

## Questions and Answers

### Older Worker Retention Strategies Application

- Q.** When is the application due? Can it be hand delivered?
- A.** The application may be hand delivered and also must be received electronically by **5pm on Friday August 1, 2008.**
- Q.** Is there a page limit?
- A.** Please limit your response to the narrative questions to eight (8) pages using a font of 11 points or higher using 1.5 spacing.
- Q.** I see in the application instructions that a required outcome of the grant is that the grantee will prepare a written retention plan. As a lead applicant, we would partner with a company or companies and/or unions. These company partners would be the target of the grant's activities. Should only these partners prepare retention plans or must we (the lead applicant) also have such a plan?
- A.** The written retention plan should be for the company or companies who are the object of the grant's activities.
- Q.** If there is more than one employer engaged in the project, do we need to develop a retention plan for each employer?
- A.** Your retention plan(s) should be designed to meet the needs of all of the participating businesses and their targeted employees. You may address the needs of targeted employees in one occupation (across one or more businesses) with one plan if you believe that the plan when implemented can adequately address those needs.
- Q.** Should plans include one retention strategy or more than one strategy?
- A.** You should develop a plan that best meets the needs of your business and your targeted population of workers. It may include one or more strategies.
- Q.** Do we need to provide individual employee names (of those who are the targeted employees)?
- A.** No.
- Q.** Please describe the expectations related to a grantee being available for follow up one year after the end of the grant period.
- A.** Applicants must agree to be available to respond to written and/or in person (phone or face to face) follow up interviews or surveys 6 months and 12 months after the end of the grant.
- The goal of the follow-up interviews or surveys will be to identify:
- The actions that were undertaken in participating companies as a result of the design grant.

- The older worker retention outcomes that resulted from those actions.

**Q.** Are non-profit hospitals eligible?

**A.** Yes, non-profit hospitals are eligible applicants.

**Q.** Are Massachusetts based companies that do not pay into the unemployment pool eligible to apply for this grant?

**A.** Yes.

**Q.** Do the business partners need to be in the critical industries as identified by other WCTF grant applications? Will any preference be given to a specific industry sector?

**A.** No. The grant partners and the focus of the retention plan may be in any industry.

**Q.** Are the grants competitive in a geographical region?

**A.** No, the grant competition is statewide.

**Q.** Will applications with “more” employers be favored over an application with “fewer” employers?

**A.** No. However, The Commonwealth Corporation will review all applications for cost reasonableness and cost effectiveness.

**Q.** Will an application targeting a small business with a small number of targeted employees be competitive?

**A.** Yes, this would be acceptable if there were a business need to retain workers and the result of the grant would be a well developed design that other businesses could learn from. The Commonwealth Corporation will review all applications for cost reasonableness and cost effectiveness.

**Q.** Are there examples of design strategies such as these that that have been shown to be successful strategies for addressing staffing challenges?

**A.** See the resource page posted to the website <http://www.commcorp.org/sectorstrategy/pdf/OlderWorker-Resources.pdf> for links to several reports on strategies to retain the older workforce.

**Q.** Must an applicant apply for the full \$50,000?

**A.** We will accept applications for projects with budgets anywhere up to \$50,000. The Commonwealth Corporation will review all applications for cost reasonableness and cost effectiveness.

**Q.** Will you accept applications for projects that will end in fewer than the allowed 12 months?

**A.** Yes.

- Q.** Will there be a bidder's conference?
- A.** We have completed three scheduled webinar information sessions to provide an overview of the grant and answer questions. The power point presentation used in the webinar is posted on the Commonwealth Corporation website. No formal bidder's conference is planned.
- Q.** Would the "go live" date for grantees be October 1, 2008?
- A.** The start date for grant activities will be based on the award date and subsequently, the contract date. Contracting for grants that do not involve any negotiation generally can be completed within 2 weeks after the notification of grant awards.
- Q.** How will the date for beginning of grant activities impact the requirement for participation in sharing and follow-up?
- A.** We anticipate that our follow-up activities will begin after the end of each grant period. Applicants will be asked to agree to follow-up 6 and 12 months after their grant period ends.
- Q.** How long do employers have to implement their plans after the grant period has ended?
- A.** The intention is for the plan to begin to be implemented soon after the grant period has ended. There is no restriction on how long a period of time the implementation should take in full.
- Q.** If, after a plan is created, the business model changes and the employer decides not to follow through on the implementation of the plan, are there any implications?
- A.** If grantee (and/or employer partners) decide not to follow through on the implementation of the retention plan, we would require that grantee provide an explanation of the reasons for the employers' decisions.
- Q.** Does the 30% match need to come only from the lead applicant?
- A.** No, it may come from a combination of the lead applicant and the other partners in the project.
- Q.** Is there a cap on the indirect costs?
- A.** 7.5%

**6/23/08**