

**GUILFORD COUNTY WDB
SMALL BUSINESS TRAINING
GRANT**



GUIDELINES

PROGRAM YEAR

JULY 1, 2018 - JUNE 30, 2019

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

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FOR LOCAL GUILFORD COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD INCUMBENT WORKER SMALL BUSINESS TRAINING GRANT

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**THE LOCAL GUILFORD COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
INCUMBENT WORKER SMALL BUSINESS TRAINING GRANT GUIDELINES**

KEY POINTS:

- The Guilford County Workforce Development Board IW Small Business Training Grant is a training grant through which qualifying businesses can address employees' skills gaps and impact company stability. These skills gaps can be a result of a worker's changing responsibilities/requirements in her/his job. For a worker whose job may potentially be eliminated and skill upgrading is needed to accept new responsibilities. The Guilford County WDB IW training should result in increased knowledge, certifications, and the competitiveness of the employee and employer.
- The business applicant must be a Guilford County for profit, or private not-for-profit business which generates income through the production of products or the provision of services;
 - a. have been in operation for at least twenty-four months and in operation in Guilford County for the entire twelve (12) month period prior to the application deadline date;
 - b. current on all Federal, North Carolina, Guilford County, and city tax obligations;
 - c. ensure that all trainees are current employees of the business;
 - d. and have 250 or less employees at its primary business location in Guilford County;
 - e. A group applicant cannot have more than 750 employees in Guilford County and no single employer within the group may employ more than 250 individuals.
- Guilford County WDB IW Training Grants are awarded on a competitive basis. The maximum up to \$15,000 per grant, with a lifetime funding limit of \$30,000.
- The Guilford County WDB IW Training Grant is administered through the Local Business Services Unit. Applications are submitted directly to a LWDB. A LWDB member may request additional information or establish supplemental provisions and requirements for the training applications.

***Lifetime Limit- 3 years**

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION SUBMITTAL:

- All applications must be submitted by the last business day of the month
- Review and Decision made within 30 business days after submittal deadline

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE LOCAL GUILFORD WDB INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING GRANT?

The LWDB IW Training Grant is a competitive training grant through which qualifying businesses can address employees' skills gaps and impact company stability. These skills gaps can be a result of a worker's changing responsibility/requirements in her/his job, or for a worker whose job may potentially be eliminated and skill upgrading is needed to accept new responsibilities. The LWDB IW training should result in increased knowledge, certification and the competitiveness of the employee and employer.

WHAT IS AN INCUMBENT WORKER?

An incumbent worker is:

- a. At least 18 years of age and a paid employee of the applicant business or businesses,
- b. Meet selective service requirements if applicable,
- c. In a relationship that meets the Fair Labor Standards Act requirements for an employer-employee,
- d. An employee with an established employment history with the employer for 6 months or more,
- e. A citizen of the United States or a non-citizen whose status permits employment in the United States, and
- f. An employee to be trained that works at a facility located in Guilford County

WHAT IS AN EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIP?

In order for the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) minimum wage and overtime provisions to apply to a worker, the worker must be an "employee" of the employer. This means that an employment relationship must exist between the worker and the employer. The FLSA defines "employ" as the work that the employer directs or allows to take place. Workers who are economically dependent on the business of the employer and will receive a W-2 for tax filing purposes have an employer-employee relationship.

Individuals that do not meet the employer-employee relationship are:

- Those who will receive a 1099 for tax filing purposes
- Those who are placed through a temporary agency.

WHEN WOULD AN EMPLOYER UTILIZE THE LOCAL GUILFORD COUNTY WDB IW TRAINING GRANT?

An employer can utilize this competitive training solution when an employee has identified skills gaps that need to be addressed through training, thus enhancing the employee's continued employability and improve business stabilization.

WHICH EMPLOYEES WOULD BENEFIT FROM THE LOCAL GUILFORD COUNTY WDB IW TRAINING GRANT?

The Local Guilford WDB IW Training Grant is beneficial to employees who have identified skills gaps, where eligible training addresses these gaps, improves employee retention, helps stabilize the business, and will increase the competitiveness of the employee and employer. These employees either:

- Need to upgrade skills and knowledge to retain their current job;
- OR**
- Need to gain new skills and knowledge so they qualify for a different job with their employer.

Additionally, the training provides a significant step towards achieving an industry or applicant recognized certification or credential that increases the workers' overall employability.

An ideal incumbent worker opportunity is one where a participant acquires new skills allowing him or her to move into a higher skilled and higher paid job within the company, thus allowing the company to hire a job seeker to backfill the incumbent worker's position.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

A business that is eligible to apply:

- Is a Guilford County private, for-profit, or private not-for-profit business,
- Has been in operation for at least twenty-four (24) months and in operation in Guilford County for the entire twelve (12) month period preceding the application date,
- Has an employer-employee relationship with a minimum of 5 employees
- Is current on all North Carolina, Guilford County, and City tax obligations, and
- Have 250 or less employees at its primary business location in Guilford County. A group applicant cannot have more than 750 employees in Guilford County and no single employer may employ more than 250 individuals.

WHAT IS A NOT-FOR-PROFIT BUSINESS?

A not-for-profit entity is a legally constituted organization whose primary objective is to support or to actively engage in activities of public or private interest without any commercial or monetary profit purposes. For the purpose of this grant, it is further defined as having the following characteristics: 1) has paid employees (volunteers are not eligible for training under this program); 2) pays required wage taxes; and 3) generates income through the production of products or the provision of services.

WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

The following businesses are not eligible to apply for funds under this program:

- A business currently receiving training funds from a state or local government or other public entity that, in any way, duplicates the training being proposed
- A business that previously received funds passed through the local WDB for any type of project, that upon the determination of the WDB, did not substantially meet the proposed outcomes of the previous project or that did not act in good faith toward achieving the objectives of the project
- A training provider or educational entity
- A Workforce Development Board or its administrative entity
- A labor union
- A government entity
- A not-for-profit agency that does not generate revenue
- A business that does not meet the WDB administrative requirements
- A business that employs more than 250 workers.

WHAT KINDS OF TRAINING CAN BE FUNDED BY THE LOCAL GUILFORD COUNTY WDB IW TRAINING GRANT?

The following types of training can be funded:

- Occupational skills training designed to meet the special requirements of a business or a group of businesses
- Educational training defined as short courses that address the identified skills gaps and could lead to a credential or to an industry-recognized certification. The training may include a curriculum course, but cannot be part of a trainee's pursuit of an educational degree.

Grant funds will be expended on training activities that take place only in Guilford County unless the Local Workforce Development Board approves training outside the county. If consent is given, all other rules and regulations of the Guilford County WDB IW Training Grant still apply.

WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT PER ROUND FOR WHICH A BUSINESS CAN APPLY?

The LWDB IW funds are limited, and are therefore, awarded on a competitive basis. The maximum amount is up to \$15,000 per grant.

WHAT IS THE LIFETIME LIMIT FOR BUSINESSES RECEIVING GRANTS?

The lifetime limit is \$30,000 over a 3-year period. The lifetime limit applies to the company, its parent company and subsidiaries. This applies to all applicants, regardless if they have received a grant before.

The business may apply for subsequent, competitive grants, but receipt of a prior grant does not automatically guarantee an award of future grants.

HOW IS THE LIFETIME LIMIT DETERMINED?

Businesses that have received a LWDB IW Training Grant and have not reached the lifetime funding limit of \$30,000 and are eligible to apply for the difference of the prior grant award(s).

If a company is awarded the Guilford County WDB IW Training Grant, but is unable to use any of the funds and forfeits the full grant amount, then that grant amount will not count against the total lifetime limit for that company.

CAN A BUSINESS APPLY FOR A GRANT THAT WILL SERVE DIFFERENT, MULTIPLE BUSINESSES WITH COMMON TRAINING NEEDS?

Yes, unique businesses can partner and apply for a collaborative training grant. The businesses pursuing this approach must consult with their Guilford Workforce Development Board Staff, who will help coordinate this type of application. Group applicant can have no more than 750 employees.

The proposal for the common request must:

- Train employees of at least two different businesses, with one of those businesses designated as the Lead Applicant,
- Include employees of the Lead Applicant in the training,

- Include information on each business that will be part of the training. (The application has a specific section for this information.),
- Include training descriptions and outcomes that address the employees from all businesses impacted by the proposed common training and
- Be for a collective group of businesses of which *none* have ever received a collaborative training grant.

An application representing common training needs of **two or more businesses** will be subject to the \$30,000 per training grant.

HOW ARE BUSINESSES' LIFETIME FUNDING LIMITS CALCULATED IF IT IS PART OF A COLLABORATIVE APPLICATION?

The amount of the award will be equally portioned among the businesses included in the application.

Example: Two businesses receive a collaborative training grant in the amount of \$17,500. Each business will have \$8,750 credited towards its lifetime funding limit of \$30,000.

IS THE BUSINESS REQUIRED TO CONTRIBUTE?

The employer or group of employers must pay for a portion of the cost of providing the training to incumbent workers. This portion is defined as the non-federal share. The non-federal share is based on the following limits:

- Not less than 10% of the cost, for employers with not more than 50 employees.
- Not less than 25% of the cost, for employers with more than 50 employees, but not more than 100 employees.
- Not less than 50 percent of the cost for employers with more than 100 employees. (WIOA Section 134(d)(4)).

The number of employees is based on all locations within Guilford County. The business will be required to calculate its actual non-federal share at the conclusion of the training. Should the non-federal share not meet the limits, the funds could potentially have to be repaid.

WHAT IS THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE?

The non-federal share provided by an employer participating in the program may include the amount of the wages paid by the employer to a worker while the worker is attending a training program. The employer may provide the share in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated. Examples of the non-federal share are trainees' wages, on-site facility usage, trainees' travel, food, and lodging.

WHAT COSTS CAN BE REIMBURSED BY THE GUILFORD COUNTY WDB IW TRAINING GRANT?

See Attachment A for a list of allowable and non-allowable costs.

WHAT OUTCOMES ARE EXPECTED FROM THE GUILFORD COUNTY WDB IW TRAINING GRANT?

- When businesses experience a skills gap in their workforce, the company's stability can be compromised. The Guilford County WDB IW Training Grant funded by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) addresses such needs by increasing workers' skills, wages, advancement opportunities, knowledge, and certification.
- The WDB's NCWorks Incumbent Worker Training Policy should be designed to meet the special

requirements of an employer (including a group of employers) to retain a skilled workforce or avert the need to lay off workers.

HOW DOES A BUSINESS ACCESS AN APPLICATION?

Applications for the LWDB IW Training Grant are available on the Guilford County WDB website: <http://www.guilfordworks.org/>.

IS IT REQUIRED THAT THE APPLICANT USE THE APPLICATION FORM PROVIDED?

Yes. The application is provided as a PDF document. *All* information is to be provided *within* the form. The space will expand to accommodate the information. Please do **not** include trainer's resumes or other excess information. However, a trainer's qualifications, course descriptions and objectives should be summarized within the form.

IS AN AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE ACCEPTABLE?

Yes. All sections requiring a signature must have an authorized original signature.

WHAT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST THE BUSINESS?

Businesses and vendors should contact the Business Service Staff for technical assistance throughout the process.

HOW WILL FUNDING DECISIONS BE MADE?

The LWDB will review the application for viability and make funding decisions 30 business days from the last business day of the month after submittal. The number of awards approved per round is based on funding availability and the number of eligible applications as determined by the LWDB.

HOW WILL I KNOW IF MY BUSINESS' APPLICATION IS APPROVED?

The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) will notify the business of action taken on its application. The LWDB will begin the process of developing a contract between it and the successful applicant, to be executed within 45 days of the date of the Notification of Award Announcement from the LWDB. The contract will set forth all processes and expectations for administering, implementing, and completing the training.

- If the contract is not executed within the aforementioned 60-day time frame, the grant award becomes null and void and the business will have to re-apply in a future round.

Each project will be monitored and evaluated by the LWDB, with outcomes kept for monitoring.

HOW LONG DOES A BUSINESS HAVE TO CONDUCT THE TRAINING?

Training must be completed **within 12 months** from the date of the contract between the business and the LWDB.

CAN THE CONTRACT BE EXTENDED?

A business is expected to carefully assess its training needs so that it will apply only for the funds needed

for training that addresses its employees' skills gaps, and can be completed in a twelve (12) month time frame. Under **extenuating circumstances**, a request can be made by the business to the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) to extend the date of a contract. Each request is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. In any event, no extension will exceed 30 days past the end date of the original contract.

ONCE THE BUSINESS HAS BEEN AWARDED A GUILFORD COUNTY WDB IW GRANT, CAN IT CHANGE THE TYPE(S) OF TRAINING OR USE OF FUNDS APPROVED IN THE GRANT?

The Guilford County WDB IW Training Grant is a competitive training grant and each application is evaluated against eligibility criteria.

If there is an extenuating circumstance that leads to a need to request a change to the approved training, the business must contact the Business Services Rep. to discuss the best alternatives. Please note that all requests must be made in writing. Training changes cannot create a new application and must continue to address the trainees' originally identified skills gaps, be completed within the original one-year timeframe, and meet the Guilford County WDB IW criteria. The Business Services Rep. will evaluate each request on a case-by-case basis.

WHAT INFORMATION IS A BUSINESS REQUIRED TO SUPPLY TO THE LWDB ON THE EMPLOYEES TO BE TRAINED?

The LWDB will discuss with the business the employee information required on the trainees. Federal requirements mandate funded businesses provide, at a minimum, the following data for each training participant:

- Social Security Number
- Complete Name and Contact Information
- Gender
- Date of Birth
- Citizenship (Right-to-Work Status)
- Selective Service Compliance
- Person with Disability
- Ethnicity and Race
- Veterans Status
- Hire Date

It is possible that more information may be needed. The business must also ensure that each trainee has an employer-employee relationship and an employment history of 6 months or more with the employer.

ARE ANY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS EXPECTED OF THE BUSINESS?

Yes. The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) will advise and discuss the reporting requirements for the grant award, to include content, time frame and other matters. A final report on the training is due no later than forty-five (45) days from the *end of the training*.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

- The business will submit a monthly project performance report during the term of the agreement.
- Invoices for activities will be on a cost-reimbursement basis only and documentation must be sufficient

to justify the requested payment. Only items identified in the contract budget will be reimbursable.

- Formal monitoring of the project will be conducted by WDB staff at least once during the term of the contract.
- A Final report and invoice must be submitted within 45 days of project completion date. The final reimbursement will not be distributed until receipt of final report.

ATTACHMENT A

Reimbursable /Non-Reimbursable Training Costs

The following is a listing of reimbursable and non-reimbursable training costs for the Local Guilford WDB IW Training Grant:

Allowable Employer Non-Federal Share:

1. Employee related costs such as wages, fringe benefits, travel
2. Training that employees are already provided, either by the company or on the company's behalf
3. Membership fees/dues
4. Job/position profiling

Allowable Training Costs:

1. Training / Course registration
2. Training that results in participants obtaining an industry-recognized certification or credential to include training, preparation for certification exams. Funding must be requested for both the training and the certification exam and completed within the twelve (12) month contract
3. Web-based online training
4. Employee skills assessment that results in primary training funded through the grant
5. Textbooks / manuals used 100% for the training activities
6. Materials and supplies directly related to the funded training
7. Travel for trainers-if the requested training is not available within reasonable proximity to the business

Non-Allowable Training Costs:

1. Employee related costs such as wages, fringe benefits, travel
2. Process improvement or quality-related training
3. Training-related costs incurred prior to the beginning date of the contract with the LWDB or after the contract ends.
4. Training that employees are already provided, either by the company or on the company's behalf.
5. Training that a company is mandated to provide on a regular basis to its employees by federal, state, or local laws
6. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and other training that is specifically required for an employee or entity to maintain licensure, certification or accreditation
7. Courses that are part of a trainee's pursuit of an educational degree
8. Employment or training in sectarian activities
9. Curriculum design and/or training program development
10. Trainers employed by any business whose employees are being trained to include parent company employees
11. Purchase of employee assessment systems or systems usage licenses (example: site licenses)
12. Company website design and development, website hosting, and maintenance, software or hardware upgrades, advice on computer selection for purchase and upgrade
13. Third party compensation or fees not directly related to the provision of the requested training
14. Any costs that would normally be considered allowable, but for which there is no request/cost for training related to the item(s) within the application
15. Capital improvements, purchase of real estate, to include the construction or renovation of facilities or buildings, and capital equipment or other durable (long lasting and/or reusable) training materials
16. Business relocation or other similar/related expenses
17. Travel outside of contiguous United States or costs associated with bringing a trainer into the country

18. General office supplies and non-personnel services costs (example: postage and photocopying)
19. Membership fees/dues
20. Food, beverage, entertainment, and/or celebration related expenses
21. Job/position profiling
22. Publicity/public relations costs
23. Costs associated with conferences