the participating youth as well as other state, local and community agency personnel involved in the lives of participating youth (*e.g.*, DYS case managers and staff, Department of Social Services staff, and other involved individuals).

The ultimate goal for the grant funds is the design and delivery of an innovative pilot program, focused on high quality career and job readiness and pre-employment services that are delivered by staff with *demonstrated* success working with youth in DYS custody (particularly those youth accessible through DYS Community Re-entry Centers). We also seek proposals that leverage the services of more than one organization, and are particularly interested in service delivery from organizations with an effective track record of working with youth in DYS custody. This RFP will provide funds to selected applicants that can meet this challenge.

Eligibility for Grant Award. This RFP solicits proposals from any non-profit or community-based organization, one-stop career center, and/or workforce investment board/youth council within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The strongest proposals will reflect a collaborative approach, combining organizations (including the DYS Community Re-entry Center) that can partner together to effectively serve youth who are currently in DYS custody. An organization may submit a proposal by itself, or a collaborative proposal can be submitted by a lead organization on behalf of itself and several named partners. Your proposal must include an original signature(s) of a responsible official(s). If a LWIB serves as a lead organization, the grant proposal must include the signature of the LWIB's fiscal agent.

Every proposal must also include the signature of the participating DYS entity (director of a DYS Community Re-entry Center). A list of DYS Re-entry Center staff is located in the Attachments.

Funding Levels. A total of approximately \$300,000 will be awarded through this request for proposal. CommCorp anticipates awarding between four and five grants, with a grant range of between \$40,000 and \$60,000 each.

Use of Funds. Funds granted under this proposal must be used to serve youth who are currently in the custody of the Department of Youth. Participating youth should be between the ages of 16 and 21 and be currently affiliated with a DYS Community Re-entry Center. Program funds should be targeted specifically to youth in DYS custody and not targeted at court-involved youth (youth not currently in DYS custody).

Funds may be used for to pay for staff (including program coordination), case managers, professional consultants, transportation, youth stipends, curriculum materials, and food for participating youth. Administrative costs should be no more than 10% of requested funds.

Coordination with Agencies and Organizations. This request for proposal has been designed to encourage collaboration between local DYS entities and local community and workforce groups that can effectively serve youth in DYS custody. Selected partners should address their demonstrated success and effectiveness in working with youth in DYS care, be able to tailor program design and implementation to the specific needs of this youth population (for instance, programs should address a variety of learning styles, particularly those that are interactive and engaging to youth culture, deliver services in a "hands-on", non-classroom oriented environment, involve program staff who are motivated and possess an ability to be culturally sensitive to participating youth). Services should also be designed with innovative program delivery in facilities and environments that are oriented and accessible to youth that reflected with the DYS population.

Examples of Project Services. Proposals should clearly identify program design, activities, strategies, and employment-related outcomes that will be funded through this grant award. Because of the limited size and duration of the grants, it is anticipated that most efforts will focus on life skills, job and career readiness activities and pre-employment activities. Examples of project activities and services include:

- design of program services that take advantage of existing WIA youth services that can be customized to the needs of youth in DYS custody;
- special efforts for both outreach and follow-up to engage youth who are eligible for services but face barriers that prevent them from consistently attending or participating in services;
- the development and implementation of an individual service strategy to identify short and long term goals for each participating youth in the area of employment readiness;
- Adapting one stop career center services so that they are youth friendly, and are provided through an asset-based and youth development perspective;
- Creating more effective brokering between employers and youth, for work-based experiences including structured internships, and part-time or full-time employment;
- Involvement of youth in the planning and service delivery process;
- Designing a program delivery strategy for job and career exploration, and/or vocational training and employment readiness to assist the youth/young adult with employment and economic self sufficiency;
- Defining operational details for program participants, including stipends for clients based on program attendance and achievements; a plan for six-month follow-up services; and assistance with transportation and other support services needs of clients;
- Demonstrated capacity to serve youth from a variety of cultural, economic and linguistic backgrounds; and
- Strong collaborations with local DYS entities and local community service providers to enhance the array of services available to meet the needs of clients, including academic support programs (related to job readiness), career readiness, vocational and occupational skill training, exposure to the world of work, schools, health and mental health care, substance abuse services, housing support, etc.

Required Proposal Contents. Each proposal must include the following:

- **Cover sheet** — Use the Cover Sheet form supplied in this RFP to provide all appropriate signatories, and to identify a key program and fiscal contact for your proposal.

- **Proposal Narrative** — Proposals must include a brief written narrative of no more than five (5) pages of double-spaced text printed using a 12-point font and one-inch margins. Letters of support may be submitted but only if they contain a specific commitment of resources to the implementation plan. No appendices are allowed. Data tables included within the text may be single-spaced. A competitive Narrative would include:
 - ❖ Information that summarizes the target population expected to participate in program activities, including the specific number of youth to be served, their demographics (gender, ethnicity), their DYS Re-entry Center, and the geographic location of emphasis for participating youth.
 - ❖ Information on the collaborating organizations qualifications for working with youth in DYS custody, including their demonstrated track record of working *effectively and successfully* with the DYS youth population, specifically in the area of job readiness, pre-employment and employment.
 - ❖ A summary of specific direct service activities that will be undertaken in the proposed project. Proposals may fund limited program design and planning, participant support services that enhance youth participation and engagement, service delivery, follow-up services, or a combination of these activities.
 - ❖ Specific anticipated outcomes of grant activities for the youth who will be served. Outcomes should include number of youth completing job readiness, job training and pre-employment activities; number of youth projected to participate in work-based activities such as job shadowing and structured internships; number of youth projected to receive actual employment. Outcomes will be tracked and reported to DYS.
- **Activity Sheets** —A template Activity Sheet is included in the Appendix to this RFP. Proposals should include as many activity sheets as necessary to accurately describe specific proposed activities. Describe specific activities that will be accomplished with the support of grant funds, identify a local partner who has the lead responsibility for assuring the activity is accomplished, and include a timeline for when the activities will occur. Activity Sheets, taken together, comprise the applicant’s proposed workplan.
- **Budget Forms** – You must submit both a line item budget and a budget narrative that describes your planned uses of grant funds. A budget sheet is attached in the Appendix. Please note that not more than 10 percent of grant funds may be used to meet grant administrative costs.

Instructions for RFP Submission. Each proposal must consist of an original and four (4) copies. The cover sheet for the original must contain an original signature of the individual

who is the official signatory for the identified fiscal agent. All proposals must be fully complete and contain all required attachments.

All proposals must be received before 5:00 p.m., Wednesday, December 20, 2006. Delivery of proposals is the sole responsibility of the applicant. Submission of proposals by facsimile or electronic means (*i.e.*, e-mail) is not permitted. CommCorp is not responsible for irregularities in delivery on the part of the U.S. Postal Service or private courier services.

RFP submissions will be stamped with a time and date of receipt. Proposals, or any parts thereof, received after the required date and time will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered.

Proposals must be submitted to:

Monique Miles
Commonwealth Corporation
529 Main Street, Suite 110
Boston, MA 02129

Evaluation of Proposals and Grant Award Process. Proposals will be evaluated by a review committee that will likely consist of representatives from CommCorp, the Department Youth Services, and youth currently in the custody of the Department of Youth Services. Review and assessment will be based on the following priorities:

- applications that reflect a creative, collaborative and community-centered approach to meeting the job readiness and employability needs of eligible youth;
- the degree to which the applicant organizations can demonstrate a successful track record (retention of youth in programs, successful job readiness, pre-employment and employment outcomes) working with youth in DYS custody.
- the quality and extent to which the project plan states goals and objectives that are measurable and attainable;
- the quality and clarity of the proposed service strategy;
- the number of youth who will be directly served through grant activities;
- the degree to which the proposal communicates the presence of a working relationship between local DYS entities and appropriate partner organizations representing the appropriate combination of education, workforce, social services, and youth development;
- the degree of support services that will assure the success of participating youth to complete all program activities and be prepared for employment or continued vocational training experiences; and
- strategies that will ensure sustainability of program services beyond the grant period.

CommCorp reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or to accept any and all proposals, in whole or in part, if deemed to be in the best interest of the Commonwealth.

Grant funds will be awarded through a contract from CommCorp. Grantees must comply with all fiscal and administrative requirements, including program and fiscal reporting, established by CommCorp, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the Department of Youth Services. The grant duration will be January 1, 2007 – June 30, 2007.

Grantee Requirements: Successful grantees will participate in two statewide working sessions to share program design and implementation activities between the time period January 2007 and June 2007. Grantees will also be required to submit an activity report in March and June of 2007 that details the number of participants that were initially recruited for each identified program activity and the number of participants who successfully completed each program activity.

**Bridging the Opportunity Gap: Department of Youth Services (DYS) Job
Readiness and Employment Program**

Proposal Cover Sheet

Workforce Investment Area: _____

Applicant Agency: _____

Contact Person: _____

Position/Title: _____

Address: _____

Address 2: _____

City and Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Proposal Signatories (at least two agencies must be listed)

Name of Lead Organization

Authorized Signature & Title

Name of DYS Entity

Authorized Signature & Title

Name of Partner Organization

Authorized Signature & Title

Name of Partner Organization

Authorized Signature & Title

Name of LWIB Fiscal Agent (if applicable)

Authorized Signature & Title

**Bridging the Opportunity Gap: Department of Youth Services (DYS) Job
Readiness and Employment Program**

Proposed Project Budget

	Requested Funds	Matching Fund	Total Project Cost
Personnel Costs			
Salaries	\$0	\$0	\$0
Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Subtotal: Salaries and Benefits</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0
Direct Costs			
Consultants and Subcontracts	\$0	\$0	\$0
Youth Stipends	\$0	\$0	\$0
Transportation for Youth	\$0	\$0	\$0
Copying	\$0	\$0	\$0
Curriculum/Training Materials	\$0	\$0	\$0
Supplies/Food (for youth)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Misc. (must be \$1,000 or less)	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Subtotal: Direct Expenses</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0
Indirect Costs			
General and Administrative	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Subtotal: Indirect Expenses</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Project Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0

Bridging the Opportunity Gap: Department of Youth Services (DYS) Job Readiness and Employment Program

Proposed Project Workplan

Lead Applicant: _____

Workplan Page _____

I. Life Skills and Job Readiness Activities

Action Step/Activity	Goal or Outcome	Lead Partner	Timeline	Num

Attachments

List of DYS Community Re-entry Center Contacts

DYS has established 33 Community Re-entry Centers (CRC) in Massachusetts to serve youth that have completed the residential phase of their adjudication. A range of community and non-profit vendors, listed below, operate the Community Reentry Centers. Each application should clearly identify the Community Re-entry Center program location to be served and the collaborating Community Re-entry Center staff.

<i>Program Name</i>	<i>DYS Site Director Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Phone/Fax</i>
Attleboro CRC	Tony Cooper	6 Park Street Attleboro, MA 02703	508-226-9668 508-223-4585
Brockton CRC	Diane Durant	15A Bolton Place Brockton, MA 02301	508-427-4393 508-427-4394
Chelsea CRC	Sherman Shelley	175 Crescent Avenue Chelsea, MA 02150	617-887-2203 617-887-1799
Chicopee NC	Karen Tracana	580 Meadow Street Chicopee, MA 01013	413-592-4373 413-592-0006
Dorchester CRC	Delbert Woodham	622 Washington Street, 2 nd Fl Dorchester, MA 02124	617-740-8480 617-740-8489
Fall River	Bob Richards	54 Front Street, 2 nd Fl South Fall River, MA 02720	508-675-1397 508-675-2768
Fitchburg CRC	Pam DeSouza	76 Summer Street, Ste 055 Fitchburg, MA 01570	978-345-6381 978-345-6503
Framingham CRC	Bill Buckley	48 Franklin Street Framingham, MA 01702	508-879-5725 508-879-9301
Greenfield NC	Andy Calvanese	1 Arch Place Greenfield, MA 01301	413-775-5010 413-773-5773
Holyoke CRC	Karen Tracana	225 High Street Holyoke, MA 01040	413-540-9400 413-540-9464
Holyoke NC	Karen Tracana	70 Nick Cosmos Way Holyoke, MA 01040	413-552-3240 413-493-7051
Hyannis CRC	David Rose	500 Main Street Hyannis, MA 02601	508-790-9324/9326 508-790-1288
Lawrence CRC	Michele Collins	360 Merrimack St., Bld 9 Lawrence, MA 01843	978-686-4014 978-682-6915

Attachments

<i>Program Name</i>	<i>DYS Site Director Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Phone/Fax</i>
Lowell CRC	position vacant	10 Favor Street Lowell, MA 01852	978-458-5777 978-458-7328
Lynn CRC	John Bates	25 Munroe Street Lynn, MA 01901	781-592-1391 781-592-1398
New Bedford CRC	Bob Richards	209 Union Street New Bedford, MA 02740	508-992-3075/2597 508-992-3304
North Quabbin PATCH NC	Andy Calvanese	423 Main Street Athol, MA 01331	978-249-5073 978-249-5080
Northampton NC	Andy Calvanese	1 Prince Street Northampton, MA 01060	413-587-6404 413-587-6428
Pittsfield CRC	Andy Calvanese	141 North Street Pittsfield, MA 01201	413-448-2093 413-443-6366
Plymouth CRC	David Rose	47 Main Street Plymouth, MA 02360	508-830-3642/3519 508-830-6841
Quincy CRC	Mike Deady	1445 Hancock Street Quincy, MA 02169	617-479-5730 617-479-7015
Roxbury CRC	Kenetha Moore	35 Northampton St., 6 th Fl Roxbury, MA 02119	617-236-1144 617-236-2244
Salem CRC	John Bates	50 Leavitt Street Salem, MA 01970	978-740-3714 978-740-9503
Somerville CRC	Sherman Shelley	124A Cross Street Somerville, MA 02145	617-629-8400 617-629-8500
South Boston CRC	Kenetha Moore	275 West Broadway South Boston, MA 02127	617-268-8771 617-268-8700
Springfield CRC	Juan Rivera	1666 Main Street Springfield, MA 01113	413-272-2240 413-732-1427
Springfield – Mason Square NC	Juan Rivera	1104B State Street Springfield, MA 01109	413-736-5700 413-736-5165
Springfield – North End NC	Juan Rivera	481 Carew Street Springfield, MA 01104	413-733-8350/8356 413-788-9968

Attachments

<i>Program Name</i>	<i>DYS Site Director Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Phone/Fax</i>
Springfield – South End NC	Juan Rivera	29 Howard Street Springfield, MA 01105	413-788-4385 413-746-5739
Taunton CRC	Tony Cooper	60 Hodges Avenue Taunton, MA 02780	508-880-0669 508-880-1576
Webster CRC	Kelly Gallant	25 Thompson Road Webster, MA 01570	508-949-1515/1542 508-949-1922
West Roxbury CRC	Phil Hindin	450 Canterbury Street Roslindale, MA 02131	617-474-8311/8135 617-474-8326
Worcester CRC	Rob McGlory	52 Ward Street Worcester, MA 01610	508-757-5499/4916 508-757-5181

Attachments