

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Employment Advancement and Retention (EARN) Program

PIKE COUNTY

Pocono Counties Workforce Development Board is requesting proposals to engage Pike County TANF/SNAP and KEYS residents referred by the local County Assistance Office (CAO) in the federally mandated Core Activities established to assist participants as they move from public assistance to gainful employment.

Program proposals must include:

1. A year-round barrier to employment remediation/instructional/job development/job placement and job retention program located at a facility that is easily accessible to Pike County residents and is open on a daily basis (Monday through Friday) from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.
2. The provider will be responsible for needs assessment, referrals for additional services, skills training, job search, job placement, job retention, intensive and on-going case management, accurate and prompt data entry into the systems of record and follow-up activities for all participants as defined in the EARN guidelines. The provider must have adequate staff to perform these duties.
 - The provider must be able to provide services for up to 50 participants, each program year in a managed open/entry, open/exit format during the period from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, with the possibility of reauthorization for up to an additional 3 years.
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3. At a minimum, the program schedule must have 35 hours of planned skills training or employment activities per week according to Department of Welfare guidelines that should include, but not limited to:
 - Assessment of participants' basic skills, occupational interests, aptitudes, and work maturity skills
 - Identification of barriers to employment
 - Assistance with supportive service requests
 - Career exploration
 - Job placement
 - Job search skills
 - Job retention services and strategies
 - Job development
 - Participant tracking and documentation
 - Other as needed and as identified in EARN guidelines
4. The provider must include follow-up and job retentions services for up to one year on each participant based on current guidelines.
5. The provider must maintain and enforce the mandatory hours per week of participation as per the Department of Welfare and report to appropriate agencies on a weekly basis.
6. The provider must have a program design established for in-house skill training, community service, job placement, and paid work experience opportunities readily available.

7. The provider must be financially solvent, have a proper system of accounting and internal controls with the ability to operate separate from Pocono Counties WIA.
8. The provider will be responsible for processing and submission of SPALS and issuance of incentives in accordance with LMC policy.
9. Provider staff are expected to dress and conduct themselves professionally while serving as positive role models for persons learning professionalism in the workplace.
10. All participant and program records are to be made available to the contractor upon request.
11. The provider agrees to follow all procedures as stated in the PA Department of Welfare's EARN guidelines. The current guidelines can be found at www.cwds.pa.gov.
12. The provider must maintain recipient files as outlined in the EARN guidelines and submit documentation on a timely basis.
13. The provider should be able to store files in a secure location. All staff and participant information must be in compliance with HIPPA regulations. Participant files must be kept for a minimum of seven years.
14. The provider should have demonstrated experience and expertise in this type of program implementation and training.
15. The provider should have, at a minimum, one designated staff member to attend state mandated trainings.
16. The provider should have, at a minimum, one designated staff member to attend weekly Direct Service Team (DST) meetings and monthly Local Management Committee meetings (LMC).
17. The provider is responsible for registering on the COMPASS and PA CareerLink® systems and assisting participants with enrolling or updating information on these systems.
18. If the provider is not performing to required performance standards and state guidelines, the contract can be terminated before the end of the contracted period.
19. Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to Cynthia DeFebo, Pike County Workforce Development Agency Director at 570.296.2909.