Leveraging Workforce Training Funds to Promote Job Quality

Building Workforce Partnerships 2016

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The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) is a national anti-poverty organization advancing policy solutions that work for low-income people.

CLASP’s Center for Postsecondary and Economic Success works on training and employment policies to help low-income workers succeed, by highlighting best practices and federal policy opportunities and informing federal policymaking with lessons from state and local innovations.

CLASP's advocacy on work/life and job quality focuses on earned sick leave, paid family and medical leave, predictable and responsive schedules, and advancement opportunities.
Combining two approaches to better help workers:

- Work-based learning – using workforce funds to support wage-paid job placements
  - workers “earn while they learn,” and ultimately get unsubsidized jobs

- Promoting job quality
  - targeting resources to high-road employers that offer good, family-sustaining jobs
The Value of “Earn and Learn” Work-Based Learning Programs

• Positive employment and earnings outcomes for workers
• Meets employer needs and develop worker skills

• On-the-Job Training
• Apprenticeship
• Subsidized Jobs
• Transitional Employment

“What Works in Job Training: A Synthesis of the Evidence”
U.S. Departments of Commerce, Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services, 2014
WIOA promotes Work-Based Learning

- **Transitional jobs** with work supports (*up to 10% of WIOA Adult funds*) for individuals with barriers to employment
- **Paid work experiences for Youth** (*at least 20% of WIOA Youth funds*) – *including pre-apprenticeship*
- **On-the-Job Training** (OJT) can pay *up to 75% wage reimbursement* – and can support apprenticeships
- **Incumbent worker training** (IWT) partnerships with employers (*up to 20% of WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker funds combined*) and Customized Training
- **Workplace-based Adult Education** and contextualized learning
Under WIOA, Governors and Local Workforce Development Boards determine factors to use as conditions for on-the-job training contracts and incumbent worker partnerships with employers:

- OJT (WIOA sec. 134(c)(H)(ii))
- IWT (WIOA sec. 134(d)(4)(A)(ii))

This policy-setting moment is an opportunity for local boards to give priority to high-road employers. These same factors can be used for other Work-Based Learning partnerships/grants.
The State Board recognizes that not all jobs are good jobs and that education and training alone will not solve the problem of poverty. There is a hidden cost to low wage work that is ultimately borne by communities, particularly communities of color and immigrant populations. ...[The State’s goal is] economic growth and shared prosperity on the basis of innovation, quality, and skills attainment rather than low wages, contingent employment, and low or no benefits. [S]tate plan partners and providers covered by the plan should make it a priority to work with employers who offer jobs with good wages and benefits, support for ongoing skill training and employee advancement, good working conditions (including paid sick days, paid family leave, and paid medical or short-term disability leave), and adequate hours with predictable schedules that enable employees to meet their family caregiving commitments.” (p. 11-12)
Suggested Criteria for Work-Based Learning Employer Partnerships

Local Boards can set policies to give **priority** to subsidized job placements (either full or part time) with employers that:

- Offer **decent wages and benefits** (e.g., top 20% for their industry and/or for the relevant occupation).
- Invest in and support employees’ ongoing training and advancement
- Recognize employees’ rights to join a union.
Suggested Employer Criteria (cont’d)

Prioritize partnerships with employers that:

• Provide **paid sick days**.
• Provide **paid family leave**.
• Provide **paid medical leave**/short-term disability.
• Offer **adequate hours and predictable schedules**
  job schedules with **advance notice**;
  - fair **on-call policy**: compensate on-call workers
    not called in;
  - **reporting time pay**: compensating workers sent
    home early
Other potential criteria

• Worker Turnover rates

• Wage Theft/Labor Law Compliance Records

Well-Designed Transitional Jobs Programs

- Time-limited, **wage-paid** work experiences subsidized for **individuals with barriers to employment** who are chronically unemployed or have inconsistent work history.
- Earn wages, learn norms and behaviors of work, gain on-the-job success, and improve soft and hard skills.
- TJ participants should be **classified as employees** – not independent contractors or trainees – protected by wage and hour, min. wage, UI, workers comp, etc.
- TJ participants **must not displace** existing employees (*required by WIOA section 181(b)(2))*.
For more information

CLASP resources on WIOA
http://www.clasp.org/WIOAGamePlan

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