

# Memorandum of Understanding

Between

The Workforce Innovation Board of WIOA Region 15

And

The United Workforce Development Board aka Career Link

Through a competitive bid process the WIB has selected Career Link to be the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I career services provider in WIOA Region 15. This MOU has an effective start date of July 1, 2017 and will end when one of the parties to this MOU terminates the agreement. Said termination will require written notification to the other party at least 30 days prior to the termination.

This MOU is a non-financial agreement. Career Link will contribute all operating costs as an in-kind contribution to the one-stop system on behalf of the Workforce Innovation Board of Region 15.

Career Link is a non-profit 401K corporation registered in the State of Illinois.

This MOU describes the services that Career Link will provide in WIOA Region 15 on behalf of the Workforce Innovation Board of Region 15. These services are listed below and reflect the services, policies and procedures that were submitted to the Board in a proposal prepared in response to a RFP released by the WIB.

## **Career Services Provider Roles and Responsibilities**

**Outreach** – Career services are advertised in the One-stop center resource room and all Affiliate offices with brochures and other handouts describing the career services available. Career service outreach to high schools in the region is achieved through presentations, in-school at-risk programs, and career fairs. Presentations to area providers, partner committees, and businesses are offered on a continuing basis. The Career Link website has served as a source of outreach in the past. Presently it is under reconstruction to accommodate all partners of the one stop. Easy access to partner services as well as career services, workshops, career fairs and other events will be advertised on the website. Illinois WorkNet is another site that is currently being used to provide career service outreach. Customers are able to locate the office nearest to them that provides career services. For dislocated workers, UI worker profiling and web blasts to laid-off workers are used to bring awareness of the services available to them. The Rapid Response team travels on-site giving presentations to workers affected by small and large layoff events. Other means of outreach are achieved through radio and television ads when needed.

**Intake** - Intakes are initially provided by the frontline staff at the one stop center and affiliate offices. Basic career services are universally accessible and are made available to all individuals seeking employment and training services. These services can be unassisted or staff assisted in the resource room or with a Career Planner.

**WIOA Eligibility Determination** - To be eligible to participate in the WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated worker programs, that is, to receive career services and to meet the eligibility requirements for training services, the individual must: 1) Be a citizen of the United States or an eligible non-citizen, and 2) Be registered with selective service (if applicable), and 3) Be 18 years of age or older. Under the WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(A), training services may be made available to employed and unemployed if they are registered and meet the following requirements:

A Career Planner determines through an interview, evaluation or assessment, and career planning the participant: (1) Is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher wages than wages from previous employment through career services; (2) Is in need of training services to obtain or retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment; and (3) Has the skills and qualifications to participate successfully in training services.

To be enrolled in a demand training program Adults must meet the general and economic criteria under WIOA. Dislocated workers must meet the WIOA criteria for Unlikely to return, Plant closure / substantial layoff, formerly self-employed or going out of business, or displaced homemaker.

**Initial Skills Assessment** – A TABE test is given

**Referral to other activities and Services** – If other services are required that are not offered by Career Link they can be referred to WIOA partner programs such as Adult Literacy training, DHS Rehabilitation, Trade Adjustment Act, Wagner-Peyser and the Veterans Programs.

**Labor Exchange Services** – Career Planners utilize the ONET system to provide up to date information on Demand occupations and industries. Labor Market Information is also provided by the Illinois Department of Employment Security and Illinois WorkNet. Partnerships with the Greater Peoria Economic Council and the Bloomington Normal Economic Development Council are able to provide more local labor market information.

**Performance Information** - As noted in the Executive Summary, Career Link has exceeded all performance measures from CETA to WIA. WIOA measures went into effect in July of 2016. The new measures were negotiated with the Department of Commerce last year. New spreadsheets have been created to track all program participants. Exits from the program will be coordinated with the Career Planners by the Systems Manager. The Department of Commerce has yet to update the measures from WIA to WIOA on the Illinois Workforce Development System. As a result, performance has not been officially tracked by the state. The updated spreadsheets created specifically for WIOA shows all current measures being exceeded.

**Supportive Service Information** - Supportive Services may be provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers who are registered in Career Planning and/or Training related activities/programs. These Supportive Services will only be provided when they are necessary to enable individuals to participate in Title I activities. Career Planning staff must determine the availability of such services through other sources first and attempt to secure funding from those sources before authorizing expenditure of WIOA funds. When other sources of funding are

identified, Career Planning staff will refer the individual to the source of that funding to obtain the needed services. Documentation of the referral as well as the response will be placed in the individual's file. When a needed service is not available or the individual does not meet the eligibility for that service, Career Link will provide funding in accordance with the following guidelines

**Assistance with Unemployment Insurance** – Customers interested in Unemployment insurance are referred to the Illinois Department of Employment Services. Customers can be assisted with registering for Illinois Job Link which is a eligibility requirement for Unemployment Insurance.

**Non-WIOA Financial Aid** – Individuals applying for PELL and MAP grants can be assisted by a Career Planner to complete the FAFSA form for Federal and State aid.

### **Individual Career Services Delivery**

**Assessment** - Individualized career services must be made available if determined to be appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment. These services include: Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and Dislocated workers which may include diagnostic testing, in-depth interviewing, and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals.

**Individual Employment Plan** - An Individual Employment Plan (IEP) is developed outlining the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals, including a list of, and information about, the eligible training providers.

**Counseling** – Individualized counseling and Career Planning are offered through the Career Planner. Group counseling depending on the topic can be offered or referred to other agencies.

**Career Planning** – Career Planning is designed to assist in helping an individual choose a career path that meets their goals. Career Planners use up to date labor market information, discuss the length of time to train, median wage earnings and whether they would allow the individual to be self-sufficient after completion of training.

**Short-term Pre-Vocational Services** – Services including: development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct skills are offered to prepare individuals for employment or training.

**Internships / Work Experience / OJT /Apprenticeships / Incumbent Worker** – Internships and paid work experiences that are linked to careers can be a component of the IEP. Internships and work experiences can be arranged within the private for profit sector. On-the-Job Training (OJT) is designed to provide an employment situation in which the employee gains training through the job. It is designed to provide opportunities for those who need an upgrade in their skills and are entering a different occupation from which they have previous experience. OJT is appropriate for those who have minimal barriers and are basically job ready. The Employer Apprenticeship Reimbursement Program is designed to provide resources to employers that are training new and existing employees through a dual education training model. It is a “earn and

learn” opportunity that provides a unique combination of structured learning with on--the--job training. The incumbent worker training program provides funding to help businesses effectively retain and keep business competitive through skills upgrades and process improvement training for existing full-time employees.

**Workforce Preparation Activities** - Activities, programs, and services can be provided through workshops initiated by our Career Planners on-site or through contracting or partnering with another agency to provide these activities. They are designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills. Obtaining these skills is necessary for successful transition into and completion of post-secondary education, training, or employment.

**Financial Literacy Services** - Services designed to support the ability of participants to create budgets, make informed financial decisions, learning how to manage credit, debt, student loans, and credit cards. Career Planners provide a general income discussion. Referrals to other agencies such as the Mid-Central Community Action Agency provide more in-depth financial planning and debt management.

**Out-of-job-area-search Assistance** – Individuals can be assisted by our Resource Room Technicians and/or our Career Planners on a variety of job search platforms. Online application assistance and resume writing including electronic resume submission are included as well.

**English Language Acquisition** – Individuals are offers assistance through interpreters through IDES and DHS. Individuals can also be referred to ESL classes at the local area colleges.

**Follow – Up Service** - Follow-up services must be and are provided, as appropriate, including counseling regarding the workplace, for adults or dislocated workers placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to twelve months after the first day of employment and /or exit from the program. While follow-up services must be made available, not all of the adults and dislocated workers who are registered and placed into unsubsidized employment will need or want such services. Also, the intensity of appropriate follow-up services may vary among different participants. Participants who have multiple employment barriers and limited work histories may be in need of significant follow-up services to ensure long-term success in the labor market.

**Describe Partnerships that will be utilized in the provision of Career Services and how they will be coordinated.**

Career Link and its Regional partners will prepare an educated and skilled workforce by aligning and integrating partner programs and services. This alignment will include programs that focus on employer needs for a skilled workforce. When possible, we will leverage funds across programs to better serve employers. The region will work to improve access to sector-based education and training services to those facing multiple barriers to employment. The region will use a diverse array of training models to achieve our goals including:

- Development of Career Pathways – that will focus on our primary targeted industry sectors of healthcare, TDL and manufacturing. We will also explore pathway creation for our secondary targeted industry sectors of information technology, finance and

business management. These pathways will contain multiple entry and exit points. This will allow individuals of varying abilities to have access to realistic pathways.

- Earn and Learn Opportunities - will be created by leveraging the linkages that economic development partners have to employers in our targeted industry sectors. Integrated business services will be developed so that employers will have an understanding of training resources from all partners.
- Talent Pipeline Solutions – reengineer the concept of education and training design. This model places the employer at the center of skill acquisition and training. The region will develop programs based on the concepts outlined in a talent pipeline approach. This includes the concept that each partner adds incremental value to the supply chain of a trained workforce.

Each partner program under WIOA will look at its own program design to see how they align with the goal of preparing an educated and skilled workforce. For programs under Title 1 and Title IV this may mean a review of the current curriculum that they fund within our targeted industry sectors. Programs under adult education may want to expand contextualization of curriculum around workforce and academic readiness. As a region partner programs will review current assessment processes and tools and develop, to the extent possible, common assessment practices that address the needs of our industry sectors of focus.

Provider Relationships with area colleges will identify the performance of high demand occupations. The occupations will be identified as to their ability meeting the employer, industry, and jobseeker needs. Colleges will submit programs to added on to the Eligible Training Provider List as approved demand career programs.

1. Work Based Learning – Earn and Learn Models

To increase the utilization of work based learning in the region we will work through existing initiatives such as the Strategic Manufacturing Group, Healthcare Exchange, Bloomington/Normal Workforce Development/Stem strategies, and Workforce Alliance addressing our target industry sectors to promote these programs to regional employers. We will also work with our business service teams to standardize the promotion of these programs when meeting with employers.

2. Sector Strategies

The Career Link plans to use Career Pathway, Talent Pipeline, Apprentice Plus, and Registered Apprentice approaches to support our sector strategies. We will inventory the current information on Career Pathways in the region and evaluate how complete they are. It is our plan to create pathways with multiple entry and exit points, so that participants with varied levels of educational attainment can enter a career pathway at an appropriate entry point to obtain the skills and credentials that they need. These career pathways will also enable participants to exit into employment that is relevant for the skills and credentials they have obtained, or continue in further education and training to

prepare for better-paying jobs that require more advanced skills. Talent Pipeline is a newer concept that puts the employer as the primary consumer of the program. Career Link will explore these models and work to develop training and introduce programs using this approach. Registered Apprenticeship relationships are being created with the Trades unions throughout the region. In addition, apprenticeship opportunities involving other identified demand industries are being explored.

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