**Training Liaison**

**Request for Application**

**Program Description**

The Workforce Alliance of the North Bay (WANB) is releasing this **Request for Application** (RFA) to enter non-financial agreements with agencies (that will be designated subrecipients) who can connect with businesses having trouble attracting and hiring qualified applicants and promote Work-Based Training (WBT) alternatives so the local business can use the program to obtain employees.

1. WANB will not directly pay the subrecipients (Liaison) for their services.
2. Instead, WANB will pay for training reimbursements to the business for their extraordinary cost to train an applicant that needs skill development for the job they are unable to find qualified applicants.
3. Accordingly, the liaison will gain benefits from the WBT program as WANB pays the direct (WBT) costs to the business, including wrap-around career services.
4. The liaison agency thus foregoes the cost required for their clients/participants to be trained and employed.
	1. The liaison’s client/participant must be enrolled in WIOA to have access to WIOA WBT funds and can or continue to be co-enrolled in the Liaison’s program.
	2. The client/participant will have access to several employment and training wrap around services while participating in the WBT.

The liaison thus accrues benefit from this subrecipient relationship by foregoing the costs of WBT and several basic and individualized career services, so their client/participant receive training and becomes an employee of the businesses they liaison works with.

1. Wrap around services include several career services, supportive services and counseling. These will be available without charge to client/participants through the CareerPoint (AJCC) network. CareerPoint is co-funded by WANB and are the regions federally funded workforce services access points.
2. The clients will “Earn and Learn,” …**becoming employed, receiving pay**, **learning essential job skills**, and **remain employed by the business after the training is completed**.
3. The WBT program will increase the probability that the liaison’s co-enrolled participant will succeed, and the liaison will be able to report successes (getting their client(s) placed and retained in sustainable employment).
4. The business will fill the vacancy they have struggled to fill, train the new hire in the way they choose, and in the skills they value.
5. The business will shape the under skilled applicant into a new hire and employee with the minimum qualifications for the job, resulting in a loyal and qualified employee.
6. The business will be reimbursed for qualifying costs (The “extraordinary costs” to prepare an under skilled employee for the minimum qualification for a specific job).

The liaison will jointly work with the WANB Service Provider (SP) and the business to build an applicant pool for the specific WBT job the employer is having trouble hiring. This applicant pool will consist of job seekers that lack the minimum qualifications for the job, but who have strong interest, aptitudes, and desire to learn the specific job. The WANB SP can work with the liaison to develop this applicant pool.

The business will interview and select a hire from the prescreened applicant pool.

The liaison and business, together with the WANB SP will then develop a training plan that is tailored to train the selected applicant so they can acquire the minimum skill qualifications that they lacked. The training plan will constitute an “On the Job” (OJT) training plan.

The WANB SP will facilitate the completion of a worksite agreement to articulate the OJT.

* The OJT agreement will provide a brief description of the skill acquisitions needed by the business for this job, the skill improvements needed for the selected applicant, and the estimated way those skill trainings will be provided.
* The OJT agreement will also define the reimbursement that will be paid to the business for the extraordinary cost they incur to train the new hire.

This program is flexible and allows the liaison to work with the WANB SP so both agencies keep informed of the client/participant as they progress through the WBT progress. As an example, the liaison may provide case management and counseling, or partner with the WANB SP to share that role as deemed appropriate. The relationship of sharing these roles is reliant on the agencies to work out.

But the WBT process will remain focused on making the WBT an effective way to have the job seeker gain a sustainable job and provide businesses having trouble finding qualified applicants with an employee hired and trained with minimal cost.

**Who can be Trainees of the WBT?**

1. Participants must lack skills to meet the minimum qualifications of a job as decided by the business (employer).
2. Participants can be selected from pools of under-skilled job seekers in the liaison’s program, from a WANB participant pool of under-skilled job seekers, job seekers outreached and/or recruited by public announcements that do not already have the minimum skills for the job, or applicants that the employer previously interviewed and did not hire because they did not have the skills required.

The employer has the ultimate decision about who they hire and train. Neither the liaison, WANB SP, or any other influence can dictate who is hired.

The only requirement for this hire to qualify as a WBT is that the participant has a short assessment processes provided by WANB’s SP and be enrolled into WIOA prior to the date of hire.

**Why WANB is Requesting Applications**

WANB receives federal WIOA funding to assist both job seekers and businesses. A portion of the funding is restricted and **must be used for training**.

The WANB Service Provider (SP) is responsible to operate the WIOA Employment and Training program, which is primarily provided at the CareerPoint centers. As part of this responsibility, the SP enrolls participants into WIOA, enters their services and progress into the state tracking system (CalJOBS), is the pass-through agency that pays for all training expenditures, and works together with other WIOA mandatory partners at the CareerPoint to provide career services.

Because of above responsibilities, the SP must be an integral part of the WBT program, and the efforts they provide are funded by their program budget that was awarded to them by WANB through competitive procurement.

Accordingly, all the enrollment components, the wrap around employment and training components, together with supportive services components, when allowed by WIOA and WANB’s policy, will be provided to participants in the WBT program at no cost to the participant, liaison, or to the business (employer/trainer). Liaisons can elect to provide career services, case management, and any other service the participants need, but those service activities will not be funded by the WBT program, and such elections need to be coordinated with the WANB SP.

**Work-Based Training**

For a variety of reasons, WANB’s contracted Service Provider (SP) has been unable to create the quantity of training opportunities to use the WIOA restricted training funds. WANB’s four county region does not have a wide range of Eligible Training Providers to provided short term vocational training to participants and thus, the “Earn and Learn” models need to be a major option to clients.

Anecdotally, many businesses are spending excessive time, effort, and financial resources trying to find qualified workers for certain jobs. Sometimes after businesses completes a hire, they realize the hire didn’t have the minimum qualifications they thought, the new hire has difficulties assimilating into the businesses operating culture, or the new hire is a good fit but leaves for another job after the employer invests in their full assimilation. Failed hires cause a spiraling effort to repeat the process, exhausting greater time and money.

**WBT is an effective alternative.**

Many job seekers strive to work in specific industries, and/or at a specific occupation, but they simply do not always have the minimum qualifications required. Many of these job seekers have the aptitudes and desire to work in these jobs, but they have never been taught.

Businesses routinely see applicants for employment that have the minimum qualifications, but are not familiar with the business’ practices, methods, equipment, workflow and/or production expectations of their business.

WBT is a program that allows the business to customize a training that focuses on its business operations, its culture and workflow, and allows the business to “build” employees that will add value to their operation and be a long-term member of their team.

**Initial Outline of Program**

The program is designed so that the liaison will outreach, find businesses that are having trouble finding skilled workers for their business. The liaison provides the business with information about the WBT program and how it benefits them.

1. WBT opportunities provide job seekers a way to gain the skills needed for a sustainable job while they are employed; and
2. WBT opportunities provide businesses:
	1. A reimbursement for the extraordinary cost they incur training participants,
	2. A way to fill vacant jobs where qualified applicants are difficult to find, and
	3. A way to hire employees that are a good fit for their business needs and culture.

**Who Can Apply to become a Liaison**

1. Public agencies that run training and employment programs,
	1. *Examples could be County Welfare to Work program, Migrant Seasonal Farmworker program, Department of Rehabilitation Programs…*
2. Community-based organization that assist their customers to gain employment,
	1. *Examples could be a faith-based employment program, a homeless shelter and support program…*
3. Non-profit agency or association that assist employers to conduct profitable businesses,
	1. *Examples could be a philanthropy programs that help customers prepare for employment.*
	2. *Other examples could be chamber of commerce*
4. Educational agencies that provide placement services to students.
	1. *Examples could be adult schools, community colleges, educational school foundations,*

**Summary of the Application**

WANB is seeking applications from agencies as described in the four categories above who want to become liaisons.

As a liaison, the agency will:

1. Find businesses that are struggling to hire job seekers for open jobs,
2. Promote Work Based Training (WBT) as an option for this business, and
3. Together with the WANB Service Provider (SP), work with the business to hire and train participants for the job.

The advantage for businesses that use these WBT’s to hire employees is that the liaison and SP will screen applicants for suitability, prioritize them so the business can select and hire who they choose, train the new hire (employee) the way they deem necessary. The WBT provides full control to the business regarding how they want to train the participant, and in what skills they believe are minimum qualifications for the job.

WBT agreements culminate from a streamlined process that quickly and easily establishes the training plan. These agreements will be classified as:

1. On-the-Job Trainings (OJT),
2. customized trainings (CT), or
3. incumbent worker trainings (IWT).

*(All three types of trainings will be articulated in the same worksite agreement format, referred to in this application as the OJT agreement.)*

Additionally, as articulated throughout this application:

* The businesses maintain control over who they hire and what and how they will train the new hire.
* The Business (Employer) hires motivated and prescreened applicants who will learn the skills that the Employer wants them to have.
* The Employer will be paid (reimbursed) for the extraordinary costs it incurs in the training of the employee/participant.
* At the end of the training period, the Business/Employer will have an employee that is both trained and grateful to the Employer.
* The applicants can be from the liaison’s clients, the SP’s clients, or be from other sources including applicants that were previously not hired by the business because of skill gaps.
* By using the WBT model, the liaison agency gains value for its participants and foregoes the cost of paying for several career services and training services that will be funded by WANB’s Service Provider.
* The liaison may jointly case manage the participant with WANB’s SP and stay in the loop by providing counseling and keeping track of the progress and success.
* The liaison will be able to report program successes (i.e., placing clients into employment) as part of their program because the job seekers are co-enrolled.
* The job seekers will benefit from training that leads to sustainable jobs).
* The job seekers will be paid wages as a bona fide employee while they are trained.
* The Participants will be trained and proficient in the skills the business values and become a central part of the business’s operation. Equating to becoming a valued employee.

**What is WBTs and how are they Built**

WBTs for the purpose of this application consist of:

* + WIOA On-the-Job Training (OJT),
	+ WIOA Customized Trainings (CT),
	+ WIOA Incumbent Worker Training (IWT)
* WBT options are solutions that place “under-skilled” job seekers into jobs that will provide them with sustainable wages and benefits.
* WBTs achieve learning of critical skills that the job seeker didn’t have prior to the training.
* WBTs take far less time than a traditional classroom training programs.
* Job Seekers are employed during the training and receive a wage as they learn.

**How will Liaisons be awarded?**

WANB will select applicants that have connections to businesses, who may have existing clients who can be co-enrolled in WIOA. WANB will also select applicants who are willing to create/expand their client populations to promote this WBT program. Both WANB and the liaison agency will gain success at a fraction of the cost due to co-enrollments and cost sharing.

* WANB has resources to fund the cost paid to the employers, which will reimburse them for their extraordinary costs of training the new hires.
* The liaison agency will support the program with staff who will outreach businesses and create opportunities for the WBTs, saving on the cost of training and on other career services provided to their clients by WANB’s SP.
* WANB’s SP will use existing capacity (and existing budget) for assessments, the WIOA enrollment process, and to provide training reimbursements to the employer/trainer business.
* The Career Point network will provide wrap around basic and individualized workforce services to the job seeker and will facilitate prescreening of applicants for the hiring process.

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| *This application (dated August 30, 2024) will be open for submissions on a continuous basis. WANB will conduct an initial Applicant Coaching Meeting to answer questions to prospective submitters on September 24, 2024. To schedule attendance for this meeting and to learn about the time and location, please contact Stefan Ochoa at sochoa@workforcealliancenorthbay.org or (707) 932-5169.**Agencies are welcome and encouraged to attend this meeting to discuss the program and WBT alternatives.* *If agencies consider applying after the initial coaching meeting, WANB will have additional coaching meetings for those agencies.* *Please note, that WANB’s funding for the WBT program is limited, and award to be a Liaison does not guarantee a fixed amount of funding. WANB will provide funding when needed as available, and periodically keep liaisons aware of the remaining funding available.* Successful Liaisons will work with WANB fiscal to get a clear understanding of the funds that are earmarked. Funding is not guaranteed, and WANB may move funding from one liaison to another depending on the successes they are accruing, and based on the extent of funding WANB has to move to this initiative. |

Training Liaison Application Form

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| *Date of Application* |  |        |
| *Agency Name submitting Application* |  |        |
| * *Describe Programs your agency operates that help job seekers become prepared and find employment.*
* *If you are an association that helps businesses become successful, please explain your mission.*
 |  |       |
| *Type of Agency* |  |

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| [ ]  Government Agency | [ ]  Adult School | [ ]  Community College |
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| [ ]  Trade School | [ ]  For Profit School | [ ]  Non-Profit School |
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| [ ]  Other (describe):       |

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| *Agency Main Office Address* |  |

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| *street* |       |
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| *City* |       |
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| *Zip Code* |       |

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| *Agency Point of Contact* |  |

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| *Name and Title* |  |       |
| *email* |  |       |
| *Phone Number* |  |       |

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| *Counties Agency is Applying to Serve**(Check all applicable Counties)* |  |

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| [ ]  Napa | [ ]  Lake |

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| *Estimated Budget For Liaison activity that the Liaison will pay (this is for information purposes only)* |  |       |
| *Types of Training Agency Will Promote* |  |

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| [ ]  On-the-Job Training | [ ]  Customized Training |
| [ ]  Incumbent Worker Training | [ ]  Other Explain       |

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| Please provide a narrative of your planned approach to engage employers and create Work-Based Training opportunities.      |

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| Describe to the best of your knowledge the training your staff will need to be prepared to operate the goals of this project:       |

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| Please describe your agencies staffing that will work in this project along with the estimate amount of time (in total hours). If you have two staff with the same designation giving 100 hours each to this project, list the title once and accumulate the 200 hours for the job title. (i.e., this is position-specific and not person-specific)

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| Position Title | Accumulated Hours |
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| Describe the type of participant, clients, and/or customers your program generally serves and how the WIOA Work-Base Training program will be beneficial to your program.      |

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| Estimate the number of Work-Based Trainings your staff are planned to produce.      |

**Additional Information**

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| **Terms used in this Application:*** WIOA - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
* WANB – Workforce Alliance of the North Bay, Contractee
* WBT – Work-Based Training
* OJT – On the Job Training
* CT – Customized Training
* IWT – Incumbent Worker Training
* Subrecipient – Liaison, Awarded Agency, awarded a Training Liaison agreement from this application process
* SP – Service Provider (contracted by WANB to run employment and training program operations)
* RFA – Request for application
 |  | **Terms that are used interchangeable:*** Client, Customer, Participant, Job Seeker
* Business, Employer, Trainer
* Non-Financial Agreement, Interagency Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding
* CareerPoint, Service Center, One-Stop, Americas Job Centers of California
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***Below is a pictorial description of the expected workflow***

