

**THE STATE OF NORTH  
CAROLINA**

**NCWORKS INCUMBENT  
WORKER**

**TRAINING GRANT**

**NCWorks**

**STATE  
BOARD GUIDELINES**

**PROGRAM YEAR**

**JULY 1, 2015 - JUNE 30, 2016**



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FOR BOARD GUIDELINES**

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## **PY 2015 NCWorks Incumbent Worker Training Grant**

### **Guidelines for Local Workforce Development Boards**

These Guidelines serve as instruction and guidance to administering the State NCWorks Incumbent Worker (NCWorks IW) Training Grant. These guidelines, the Business Guidelines, and the Application Assessment are the primary documents to aid the Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) in efficiently and effectively administering the NCWorks IW Training Grant. A LWDB may require additional information as it deems appropriate.

#### **I. Application Submission at the Local Board Level**

The LWDB will establish the structure and timeline of the local review process so it can meet the State's submission deadline.

The Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) will accept the LWDB's funding selection **by 5:00 pm** on:

#### *State Submission Deadlines*

**November 30, 2015**

**\*March 31, 2016**

\* PENDING FUNDING AVAILABILITY

#### **II. Application Review at the Local Board Level**

Using the Business Guidelines, Application Assessment and other tools as deemed appropriate, the LWDB will evaluate each application to ensure its viability. It should consider only an accurately completed application that meets all of the criteria for funding recommendation.

The LWDB is strongly encouraged to adopt a team or group decision-making process for the application review and grant recommendation in this competitive process.

##### **A. Acceptable Application Package**

All information is to be provided within the PDF fillable application. It should include any additional information that the LWDB requires.

A trainer's qualifications, course description and objectives should be summarized within the form. The trainer's resume or other excess information should not be included.

##### **B. Determination of Prior NCWorks IW Grants**

A single lifetime funding limit applies to a business, its parent company and subsidiaries. A complete listing of all companies that have received the NCWorks IW Training Grant can be found at <https://www.nccommerce.com/workforce/businesses/ncworks-incumbent-worker-training-grants>.

Determination of the remaining lifetime limit requires the LWDB to contact the DWS' Business Services Specialist to ensure that this request for funding does not exceed the different of prior grants and the lifetime funding limit of \$60,000.

C. Application Assessment

The purpose of the Application Assessment is to provide a common assessment of the state-level criteria for each application received by the LWDB. The results of this assessment determines the viability of the application. Refer to the Application Assessment that is an attachment of the most recent policy statement.

D. Incomplete Applications

Boards are encouraged to work with businesses to ensure that a viable application is submitted for funding consideration. Not all businesses' training needs can be met through NCWorks IW.

E. Out-of-State Training

Funds awarded for a project will be expended on training activities that take place in North Carolina **unless** the LWDB approves training outside the state. Should out-of-state training be allowed, all other rules and regulations of the NCWorks IW still apply.

F. Collaborative Grant Applications

Multiple/unique businesses may partner and apply for a collaborative training grant with a maximum funding amount of \$12,500. The LWDB is encouraged to work with unique businesses in high demand sectors within their regions to complete collaborative applications. The following information further supports and explains the information contained in the NCWorks IW Application:

- A business can benefit only once from a collaborative training grant award
- The LWDB will contract with the Lead Applicant, who must have employees included in the training
- The LWDB will contact the DWS NCWorks IW Business Services Specialist to ensure the funding request does not exceed lifetime funding limits.

All businesses and the trainees included in the application must meet all NCWorks IW criteria.

### **III. Grant Recommendation Request to DWS**

The LWDB will submit the grant recommendation request according to the State's Submission Deadlines of November 30, 2015 and March 31, 2016 for PY2015. If the applications submitted to the State do not meet the criteria, or require changes to ensure accurate and viable applications, the LWDB will be notified that the recommendation for funding is disqualified.

Submissions received after 5pm on these dates will not be accepted.

The following documents are required for the grant recommendation request:

A. Cover Letter from the LWDB

The LWDB will submit a single cover letter, endorsed by the LWDB's Chairperson, addressing the applications recommended for funding. One letter for multiple selections will suffice. The Cover Letter must include:

- The name of the business(es) recommended for funding;
- Prioritization of business(es) that meet the State's criteria;
- Approval of out-of-state training, if applicable; and
- The presence of any collaborative grants selected for funding, if applicable.

The following documents are required for **each** business recommended for funding, in an individual application packet format:

B. Complete Application Package

C. Completed State Application Assessment

D. Electronic Application Overview

The Application Overview captures key information. There are two worksheet tabs. One is an Instruction Worksheet; the other is the Input Application Data Worksheet. The Instruction Worksheet provides detailed directions for completion and electronic submission. The Application Overview spreadsheet must be submitted to the state electronically. One may not need to reference the Application Overview instructions after completing the form several times.

Submission Format

The recommendations for funding from the LWDB to DWS is acceptable by email (preferred method), the US Postal Service, other carrier, fax, or hand delivered. Due to the size of some of the submissions, preference is that each application be submitted on a separate email.

If the recommendation for funding is by email, the instructions for submission are as follows:

- The first email will contain the Board's cover letter and the Application Overview (Excel sheet with all the businesses recommended for funding and all the pertinent data on ONE sheet);
- The subject line of the email submission will be Board Name- Business Name - 1 of the total # of recommendations for funding that is being submitted, then the second email subject line will be Board Name-Business Name- 2 of the total # of recommendations for funding.
- For efficiency purposes, all submissions are to be submitted consecutively on the same day.

The date and time stamp of the submission are not to exceed 5:00 pm on the State's Submission Deadline dates stated previously.

Execution of the review and submission process does not imply a start date for training. Contracts cannot be entered into until receipt of a congratulatory award letter from an authorized representative of DWS.

#### **IV. DWS Grant Award Notification**

The Award Notification occurs in two steps:

##### **A. Award Letter**

Upon review of the recommendations for funding, the state will notify the LWDB in the following manner:

1. An electronic congratulatory award letter from an authorized official of DWS
  - LWDB may then notify its applicants as to the status of their applications, and begin the contract process.

##### **B. Notice of Funds Availability (NFA)**

The Notice of Funds Availability (NFA) is generated in Workforce Information System Enterprise (WISE) from the respective DWS Planner. The dates within the NFA are important because:

1. The date of the NFA letter begins the 60-day time period within which the contract with the business must occur.
2. The NFA will include the end date for the use of the funds.

#### **V. Contract Process and Duration**

The LWDB is responsible for oversight of each contract to ensure alignment with the approved application and all regulatory requirements.

The LWDB works with the applicant to generate the contract within the 60-day time period from the date of the NFA Letter. Each contract will have a definite beginning and ending date not to exceed 12 months and will include other information required by the LWDB.

If a contract is not executed within that time frame, the award becomes null and void and the entire grant award will be rescinded.

Payment to the business is on a cost reimbursement basis for training cost in the approved application.

Below is the timeline for the contract execution, completion of training, and funds availability.

**PY 2015 NCWorks Incumbent Worker Training Grant Funding Availability Time Line**

<i>State's Submission Deadlines by Round</i>	<i>Expected Award Announcement Date</i>	<i>NFA Letter Date *</i>	<i>Contract Execution Date**</i>	<i>Contract End Date***</i>	<i>End Date for Fund Availability</i>
11/30/15	1/13/16	1/ /16	3/ /16	3/ /17	4/30/17
3/31/16	5/12/16	5/ /16	7/ /16	7/ /17	8/31/17

\*Actual date will vary. The actual date will be used to calculate the Contract Execution Date

\*\*No later than 60 days from the date of the NFA letter.

\*\*\*No later than 12 months from the Contract Execution Date.

**VI. Requests for Changes to NCWorks IW Training Grant Award**

The NCWorks IW Training Grant is a competitive process and changes are not encouraged. Only under *extenuating circumstances*, a business may request a change to its current NCWorks IW training grant. The business is to submit its request to the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) for consideration.

If there is a need to request a change to the approved training, the business must contact the LWDB to discuss the best alternatives. 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 NCWorks IW criteria. The LWDB will evaluate each request on a case-by-case basis, and consult with the Division for a final decision.

The following guidelines shall be used for the review process:

**A. LWDB Review of Change Requests**

1. The following questions serve as a beginning point:

- a. Does the request meet the continued intent of the NCWorks IW, which is to address employees' skills gaps and impact company stability?
- b. Does the request create a new application by changing the original trainees, type of training, or other major changes? If yes, the request for change will not be permitted.
- c. Does the request meet the NCWorks IW criteria?
  - 1) The change is to be reviewed with the appropriate section of the Application Assessment.

**Example:** A training component change would be assessed against that section of the Application Assessment.
- d. Will the skills gaps of those employees slated for training in the originally approved application be addressed, if the change is approved?
  - 1) If no, then further consideration of 1.a. and 1.b. above is needed.
- e. Can the requested change be completed within the time frame of the existing grant round/contract?

- 1) Time extensions are not encouraged, but in extenuating circumstances, extended time cannot exceed the existing contract by more than 30 days.
- f. Are there other considerations to be addressed in reviewing this request? (i.e. Board requirements, reasonableness of cost, etc.)

2. The LWDB will maintain a copy of all of the documentation at the local level.

**B. Notification to DWS of Change Request**

1. Boards will submit an email to DWS’ Business Services Specialist.
2. The email will include:
  - a. The business name, program year and round date of the funds designated for the training;
  - b. An explanation of why the change/extension is requested, to include confirmation that the training requested addresses the originally identified skills gaps, if applicable, and does not create a new application;
  - c. Ensure that all of the eligibility criteria are met;
  - d. Confirm that all training will be at the same or lesser cost; and
  - e. Attachment A of the application addressing the new Training Component(s), if applicable.

Upon DWS’ review, it will make a final decision on the request.

Unused funds are to go through the de-obligation process with DWS. Businesses may reapply for the NCWorks IW during the normal competitive funding rounds.

**VII. Participant Data Entry**

NCWorks IW trainees must be entered into NCWorks Online within thirty (30) days of beginning the training. Directions for participant data entry can be located in the NCWorks folder after logging into staff account.

Below is the minimum information on trainees that DWS is requiring; a LWDB may collect more if it so chooses. It is up to the LWDB as to how it will collect this information for required data entry in NCWorks Online and record retention.

The LWDB must collect the following information for **every** trainee:

- 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

**VIII. Reporting Requirements**

The LWDB will be expected to monitor and evaluate each training grant. DWS NCWorks IW Business Services’ Specialist will work proactively with the LWDB by enhancing training and technical assistance, to include field visits and webinars.



A. Quarterly Reporting

Each LWDB administering the NCWorks IW Training Grant must submit a quarterly report to DWS. The first reporting timeframe is to begin in the quarter in which the cover letter to the Notice of Funds Availability is dated. All quarterly reports are due no later than thirty (30) days after the end of the calendar quarter.

Examples:

Quarter	Report Due Date
October – December, 2015	January 29, 2016
January – March, 2016	April 29, 2016
April – June, 2016	July 29, 2016
July – September 2015	October 30, 2015

Quarterly reports are *due as long as* NCWorks IW Training *contracts are in place*. To ensure that DWS has current contact information for grantees, please update changes to the Point of Contact as specified in the Quarterly Report.

The Quarterly Report form and additional instructions are included in an email with the Application Overview Sheet. The LWDB may collect additional information for its records as it deems appropriate.

Once the training is complete, a Final Report is due to the NCWorks IW Business Services Section of DWS.

B. Final Reporting

At the conclusion of the training, the LWDB will submit a Final Report on the NCWorks IW Training Grant. The LWDB is responsible for ensuring that all information requested in the Final Report is provided and is encouraged to assist the business in its completion. The final report must capture the business’ actual non-federal share contribution and the LWDB is to ensure the business has met the required limits. Should the non-federal share not meet the limits, the funds could potentially have to be repaid. The LWDB may also collect additional information for its records as it deems appropriate.

The Final Report is due to DWS within forty-five (45) days from the completion of training and the drawdown of all expenditures or the end of the grant, whichever occurs first. The final financial data included on the Final Report must be completed by the LWDB and must agree with the fund status reported in WISE. The Final Report is to be signed/sent by an authorized representative of the LWDB, preferably by email.

The Final Report form and additional instructions are included in an email with the Application Overview Sheet and the Quarterly Report Form.

**IX. Record Retention**

NCWorks IW records include the following documents and must remain in the office for a minimum of five (5) years after the expiration of the grant.

## A. NCWorks IW Records

NCWorks IW records may be in paper and/or electronic formats and include:

- Email correspondence relevant to each application;
- Cover letter;
- Completed application, to include all attachments;
- Application Assessment;
- Application Overview;
- Award letter;
- Notice of Funds Availability; and
- Other documents required by the LWDB.

NCWorks IW Records must remain in the office for five (5) years after expiration of the grant, if no litigation, claim, audit, or other official action involving the record has been initiated.

**NOTE:** If the LWDB's record retention is more stringent than DWS's retention policy, the LWDB must follow the most stringent regulation.

## X. Incomplete Grant Awards

When training is not completed as approved in the grant, the LWDB will need to address the de-obligation of unspent funds and the appropriate reporting process. The appropriate process is determined by whether or not training occurred.

Examples of when incomplete awards may occur are, but not all inclusive:

- Lack of contract with the business within the 60-day deadline;
- Decline of award by the business;
- Occurrence of extenuating circumstances, such as a natural disaster or closing of the business; or
- Lack of federal funds.

### A. Training has Occurred

1. If any training has been provided, then a Final Report will be due for this grant and the normal de-obligation process through WISE will be followed.

### B. No Training has Occurred

1. If a company is awarded a NCWorks IW but is unable to expend any of the funds and forfeits the full grant amount, then:
  - The grant amount will not count against the total lifetime limit for that company. The entire amount will be de-obligated through WISE.
  - The LWDB will notify DWS by email within five (5) business days of the event.

## 2. Email notification to DWS

The email notification, to the DWS Business Services Specialist, will include the:

- Business Name;
- Round Date;
- Training Award Amount;
- Reason for the grant not being used; and
- LWDB's decision on keeping the administrative fee.

### C. Unused Grant Awards

Due to the competitiveness of the NCWorks IW Training Grant and the need for fairly administering the program across all applicants, substitution or transfer of unused grant awards to unsuccessful applicants, or other businesses, is **not** allowed. Unused funds are to go through the de-obligation process with DWS. Businesses may apply for the NCWorks IW during the normal competitive funding rounds.

## **XI. Training Materials**

Training materials purchased with the funds awarded through this Grant will be in the public domain and will be available for use by other eligible entities at no cost. It is the LWDB's choice concerning the retrieval of materials from its grant recipient.

## **XII. Administrative Fee**

A two and one-half percent (2.5%) grant servicing fee is added to the funding for each approved project under the NCWorks IW Training Grant. The fee covers Local Workforce Development Board management and oversight associated with the project. Therefore, the LWDB has a choice as to whether it retains the administrative fees after considering the time spent with the applicant.