

Workforce Solutions is fiscally responsible for the administration of and serves as the Fiscal Agent for the EARN program. Workforce Solutions is governed by a Board of Directors, appointed by and working in conjunction and partnership with the Local Elected Officials (LEO) of Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter counties, oversees and directs all Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act related activities for the six counties on behalf of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Workforce Solutions recognizes the Local Management Committee (LMC) that oversees the specific Department of Human Services' employment and training programs in the six county region of North Central Pennsylvania. The LMC manages and directs the local operation of contracted programs subject to the requirements of the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual. Hereinafter when the RFP refers to the LMC it will mean the LMC working on behalf of and in cooperation with Workforce Solutions to implement, award, and manage this RFP.

The Quarterly Local Management Committee (LMC) membership is comprised of the Executive Directors from the County Assistance Offices (CAO), EARN Provider, Work Ready, KEYS, ELECT, PAWW, Refugee Provider and BEP. Additional community agencies that provide services to low income individuals will be identified and invited to participate in the meetings. The LMC meets on a quarterly basis to most importantly maximize the resources available in our communities as well as to review contractor performance, resolve issues that may arise with clients and service providers, and discuss recruitment and placement strategies, as well as other pertinent issues.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

This Request for Proposal package (RFP) is to be used for the submission of proposals for the period beginning July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019. The purpose of the RFP is to identify organizations to provide high quality employment and educational programs, services and activities, using innovative strategies to enable welfare clients to become employed and to retain employment, with the ultimate goal being ongoing self-sufficiency.

This RFP contains instructions governing the proposals to be submitted and the material to be included therein; requirements which must be met in order to be eligible for consideration; general evaluation criteria; and other requirements to be met by each proposing contractor.

The EARN program training, services and/or activities being solicited in this RFP are being sought under the competitive method of procurement, which follows government procurement rules. Solicitation via this RFP will ensure that the program training, services and/or activities funded by the Department of Human Services (DHS) grant are obtained efficiently and economically and to provide for complete, free, and open competition in the selection of contractor(s.)

Proposing contractors must submit one comprehensive proposal that will provide services in all counties of the North Central Workforce Development Area. Proposing contractors must also provide projected service levels, a plan to achieve required performance levels, and line item budget for Program Year 2018 - 2019 as required by the RFP. This information should be provided on the forms located in Part B (Request for Proposal Packet/Forms) of this RFP.

The selected contractor(s) will be responsible for coordination, collaboration and leveraging funds with other contractors and/or agencies throughout the counties for which service is being offered to provide specific employment and educational program(s), services and/or activities that contribute to the client's ability to reach self-sufficiency. These program(s), services and/or activities include but are not limited to education, training, job-development, job retention, as well as meeting the social and emotional needs of each referred client from the local CAO within each respective county.

Proposing contractors must indicate their capacity to link, both financial and programmatic resources, with other contractors and/or agencies in the region. This will enhance program(s), services and/or activities provided by contractors, as well as make the program(s), services and/or activities more cost effective.

Proposing contractors must describe their linkages by providing a clear integrated services plan in Part B of this RFP. The expectation of the Workforce Development Board is that the chosen contractor will be a partner of the PA CareerLink® system. You would in fact operate as PA CareerLink. In order to effectively operate an integrated system, partners are expected to present themselves and “act” as PA CareerLink. Differentiation of agencies ultimately isn’t critical to the customers. Therefore,

The successful bidder(s) must ensure that all contracted program participants are registered in the PA CareerLink® system in order to avail themselves of the services and/or activities provided by all PA CareerLink® Partners. Therefore, the successful bidder(s) must ensure that all contracted program participants are registered in the PA CareerLink® system in order to avail themselves of the services and/or activities provided by all PA CareerLink® partners.

Successful bidder(s) will be awarded contract(s) for a period up to four years, commencing with the period July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019. Each subsequent contract will be for no longer than a fiscal year or a part thereof and shall be contingent upon the availability of funds, achieving the required performance standards, and compliance with the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual requirements and the federal and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania regulations. Subsequent contract(s) shall require submission of a revised/updated program narrative, a new program year projected service level form and a new program year project line item budget.

Workforce Solutions currently estimates the available funding will be approximately \$500,000 with a 10% administrative cap per year for the one-year period of July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019. Final funding awards will be based upon funding allocations from DHS, Workforce Solutions priorities, and other factors at the discretion of Workforce Solutions. The proposal(s) most advantageous to Workforce Solutions in terms of quality and cost will be recommended for funding. The funding will be determined by Workforce Solutions. Workforce Solutions has established a model framework which proposals must respond within. This framework identifies specific positions to be funded and the total amount of funds available for those positions and the associated management/overhead. Funds available are to include all salary/wage, fringe and associated costs. Specific funding costs by position are to be reflected in the staffing pattern.

Due to limited resources, projects that do not serve all six (6) counties of the North Central Workforce Development Area (NCWDA), specifically Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter will not be considered. There will be no exceptions.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) is to provide prospective vendors/contractors with the information they need to prepare proposals that are complete and responsive.

Workforce Solutions reserves the right to limit total program funding and/or the number of programs approved for WIOA funding based on available resources.

Workforce Solutions strongly encourages the development of proposals that leverage existing resources and expand upon successful workforce programs currently operating within the community.

III. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Proposals will be accepted from any private for-profit agency, private non-profit organization, government agency, or educational institution that can demonstrate the capacity to successfully provide the services identified in this RFP. Proposals from consortia, partnerships or other combinations of organizations will be accepted but must identify one

organization as the lead agency and prime contractor and must specify the assignment of subcontracting relationships. The lead agency will be responsible for management, coordination of services, operations, financial accountability, legal obligations and all reporting requirements. This lead entity must demonstrate its capacity to set direction, achieve outcomes, leverage matching or in-kind resources and manage overall operations, including staff oversight, customer services, continuous improvement and achievement of performance outcomes. If an agency is awarded the contract and is not the current provider it will be expected that interviews will be offered to current front line staff.

IV. CONTRACT TYPE

Contracts executed as a result of this RFP process will be cost reimbursement. Final contracts will also be subject to any changes in the legislation, regulations or policies initiated by the funding sources and funding availability. Workforce Solutions reserves the right to vary or change the terms of any contract executed as a result of this RFP, including funding levels, the scope of work, goals, performance standards, as it deems necessary in the interest of Workforce Solutions and its programs.

V. POLICY REGARDING REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

The LMC and Workforce Solutions are issuing this RFP. However, this does not obligate the LMC and/or the Fiscal Agent to make an award as a result. The application resulting from these instructions does not commit the LMC and/or the Fiscal Agent to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation of this RFP or for any monies spent prior to an award. This RFP is not an offer. Applications that may be approved are not guaranteed funding since the funding of programs is contingent upon the availability of funds from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The LMC and Workforce Solutions reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals submitted, to negotiate with all proposing contractor(s) on any or all provisions including costs of the proposals received, or reject any part of the proposals submitted. The LMC and Workforce Solutions reserve the right to change any of the enclosed specifications as required by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and/or the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services without prior notice to proposing contractor(s.) In addition, the LMC may request the proposing contractor(s) to submit revisions to their proposal.

Proposing contractor(s) shall disclose in their submissions any possible conflict of interest arising out of personal or business relationships with Workforce Solutions staff and board of directors.

Workforce Solutions is prohibited from awarding a contract to a contractor who is excluded from federal procurement or non-procurement programs by the U.S. General Services Administration. The LMC is prohibited from awarding a contract to any party disbarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in Federal Assistance Programs in accordance with the USDOL regulations at 29 CFR Part 98 or debarred by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Funding is not guaranteed to contractors since funding for all programs is dependent upon receipt of money from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Labor & Industry, Department of Human Services, and/or other federal or state funds.

VI. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND BIDDERS' CONFERENCE

The meeting is to review the proposal packet, to provide an opportunity for the LMC to explain the background of the RFP, to emphasize portions of the RFP that are considered especially important including expectations for respondents, evaluation criteria and contracting process, and to answer questions posed by potential bidders.

A Bidders Conference regarding this RFP will be conducted. This conference will be held at Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania, Inc. located at 425 Old Kersey Road, Kersey, PA 15846 on **January 19, 2018 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am**. This bidder's conference will be a joint bidder's conference with the WIOA, Youth, Adult and DW and EARN RFP opportunities.

Technical Assistance will be provided by and coordinated through Workforce Solutions only until the date of the bidders' conference. Requests for technical assistance and questions related to this RFP should be submitted by 12:00 pm on January 16, 2018 to Pamela A. Streich via email or mail. This will enable staff to secure answers to all questions for discussion at the bidder's conference on January 19, 2018. A question and answer response will be generated and sent via e-mail on Wednesday, January 24, 2018 to those who submit questions and / or attend bidder's conference. In addition, a copy of the minutes of the Bidders Conference will also be sent.

Ms. Pamela A. Streich, Director of Strategic Planning and Project Management
Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania
425 Old Kersey Road
Kersey, PA 15846
814-594-0245
pstreich@ncwdb.org

Agencies submitting a proposal may be asked to participate in an interview with board staff, committee and board members prior to the award being made. The interview will be held during the week of March 19th, 2018.

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VII. EXPECTED TIME-LINE

The following is the timeline guide for the procurement of services and activities for Program Year 2018 - 2019 (July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019).

Request for Proposals issue date	Thursday, January 4, 2018
Bidders' Conference	Friday, January 19, 2018
Q and A available	Wednesday, January 24, 2018
Proposals Submission Date by	Monday, March 12, 2018
LMC, Staff Review and Recommendations	March 12-13, 2018
Board Review and approval	April 4, 2018

Final negotiations and contracting

April – June, 2018 (to be determined)

Subcontract Executed by

July 1, 2018

VIII. NORTH CENTRAL PA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Workforce Solutions is a Private Sector Driven Board with twenty-five (25) members currently. Thirteen (13) of the members are from the private sector while twelve (12) represent the public sector – with representation from education, community-based organizations, economic development, Departments of Human Services and Labor and Industry.

The local workforce system structure that has been developed in the North Central WDA was a collaborative effort of the local elected officials and the Workforce Development Board (Workforce Solutions). Currently the North Central Workforce Development system is made up of six (6) Comprehensive One-Stop/PA CareerLink® centers and one affiliate center. A successful proposal will support the maintenance of this structure that extends across the six(6) counties of the region, maintain a coordinated menu of services with partners to provide comprehensive customer services to employers and workers, incorporate continuous improvement practices to meet and exceed established performance goals, support and utilize the workforce system to guide system services and activities and maximize the utilization of technology to expand the availability of services and activities. It is the expectation of the LMC and Workforce Solutions that the successful bidder will be a partner of the PA CareerLink® system and will house staff in the centers and contribute to the RSAB for each center with funds from this RFP.

Below is a list of the PA CareerLink® centers located in our region.

Pennsylvania CareerLink® center Cameron County (Affiliate) at Emporium
221 East Second Street
Emporium, PA 15834

Pennsylvania CareerLink® center Clearfield County at Clearfield
1125 Linden Street
Clearfield, PA 16830

Pennsylvania CareerLink® center Clearfield County at DuBois
20 North Sixth Street
DuBois, PA 15801

Pennsylvania CareerLink® center Elk County at St. Marys
245 Depot Street
St. Marys, PA 15857

Pennsylvania CareerLink® center Jefferson County at Punxsutawney
103 East Union Street, Suite 2
Punxsutawney, PA 15767

Pennsylvania CareerLink® center McKean County at Bradford
40 Davis Street
Bradford, PA 16701

Pennsylvania CareerLink® center Potter County at Coudersport
279 Route 6 West
Coudersport, PA 16915

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) identifies several required one-stop system partners and allows for additional partners designated located. Below is a list of the required partners and any other partners that are present in the North Central PA CareerLink® centers and how these programs align with the strategic vision.

Programs authorized under WIOA:

- Title I (Adults, Dislocated Worker and Youth);
- Adult Education and Literacy Act Program administered by the Department of Education;
- Wagner-Peyser Act employment services administered by DOL;
- Rehabilitation Act Title I programs administered by DoED;
- Job Corps program;
- Youth Build program;
- Native American Programs;
- Migrant and seasonal farmworker programs and
- Evaluation and multistate projects.

IX. EARN SPECIFIC INFORMATION

SIGNIFICANT SEGMENTS/TARGET GROUPS

The clients to be served will be recipients of TANF whose eligibility was determined by the local CAO's who are the sole source of referrals to EARN, whose program training, services and/or activities are funded by the EARN funding sources. More specific criteria regarding clients to be served can be found in the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual. Many of the EARN program clients will possess social and economic barriers. Some of the counties have individuals with limited literacy and/or limited English proficiencies, therefore, proposing contractor(s) must clearly indicate how the EARN program will be provided to those individuals.

EARN PROGRAM RESTRICTIONS AND/OR REQUIREMENTS

EARN Program training, services and/or activities related to employment, education and job retention shall include the following components:

- Community Service
- Vocational Education
- Need to add to the list based on EARN Manual; Work Experience; Case Management; Work Ready Workshops; Subsidized Employment; Job Search; On-the-Job Training...

Proposed EARN program training, services and/or activities must observe the following restrictions and/or requirements as they are related to the above listed components:

- Program training, services and/or activities cannot start prior to July 1, 2018 and cannot end later than June 30, 2019. Refer to the modified/current EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual for conditions and time limits placed on acceptable activities. **Contractors are required to accept any and all clients referred to them for the above mentioned program components and are required to immediately enroll clients upon their reporting to their facility.**
- Start dates for newly referred clients, for the proposed program training and services and/or activities, must be an open entry/open exit enrollment basis in order to meet the Work Participation Rate and LMC performance requirements. In addition, **proposing contractors must agree to accept unlimited enrollments.**
- Proposed contractors must have a specific plan that outlines the strategies to engage all referrals from the local CAO(s).
- A minimum of 20 hours per week of participation must be available to all clients attending the program training, services and/or activities. Depending on a client's circumstances, a 30-hour per week or more participation requirement may be necessary. The attendance requirement must be enforced for all clients participating in a program training, service and/or activity. All time missed must be made up by clients within the calendar month, and in a supervised setting. Therefore, some reasonable provision of time for clients to make-up hours missed must also be available.
- Contractor(s) must provide allowable core activities, defined by the Department of Human Services (DHS), for a minimum of 20 hours per week. In addition to the core activities, non-core activities must be provided to all clients that are required to participate in the program for 30 hours per week or more. Additional definitions can be found in the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual.
- All contractors must ensure that all contracted program participants are registered in the PA CareerLink® system in order to avail themselves of the services and/or activities provided at the PA CareerLink® offices.
- Sufficient staff must be provided to meet the EARN program requirements as noted in the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual. Contractor(s) must assign a sufficient number of direct service staff. In addition, contractor(s) must have the ability and capacity to provide program training, services and/or activities to any individual speaking any language other than English and must obtain Language Line access and/or other translation services.
- Contractor(s) must complete and maintain a Service Plan for every client enrolled in a program along with all the other required forms outlined in the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual and any additional documentation and/or forms initiated by the LMC and/or the Fiscal Agent.
- Contractor(s) must provide intensive and on-going case management during the pre and post placement phase as indicated in the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual.
- Contractor(s) must ensure that each client's information is entered in accordance with the time frames required by the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual and correctly data entered into the Commonwealth's Workforce Development System (CWDS) and Job Gateway. Contractor(s) must also ensure that the appropriate staff secure CWDS access and attend the state training within 30 days of the award of a contract. The contractor is also required to apply for Client

Information System (CIS) access. Additional information/instructions on these items can be found in the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual and on the Inspiritec website.

- Contractor(s) must collaborate with the local CAO to meet a minimum of twice per month to reconcile records/data for each client and determine the best course of action for active clients. Further details for the Direct Service Teams are found in the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual. The purpose of the DST meetings is to discuss significant or multiple client barriers with the CAO and to jointly determine the correct referral for a client with barriers. The meetings are to be frequent and ongoing. They are to be in addition to standard communication between EARN staff and local CAO staff. Topics to be covered at DST meetings include but are not limited to client outreach, enrollments, plan, activities, hours, incentives and terminations. **In particular, contractors are required to closely adhere, at a minimum, to the low hour's protocol reporting mechanisms and make-up hour reporting required by the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual. Contractors must understand that failure to comply with this requirement may jeopardize the renewal of the contract.**
- Confidentiality of client information must be maintained to meet the requirements of HIPAA regulations and specific procedures as outlined throughout the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual as related to the program being administered. All case files must be properly stored in a secured, locked space with limited staff access. Proper protocols must be in place in regard to staff computers with password protection and other safeguards.
- In the event that an organization other than the current provider is awarded the contract, swift and immediate transition activities will be necessary. The LMC requires the successful bidders to interview interested current employees of existing contractors who may be displaced as a result of the awarded contract(s). Transition activities for EARN program training, services and/or activities will be completed by July 31, 2018. Transition activities include but are not limited to the transfer of case files and ensuring that client services are uninterrupted. It is expected by the LMC that parties involved will work together to ensure that program training, services and/or activities to clients are not impacted.

X. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Bidders must submit their proposal to this RFP which meets the minimum requirements of this RFP. All bidders are required to respond to this RFP exactly as outlined in order for the Workforce Solutions to evaluate all proposals on an equal and timely basis.

MINIMUM STANDARDS

These minimum standards must be met if the proposal is to be further evaluated:

- The proposal was submitted before the closing time and date.
- The proposing organization is not on a Federal or State Debarment List.
- The proposing organization is fiscally solvent.
- The proposing organization has additional funding sources and will not be dependent on DHS funds alone for ongoing operations.
- The person signing the proposal as the submitting officer has the authority to do so.
- The proposing organization agrees to meet all Federal, State, and local Equal Employment Office (EEO) and DHS program and fiscal compliance requirements.

- The proposal addresses all program requirements of EARN.

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

The narrative section of the proposal should not exceed established page limits. The instructions for each section are provided below. Please repeat the question in your response. Bidders are not required to bid for all positions.

SECTION 1 - COVER PAGE – The cover page is to be completed by the proposing organization or lead applicant if the proposal is from more than one organization. The proposal cover page must be completed, in full, and signed by an agency officer authorized to bind the agency to all commitments made in the proposal. Only one cover page is needed per proposal. Required cover page is attached – see attachment A.

SECTION 2 - PROPOSAL SUMMARY – Maximum of 2 pages – Please provide an executive summary of your proposal.

SECTION 3 - ORGANIZATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND PAST PERFORMANCE – Maximum of 2 pages – Please answer the questions in the order listed. This category will evaluate past experience in providing services similar to those being proposed, including the ability to deliver as proposed, attain, track, and report performance. Additionally, this section will be used to evaluate the performance and management capability of the proposing agency(s).

- a. Describe your organizations' vision, mission, and service expertise and how this proposal relates to your organization's goals and to Workforce Solutions work.
- b. Describe your organizations' experience in managing various state and/or federally funded/government programs, financial management (including use of acceptable accounting practices and controls).
- c. Describe your organization's experience serving diverse customers including, but not necessarily limited to: economically disadvantaged individuals with little or no work experience, individuals with low educational attainment or low literacy proficiencies, veterans, individuals with disabilities, those with limited English ability, minorities, ex-offenders, dislocated workers or those who may have experience and skills but have not worked for an extended period.
- d. Describe your experience in administering Department of Human Services or other employment and training programs. Please provide examples to how you were, flexible, innovative and creative in service delivery while being successful in achieving performance/outcomes.
- e. Describe how many people annually have you served in a workforce program and what were the goals and quantifiable results?

SECTION 4 - RELATIONSHIPS AND COLLABORATION – Maximum of 1 page – Please answer the questions in the order listed. This category will evaluate how well the bidder has planned to work with the organizations needed to accomplish the proposed work.

- a. Describe your organizational experience in partnering with other organizations to meet the workforce development needs of clients receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
- b. Describe services provided, outcomes and key successful strategies.
- c. Describe your experience with an integrated service delivery model, information sharing, case management of co-enrolled clients, cross training of staff and shared performance and accountability.
- d. Describe your experience in collaborating with the PA CareerLink® system.
- e. Describe successes and/or challenges you have experienced in previous collaborative or integrated service delivery models that will contribute to your future success.
- f. Describe how you envision effectively collaborating with the Workforce Solutions staff to effectively establish and maintain an effective service delivery model

SECTION 5 - DESIGN AND STAFFING – Please answer the questions in the order listed. This category will evaluate the adequacy, creativity, and plausibility and alignment of staff and services within the program design. (Maximum of 5 pages)

Proposal contractors must provide at a minimum the following:

- 4.5 Dedicated Case Managers allocated as follows:
 - 1 full time in McKean County
 - 1 - ½ time in Potter County
 - 1 full time for Elk and Cameron Counties combined
 - 1 full time in Jefferson County (which includes the DuBois area)
 - 1 full time in Clearfield County

Explain the composition of proposed staff.

- For each position that will be funded under the proposed project, a detailed job description to include job duties and responsibilities, as well as qualifications is to be included in an attachment to the proposal.
- Describe proposed staffing plan to include number of full time/part time positions etc.
- Describe your plan for case managers to collaborate with Business Service Representatives in each of the PA CareerLink® centers for job placement and community service.
- Describe your justification for the staffing disbursement and expected impacts (example: partner/resource/services alignment, target population engagement)
- Provide an organizational chart representing staff alignment and accountability as an attachment.
- Describe your internal review/monitoring practices or plan.

- Describe any relevant timelines, specific content areas which will be evaluated and how the results will be utilized.
- Describe how you will be flexible with staffing. Explain some of your innovative personnel policies or practices and your ability to shift staff responsibilities and hours of service to respond to demands. Provide examples as appropriate to support your response.
- Describe your plan to ensure that staff is well trained and ready to deliver-DHS/EARN services.
- Describe any specific topics you feel will be critical for staff to be successful in supporting the program design, the delivery of quality services or achieving programmatic performance outcomes.
- Describe your plan to minimize any disruption in services to existing customers or access to program services.
- Describe your employer services experience. Include specifics on the scale of industry engagements, purpose of the engagements, strategies utilized to identify and approach businesses and outcomes from these efforts.

SECTION 6 - EARN PROGRAM TRAINING SERVICES/ACTIVITIES TO BE PERFORMED – Maximum of 5 pages

Proposing contractor(s) must plan to provide assessment/orientation services, skills training, case management services, and incentives, if needed, to all clients, and plan to offer any or all of the allowable training, services and/or activities within each of the aforementioned EARN program components. However, proposing contractor(s) should understand that the allowable training, services and/or activities are time limited.

Please describe each of the proposed training, services and/or activities you plan to administer in detail. Provide examples of program training, services and/or activities available in-house and/or provided by other contractors and/or agencies.

Heavy emphasis will be placed on proposals that demonstrate an in-depth understanding of clients’ needs. Proposing contractor(s) are encouraged to be innovative in their delivery of the EARN program training, services and/or activities, as well as expanding the program training, services and/or activities. Proposals that present a well thought out plan for motivating clients to meet the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual strict time-and-attendance requirements are highly desirable.

All EARN program training, services and/or activities must be provided and delivered in accordance with the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual and the current and/or modified EARN Program Guidelines.

Proposing contractor(s) are responsible for being familiar with the applicable current welfare program guidelines, laws, rules, and regulations and for applying them in developing the proposal response.

SECTION 7 - SPECIFIC TARGETED EARN PROGRAM OBJECTIVES & GOALS – Maximum of 2 pages

TARGET GROUP

Describe clearly your capability of serving clients with significant social and economic barriers such as: school dropouts, individuals with low literacy levels, language barriers, mental health problems, drug and alcohol problems, hygiene issues, physical, emotional and learning disabilities, in abusive situations, homeless, and/or families who have multiple children.

Also, describe a contingency plan to provide for unlimited enrollments and provide the specific that will be utilized to engage all referrals from the local CAO(s).

COORDINATION OF EARN PROGRAM TRAINING, SERVICES AND/OR ACTIVITIES WITH LOCAL BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, AND LABOR ORGANIZATIONS

Describe how the EARN program training, services and/or activities being proposed were designed and coordinated with input from local business, industry, and labor organizations.

COORDINATION OF EARN PROGRAM TRAINING, SERVICES AND/OR ACTIVITIES WITH OTHER CONTRACTORS AND/OR AGENCIES

Describe how the EARN program training, services and/or activities will be coordinated, collaborated with other contractor(s) and/or agencies as indicated in Part A, Section II, (General Information.)

Describe and indicate new and existing linkages to contractor(s) and/or agencies concurrently serving clients in North Central PA region by providing a clear integrated services plan, which should include the PA CareerLink® system.

Describe how your proposal will assist Workforce Solutions and the LMC to meet their workforce and economic development goals.

SECTION 8 - DESCRIPTION OF PAST PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS – Maximum of 1 page

PAST EXPERIENCE

Describe any past experience of successfully providing program(s) training, services and/or activities that are same/similar to those asked for in this proposal. Also, include any relevant experience working with the identified target group. Indicate whether the program goals were met. Attach to the narrative portion of the bid document copies of any monitoring reports issued by any agency that provides funds for the operation of your agency/program for the prior two program years.

PROGRAM COMPLIANCE AND PERFORMANCE

To ensure program compliance and performance, an effective management system must have a process that verifies progress in attaining established performance objectives. Describe the system you used to monitor and verify that performance goals were met in similar programs you provided in the past.

ITEMS RELATED TO PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

Describe the following relative to performance measurements:

- Demonstrated commitment to achieve and surpass all mandated performance measures.
- Identification of additional performance indicators to measure EARN program impacts and evaluate success.
- Evaluation methods for tracking and ensuring that all required performance measures are met or exceeded.

- Internal systems to identify operational problems, and take appropriate corrective action to improve performance issues as necessary. Proposing contractor(s) must include with this proposal a description of their continuous improvement process.

SECTION 9 - TRANSPORTATION – Maximum of 2 pages

The LMC is looking for creative solutions to the transportation barriers of our clients. Please provide a solutions based approach to how you can help address this barrier for our clients. Additional resources may be available depending on the request and dollars available.

SECTION 10 - REPORTING REQUIREMENTS CAPABILITY – Maximum of 1 page

The contractor or contractors selected must demonstrate the ability to be compliant with EARN program reporting and record-keeping, the capability to generate accurate and timely information, and submit periodic fiscal and programmatic reports.

Contractor(s) will be required to provide various financial and performance reports to the LMC on a monthly basis in such detail and on such forms as required by the LMC and DHS. The deadline for the monthly financial and performance reports will be the 10th day of the month following the reporting month. Contractor(s) will be required to submit the reports to Workforce Solutions for presentation to the LMC. Failure to submit the required monthly reports on time may result in deobligation of funds or termination of contract(s.)

Describe in detail the proposing contractor's capacity to administer reporting requirements, data reconciliation and ability to input data accurately into the CWDS system.

SECTION 11 - BUDGET

BUDGET FORMS – Please see attachment B.

All programs presented must include a line-item budget using the format presented. Do not substitute the budget forms in this solicitation unless otherwise approved by Workforce Solutions. This budget includes a summary of total project costs and the costs proposed to be covered with Workforce Solutions funds. In developing the budget, please include any administrative costs to operate the program within the line items. **Administrative costs should not exceed 10% of total request.**

BUDGET NARRATIVE

- All providers must adhere to GAAP and comply with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Guidance regarding allowable costs.
- A brief budget narrative is required to provide details about the budget, e.g., purchase/lease of equipment. This narrative provides justification for items in the budget.
- No purchase of equipment is permitted without specific authorization. Therefore, any requests where equipment is purchased or leased must be clearly represented in the budget and be consistent with the proposed program as outlined in your proposal.
- This narrative should also detail the amount and kind of support provided with other resources.

PROGRAM INCOME - includes the following: Income from fees for services performed and from conferences; income from the use or rental of real or personal property acquired with grant or subgrant funds; income from the sale of commodities or items fabricated under a grant or subgrant; revenues earned by a governmental or private non-profit service provider under either a fixed-price or reimbursable award that are in excess of the actual costs incurred in providing the services; and interest income earned on advances of subgrant funds. If any program income is expected to be earned, the budget narrative must address this.

Please note that costs shall be limited to those necessary and reasonable for, and directly related to, the proper and efficient operation of the proposed EARN program training, services and/or activities and must be comparable to the charges for similar program training, services and/or activities in the area. This process is to be followed for each program year being procured in this RFP. Proposing contractor(s) must fully comply with the requirements of all federal and state regulations usual for welfare programs.

ALLOWABLE COSTS / ACTIVITIES:

Costs shall be limited to those necessary and reasonable for, and directly related to, the proper and efficient operation of the Department of Human Services EARN grant. Additionally, the cost should be comparable to the charges for similar goods and services in the area and not be a general expense required to carry out the overall responsibility of the government. Allowable cost principles are established in OMB Circular A-87, A-122, and CFR Part 31.

Welfare program costs are allocable to a particular cost category to the extent that benefits are received by such category. In addition, any single costs, which are properly chargeable to more than one cost category, shall be prorated among the appropriate cost categories.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Contractors will be paid monthly based on a negotiated schedule with the Fiscal Agent.

XI. WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS AND PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES

Workforce Solutions staff are responsible for:

- Providing technical assistance to EARN program providers in the counties of the North Central Region.
- Providing assistance and training with the eligibility process.
- Monitoring and reviewing program performance in relationship to program and participant goals.
- Reimbursing EARN program providers in an efficient and timely manner.

The Provider is responsible for:

- Enrollment of EARN customers and outreach to employers.
- Assessment of customers to determine deficiency and service need of each customer based on the requirement of EARN.
- Implementing a process of collecting/evaluating their clients' satisfaction with all aspects of the program and to ensure that all needs are being met.
- Submit expense reports and invoice for reimbursement on a monthly basis.
- Providing case management to ensure program participants achieve goals as identified in the Service Plan.

- Entering pertinent EARN information for ongoing tracking and monitoring of all participants in the Comprehensive Workforce Development System (CWDS) and Job Gateway.
- The provider must have a process for collecting/evaluating their customers' satisfaction with all aspects of the program to ensure needs are being met and report results to the Workforce Solutions staff.
- The provider is expected to monitor participant files and other documents in preparation for Workforce Solutions and state monitoring visits.
- The provider will collaborate with the PA CareerLink® Operator and will align with the directives of the Operator (included the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) costs) as well as Workforce Solutions.

XII. SUBMITTAL INFORMATION

Proposals that are in response to this RFP are due no later than **3:00 p.m. on Monday, March 12, 2018**. Late submissions will not be considered regardless of reason. One hard copy must be sent in a sealed envelope and one electronic copy must be submitted appropriately as follows:

Hard Copy:

Ms. Pamela A. Streich, Director of Strategic Planning and Project Management
 Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania
 425 Old Kersey Road
 Kersey, PA 15846

Electronic Copy:

Submit to Pam Streich at pstreich@ncwdb.org
 Subject Line must read: EARN Proposal
(PLEASE SEND WITH A RECEIVED AND READ REQUEST)

XIII. AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

This RFP is being solicited based on anticipated funds. Any awards may be provided only upon the actual availability of EARN funds. Applications that may be approved are not guaranteed funding since the funding for programs is dependent upon Workforce Solutions receipt of funds under DHS.

XIV. REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

Workforce Solutions reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, received as a result of this request or to negotiate separately with competing bidders.

XV. INCURRING COSTS

Workforce Solutions is not responsible for any costs incurred by bidders prior to the selection of service providers by Workforce Solutions. The cost to develop and submit a proposal in response to this RFP is not reimbursable.

XVI. DISCLOSURE OF PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Proposals will be held in confidence and, except for selected proposals, will not be revealed or discussed with competitors. All materials submitted with the Proposal and the Proposal itself, become the property of Workforce Solutions and will not be returned. Workforce Solutions reserves the right to use any or all ideas presented in any proposal. Selection or rejection of the proposal does not affect this right.

XVII. NEWS RELEASES

All subcontractors must receive prior written approval from Workforce Solutions for the publication of any news releases.

XVIII. DISCLAIMER

The submission of a proposal to Workforce Solutions does not assure or imply an award of a contract to the organization(s) submitting the proposal.

Workforce Solutions reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, to negotiate any offer made, and/or to cancel or amend any part of this application package for whatever reason.

In addition, based on current or proposed legislative activity, Workforce Solutions reserves the right to adjust any conflicting administrative and/or programmatic requirements that may occur prior to or after the contracting process.

XIX. RESPONSE ON ACTION TAKEN REGARDING PROPOSAL

All proposals received will receive a response as to the action taken by Workforce Solutions. Bidders may request a briefing on the action taken on the proposal.

XX. CONTRACTING DATES

Workforce Solutions is soliciting proposals for the period, July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019.

XXI. SELECTION OF SERVICE PROVIDERS

Priority for selection will be based on the effectiveness of the agency or organization to deliver comparable or related services based on demonstrated performance in terms of the likelihood of meeting performance goals, cost, quality of training, and characteristics of participants.

XXII. NON-DUPLICATION OF FACILITIES OR SERVICES

Programs presented may not duplicate facilities or services available in the area (with or without reimbursement) from Federal, State or local sources, unless it is demonstrated that alternative services or facilities would be more effective or more likely to achieve Workforce Solutions performance goals.

XXIII. INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Proof of insurance is not a requirement for submissions, but proposing contractors should be aware that no work may begin under a contract funded through this program until the required insurance has been obtained and proper certificates (or policies) are filed with Workforce Solutions. Before submitting a proposal for funding, the proposing contractor(s) should contact its insurance agent to determine if it can obtain the required coverage. By meeting this requirement contractor(s) agree to insure that all employees and clients involved in the contract are covered by any and all applicable insurances (i.e. Workers' Compensation, U.C., Social Security and liability.) The contractor(s) agrees to adhere to all applicable policies and regulations concerning these insurances.

Contractors are required to carry a general liability insurance coverage for the institution sufficient to cover any liability that may arise from the performance of this contract. General liability insurance should cover bodily injury and property damage to a third party and personal injury; \$500,000 each occurrence or \$1 million dollars' aggregate is required. A reasonable deductible is allowed, not to exceed \$10,000.

Contractors are required to carry Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage for all employees and clients who are placed in a paid work experience activity. The minimum acceptable coverage is \$1,000,000 bodily injury by accident and bodily injury by disease with a \$1,000,000 bodily injury by disease policy limit.

XXIV. SELECTION AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

GENERAL INFORMATION

The selection of a contractor or contractors will be based on the following criteria:

- Demonstrated performance of the effectiveness of the agency or organization in delivering comparable or related EARN program training, services and/or activities, including ability to meet specific program design requirements
- Demonstrated performance in meeting performance goals, costs and quality of training
- A record of fiscal accountability and administrative compliance, including well established financial management systems and controls
- Quality and qualifications of key staff
- Demonstrated performance in providing education, training, job-development, job retention, as well as meeting the social and emotional needs of each referred client Creative delivery of services with a customer centered approach.

Funds awarded under this proposal shall not be used to duplicate facilities or services currently available in the county or counties with or without reimbursement from Federal, state or local sources, unless it is demonstrated that such funded services or activities would be more effective or more likely to achieve the overall program performance goals.

XXV. COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The selection of a contractor(s) shall be accomplished in compliance with the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual, and other relevant rules, regulations and directives. Each contractor is required to comply with all requirements of the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual and its attendant regulations and amendments, and any other applicable Federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and amendments.

The LMC and any entity or persons who themselves or whose organization will gain financially as a result of an LMC decision to subcontract a particular function, service and/or activity of the welfare EARN program **must abstain** from participating in discussions leading up to and including the final consensus agreement or vote.

When procurement of services and/or activities is discussed at a LMC meeting, all potential bidders will be asked to leave the meeting during that discussion. Potential bidders who do not leave will be disqualified from bidding.

XXVI. QUALITY ASSURANCE/MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

Successful contractor(s) will be subject to periodic evaluation of their program(s). On-site monitoring will be conducted at least annually or when requested by an LMC voting member. During an on-site visit the monitor(s) will follow same

and/or similar monitoring mechanisms as indicated in the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual. Contractor(s) may be asked to provide additional information at the time of this evaluation or at any other time.

Statistical progress toward achievement of goals will be monitored on a monthly basis via the statistical reports submitted to the LMC by the contractor(s.) Monthly reports are necessary to provide a method for the DPW and the LMC to review and monitor the contractor(s) ability to meet performance requirements and program goals as noted in the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual for each program/county in which they operate.

Contractor(s) selected for funding will be monitored for contract compliance, financial management, and program performance. The attainment of the EARN program standards/goals is measured at the time of on-site monitoring, as well as at other times throughout the course of the contract.

If violations and/or discrepancies are documented a formal report will be submitted to the LMC and all parties involved will submit a corrective action plan. Failure on the part of contractor(s) to achieve the EARN program goals could result in the contractor(s) being placed on probation. Continued failure may result in termination of the contract with said contractor.

XXVII. CASE RECORD AND FINANCIAL RECORD REQUIREMENTS

According to the current and/or modified EARN Program Policies and Procedures Manual, all contractor(s) are responsible for keeping their own client case record files, financial records etc. Included are regular maintenance of time sheets, individual payroll records, payroll journal, quarterly and yearly tax returns and general ledger records. Timely tax deposits must be made with federal, state and local governments.

Note: Awarded contractor(s) are required to retain contractual/fiscal records six years from audit completion, and client case record files for six years. If an audit began during the sixth-year period and has not been completed the client case record files must be retained beyond the sixth-year period until the audit is completed.

Client files are considered the property of Workforce Solutions and must be provided at the end of the program period or when requested, and must be available for review. Once records have been monitored by BETP they may be scanned and stored electronically.

XXVIII. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

All agencies that must submit a financial management description must provide the following information. This section must describe in detail the program operators' financial management system. Program operators must operate a system that satisfactorily accounts for and documents the receipt and disbursement of all workforce development funds. While a separate accounting system is not required, each operator must maintain financial records that adequately identify the source and application of all workforce development funds.

- Effective Control and Accountability over workforce development assets (Funds, Property, other workforce development assets) - Assure that the financial system will maintain effective control and accountability over all funds, property and other workforce development assets including the adequate safeguard of such assets.

- System's Capability of Generating Financial Information - Assure that the system is capable of generating all financial information needed for required reports, including data needed to monitor, evaluate and if necessary, modify program performance.
- Source Documentation - Assure that accounting records are supported by source documentation for each transaction. Assure that records are traceable to documentation and maintained in such a manner as to provide a complete and accurate audit trail during any internal or external examination.
- Bonding for Protection Against Loss - Assure that all persons authorized to receive or deposit workforce development funds, or to issue financial documents, checks or other instruments of payment for job training program costs will be bonded for protection against loss.

Identify all positions that are authorized to receive or deposit workforce development funds, issue financial documents, checks or other instruments of payment for workforce development program costs.

Identify the insuring agency, policy number, term of the bond, and the total dollar amount of the bonding coverage. Attach a copy of the Bonding certificate.

- Record Retention - Assure that all financial and program records, including any supporting documents, will be retained for at least three years from the date of Workforce Solutions submission of close-out reports. Assure that if any litigation, claims, or audits are begun prior to expiration of the three-year period, that all records shall be retained until such litigations, claims, or audits relating to the records have been resolved.

Assure that records relating to non-expendable personal property that may be authorized to be purchased with workforce development funds will be retained for at least three (3) years after final disposition of the property.

- Cost Allocation Plan - Describe in detail any cost allocation plan utilized when costs are chargeable to more than one cost category, or to more than one program and/or funding source. Identify common costs.
- Invoices and Reconciliation - Assure that the actual and accrued expenditures will be reported on invoices and that reconciliation between actual and accrued expenditures will be conducted on a payment-by-payment basis.
- Generally Accepted Accounting Principles - Assure that the agency will utilize generally accepted accounting principles in order to account for and control all workforce development funds.
- Program Income and Stand-In Costs – Any program income received as a result of this contract must be reported to Workforce Solutions. Program Income must be used prior to payment of any workforce development funds. Assure that any program income earned as a result of the contract for services will be used for job training purposes only. The use of the program income against workforce development services must be documentable and traceable through the financial system. It must be reported as part of the invoice.
- Procurement - In order to ensure fiscal accountability and prevent waste, fraud and abuse in programs administered under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the sub recipient shall have a procurement system, which adequately provides maximum, free, and open competition. To accomplish

this, sub recipients must have a system which: 1) provides for full and open competition, 2) has written procedures for procurement transactions, and 3) has a code of ethical standards, which adequately provide for the avoidance of any conflict of interest. To evaluate this, sub recipients will be required to assure compliance with Workforce Solutions; procurement policies that require the solicitation of a minimum of three written bids on purchases of less than \$25,000. Purchases of greater than \$25,000 in total must be procured through a formal advertising method, a competitive proposal or through non-competitive methods, which is a very limited option of procurement with restrictions. Purchases of greater than \$500 require Workforce Solutions approval prior to purchase.

No portion of this subcontract may be contracted to any other agency for the provision of services within the scope of the guidelines.

The agency must assure that it will comply with the Commonwealth and Workforce Solutions procurement requirements.

- Audit Report - Attach a copy of the most recently completed independent Audit. Only one Audit Report is required (copies are not necessary to be attached).
- Assurances and Certifications - All agencies submitting proposals state that the attached assurances and certifications will be signed upon award. Since these are material representations of fact upon which a favorable proposal may result in an award, the forms must be signed by an individual authorized to bind the organization to a contract. The required assurances and certifications can be found in Attachment C.
- Records, Reports, Administrative Requirements - Training providers will submit attendance and progress reports as scheduled.
 - 1) Attendance/Progress Reports
 - 2) Invoices as Scheduled
 - 3) Close Out Reports
- Tagline Requirements

All recipients of WIOA / Title I/EARN funds must ensure that all information disseminated to the public through pamphlets, booklets, manuals, posters, internet, etc. include a statement that the program is an:

“Equal Opportunity Employment Program” and;

“Auxiliary Aids and Services are available to individuals with disabilities.”
- Other Requirements

Include on all products developed through this agreement, newsletters, print and web, press releases, invites, landing pages and email campaigns, etc. the following language as well as the Workforce Solutions logo which will be provided upon award: “Funded by Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania, Inc.”

Additionally, when publishing or broadcasting program information in the news media the above mentioned Tagline must also be in place. Further the Tagline should be on agency letterhead, internal communication email, etc.

- “TDD / TYY Relay Number Requirements

The recipient must also ensure their “TDD / TTY Relay Number” is included on materials routinely made available to the public through pamphlets, booklets, posters, internet, internal communications, news releases, etc.

- WIOA Section 188 Disability Checklist and the Americans with Disabilities Act Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal (i.e. checklist for existing facilities version 2.1)
 - 1) Recipients of WIOA / Title I/EARN funds are required under applicable mandates to be Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) / ADA Compliant. To ensure applicable compliance in this regard, the recipient is encouraged to utilize the above-mentioned checklists to self-evaluate their facilities.
 - 2) The recipient may obtain both “checklists” by contacting the Equal Opportunity Liaison at their local PA CareerLink® facility or they may contact the Equal Opportunity Officer at Workforce Solutions, 425 Old Kersey Road, Kersey PA 15846.

XXIX. PROPOSAL SCORING

Prospective Providers are advised that an offer for a contract may be initiated after review of the proposal by the Proposal Review Team and Workforce Solutions. Proposals will be reviewed for acceptability with emphasis on various factors according to the type of services to be provided. Proposals will be evaluated on a similar ranking as the following criteria with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

POINTS	APPLICANT RESPONSE	SCORE	COMMENTS
Max = 5	Issue which this program/service will address is clearly explained and meets a demonstrated need (includes prevalence, frequency, short and long-term effects).		
Max = 5	Proposal demonstrates ability to enroll eligible participants.		
Max = 5	Program description addresses HOW, WHEN and WHERE services will be provided.		
Max = 5	Proposal identifies sound methods to assist with tracking and meeting identified performance measures.		
Max = 5	Proposal demonstrates previous experience in delivering proposed services to the target population and demonstrates staff and volunteer qualifications.		
Max = 5	Proposal demonstrates an understanding of EARN/DHS and its requirements.		
Max = 5	Outcomes are realistic and clearly specified.		
Max = 5	Budget: Detailed individual cost section and narrative complete and accurate.		
Max = 5	Program/service costs are deemed appropriate and reasonable.		
Max = 5	Proposal leverages funds and/or expands existing, successful programs.		
Max = 5	Proposal is developed in partnership with other entities.		
Max 55	TOTAL POINTS		

