

Workforce Solutions Program FAQ

What is Workforce Solutions?

The Workforce Solutions program is a reimbursable training grant initiative provided by the City of Chicago's Department of Planning and Development and administered by Employment and Employer Services (E&ES). The grant is designed to support Chicago employers seeking to enhance the skills of their existing workforce and/or onboard new employees through targeted training initiative.

Thanks to a combination of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and proceeds from the 2025 Housing and Economic Bond, this program is available to businesses City-wide. However, due to funding limitations there may be waitlists in some areas.

Who is eligible for Workforce Solutions?

- A company, organization or non-profit located, expanding into, or relocating to the City of Chicago.
- An active non-profit organization, such as but not limited to an industrial council, community development corporation, business/trade association, or labor organization.
- A company, organization or non-profit planning to remain operational in their community area for a term no less than three years.
- Financially sound business/organization not solely dependent on Workforce Solutions grants to stay in business.

What training activities are eligible under Workforce Solutions?

- The Workforce Solutions program can fund training for upskilling current employees, new hire on-the-job training (Chicago residents only); or a combination of both.
- Training skills obtained through the proposed training program must directly relate to job or business performance and occupations.
- Eligible costs include:
 - o Current employee upskilling (incumbent worker training)
 - o On-the-Job (OJT)/New Hire Training
 - o Training supplies and materials (items associated with direct training costs only)
 - o Customized Training Curriculum (note: curriculum becomes City of Chicago property)

What training activities are not eligible under Workforce Solutions?

- Educational degree programs, including General Equivalency Degree (GED) programs
- Consulting services not related to workforce training
- Non-job-related training
- Any expenses not agreed to at the time of contract

What types of activities does the Workforce Solutions Program fund?

Applicants have to demonstrate that the grant funding being requested is job or skill specific and will have an impact on the applicant's workforce needs. The following costs are eligible for reimbursement through the Workforce Solutions Grant Program:

- **Market Expansion** training for applicants that are obtaining new or additional product lines and machinery.
- **Staff Development** to improve specific aspects of job performance.
- **Company or Job Specific Skills based training** directly related to specific job duty/occupation, business assessments and/or business coaching and mentoring.
- **Industry Required Trainings** related to remaining competitive in the applicant's respective industry, workplace safety, and/or regulatory compliance

How much does Workforce Solutions fund?

- Up to 100% of total eligible project costs up to a standard maximum of \$250,000.
- Depending on business revenue and/or size – there will be required contribution to demonstrate a commitment to the training and to reflect a direct investment in its success.

How can a business or organization apply for Workforce Solutions Grant Program?

To learn more about the program requirements and how to apply please visit our website at: <https://www.eesforjobs.com/workforce-solutions-program/>

Contact the E&ES Workforce Solutions staff at 312-380-9933
Email: workforcesolutions@eesforjobs.com