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Overview:

The primary goal of the On-the-Job Training (OJT) program is to place participants in occupations that will enhance their prospects for long-term employment, maintain or increase their wage levels with the goal to become self-sufficient. OJT involves the acquisition of specific skills and employment competencies, through exposure in an actual work setting, to the processes, work tasks, tools and methods of a specific job or group of jobs. It is an ideal “learn as you earn” method for adults who will build on skills and knowledge already mastered while acquiring new skills. The training experience is designed around specifically identified tasks and skills required by an employee to satisfactorily complete the job.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act provides reimbursement to the employer of up to 50 percent of the wage rate of the participant, for the extraordinary costs associated with training participants, the lower productivity of the participants and additional supervision related to training. The program is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained, considering the content of the training, the prior work experience of the participant, and the service strategy of the participant, as appropriate.

Employer Outreach:

The Job Link Manager works in cooperation with the Business Services Manager and Job Link Business Representative to produce a variety of OJT marketing materials and to design an outreach strategy that could include:

- Brochures: One for Employer Outreach and One for Job Seeker Outreach
- Website link and Overview of OJT Program
- News releases for print and broadcast media announcing OJT program
 - Release in multiple print vehicles including Spanish papers
- Flyers
- OJT announcement on marquee in Job Link Resource Center
- Email distribution of OJT activities and opportunities

Marketing materials will be made available to Job Link staff for employer visits and in the Resource Center for job seeking customers. In addition, materials will be displayed off site when appropriate at chamber events, job fairs and at other events/programs sponsored either by Job Link or those events that are attended by Job Link staff.

The JOB LINK BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE will ensure employers are aware of the OJT program through presentations of promotional literature at company visits and during other points of contact such as business expos, chamber of commerce events, etc. When an employer expresses an interest in OJT participation, the Job Link Business Representative will get preliminary information from the business about the job and then connect the business with the OJT Coordinator to conduct an eligibility assessment using a Pre-Screening Employer Eligibility Questionnaire (HSD1677) (details in Employer Eligibility, pg. 3).

If the employer is found eligible, the OJT Coordinator will review and discuss program criteria, performance goals and contractual procedures. The OJT Coordinator will accept a job description for the proposed OJT position. The OJT Coordinator will review the job description to identify the baseline entry level criteria necessary for a prospective participant and route information to Counselor's to begin candidate search process.

Employer Eligibility:

Potential eligible employers able to participate in OJT contracting include:

- Private for-profit businesses
- Private non-profit organizations, and
- Public sector employers.

Since OJT is a "hire first" program, the participant becomes an employee of the company at the start of the training program and the employer is required to certify their intention to retain the trainee after the subsidized training period, based upon the acceptable performance of the trainee.

An employer will ***NOT*** be eligible to receive OJT reimbursements if:

- a) The employer has not completed a Pre-Screening Employer Eligibility Questionnaire (HSD1677).
- b) The employer has any other individual "on layoff", involved in a work stoppage or on strike from the same or substantially equivalent position.
- c) The OJT would infringe upon the promotion of or displacement of any currently employed worker or a reduction in their hours.
- d) The same or a substantially equivalent position is open or vacant due to a hiring freeze.
- e) These funds would be used to assist in relocating establishments or parts thereof from one area to another unless it has been determined that the relocation resulted in no employee losing his or her job at the original location.
 - i. If relocation has resulted in any employee losing his or her jobs at the original location, the company will be eligible for OJT after operating at their current location for 120 days.
- f) The positions are for seasonal employment.
- g) The employer is a private for-profit employment agency, i.e. temporary employment agency, employee leasing firm or staffing agency.
- h) The position is not full time, i.e. minimum of 32 hours per week. For jobs less than 32 hours per week, the counselor's supervisor must approve the contract and such approval must be noted in participant's file. In no event shall an OJT contract be written for jobs which provide less than 20 hours per week.
- i) The employer (owner) is a relative of the OJT participant requesting placement.

In addition:

- j) OJT is not an entitlement program for employers. The decision to enter into an OJT contract with an employer is at the discretion of Job Link. Employers who have a history of not continuing employment of OJT participants after the contract is completed will not be considered for additional OJT contracts.
- k) Reimbursements for OJT are not intended to be wage subsidies to employers; rather they are intended for extraordinary cost of training.

Federal Guidelines:

- a) OJT participants must receive equal pay and benefits as other employees with equivalent job responsibilities and duties.
 - a. Employers are required to pay OJT participants for holidays, vacation, overtime, and/or sick leave if they are provided to similarly situated employees. Job Link will not reimburse the employer for this time. OJT reimbursement is for training, it cannot be provided for time that is not spent in training.

Local Guidelines:

- a) No individual OJT contract shall exceed a total cost of \$10,000.
- b) A participant shall be potentially eligible for coinciding OJT/Individual Training Account (ITA) funding if supplemental training in job-specific skills is needed and is not able to be provided by the employer.
- c) If an OJT is used in combination with an ITA or a previous OJT, the sum of all training costs and supportive services shall not exceed \$15,000 per participant (\$10,000 OJT CAP + \$5,000 ITA CAP).
- d) The length of training for the OJT shall not exceed 6 months.
- e) OJT must benefit Sonoma County, therefore:
 - i. The client must be a resident of Sonoma County, OR
 - ii. The employer must be located in Sonoma County.
- f) Self-sufficiency is determined using the Federal Poverty Level and the Lower Living Standard Income Level.

Participant Eligibility:

A participant may be considered for the OJT program only after the individual has met WIOA eligibility requirements, received an assessment, has been determined job ready (**Job Readiness Assessment HSD1566**), and for whom an OJT placement is appropriate based upon the skill requirements of the occupation; the academic and occupational skill level of the participant; the participant's prior work history and experience; and the participant's level of commitment to program services and likeliness to succeed.

Employed Participants:

When funds are available, an OJT contract may be written for eligible employed workers when:

- a) They are not earning a self-sufficiency wage.
- b) The OJT relates to the introduction of new technologies, new production or services procedures, upgrading to new jobs that require additional skills, workplace literacy, or other appropriate purposes.

OJT Referral Process:

Counselor Identified OJT:

An individual may be considered for the OJT program when they meet the Participant Eligibility requirements, and determined by an Employment & Training Counselor (ETC) that they will benefit from the program. Documentation of a participant's appropriateness for OJT must be in their case file.

The ETC will take the following steps for a potential OJT participant:

Step 1: ETC will do the following:

- a. Submit completed WIOA Application to Employment and Training Program Coordinator (ETPC) for eligibility review.
- b. ETPC will enroll the client
- c. ETC will assign case to his/her caseload.

Step 2: ETC identifies potential OJT participant during initial Job Search appointment, case management or ongoing intensive Job Search services.

- a. Consideration of the following:
 - i. Skill requirements of the desired occupation.
 - ii. Academic and occupational skill level of the client.
 - iii. Prior work experience.
 - iv. Individuals' ability to succeed.
- b. ETC reviews the benefit of program with client, if all agree OJT is appropriate program continue to step 2.

Step 3: ETC will complete a Job Search Assessment (if not previously done) and **Job Readiness Assessment** (HSD1566).

- a. If not Job Ready, inform client of areas of concern and steps to improve.
 - i. Client can request reassessment once ETC confirms items have been addressed.
 - ii. Enter 205 activity code in CalJOBS before entering 300 training code
- b. If Job Ready proceed to Step 3

Step 4: After Step 1 – 3, If Job Ready, begin OJT process

- a. If not job ready, direct client on how to continue using Career Services for their job search needs.
- b. If job ready, proceed to Step 4

STEP 5: ETC will complete Internal OJT Referral form and submit the request for OJT program participation to the OJT Coordinator. The documentation of a participant's appropriateness for OJT must be in the case note prior to submitting to OJT Coordinator.

- a. ETC and ETPC Business Services will determine eligibility.

- b. If not approved, ETC will review issues with OJT Coordinator and discuss options.
- c. If approved, participants with an OJT placement will remain on the referring ETC's caseload for retention and follow-up services.

Partner Referred or Client Self-Identified OJT:

A Job Link partner agency may refer an individual for the program or an individual may request to be an OJT participant with intent to fill a specific posted OJT placement. OJT Coordinator will make the determination if client meets the Participant Eligibility requirements. A self-identified individual will go through the regular eligibility process with an ETC.

Partner Referred Referral Steps:

Step 1: Individual is referred to Sonoma Job Link OJT program in the following ways:

- a) Individual expresses an interest in participating in the OJT program determining it is the ideal method to build on their current skills and knowledge, Or
- b) Individual is referred by a partner agency, using **OJT Partner Referral** form, for the OJT program (typically the Department of Rehabilitation or Employment Development Department), Or,
- c) Individual is referred by SonomaWorks ETC using the **Internal OJT Referral** form, OR
- d) Partner refers the individual through discussions with the ETPC Business Services.

Step 2: OJT Coordinator will do the following:

1. Complete the participant eligibility requirement and assessment for the partner referred client to determine eligibility and appropriateness for the OJT program.
 - a. If the individual meets the requirements, the OJT coordinator will pass the client on to an ETC to complete WIOA eligibility
 - i. The ETC will work with the OJT coordinator to identify an appropriate placement for the client based on their and an employer's needs along with the client's ability to gain needed job skills.
2. If the client self-identifies the ETC will determine eligibility and appropriateness for the OJT program.
 - a. The ETC will inform the OJT coordinator to collaborate on finding an appropriate placement.
 - b. Enter the 205 Activity code in CalJOBS before entering 301 training code.
3. Inform partner agency of eligibility and assessment determination.
 - a. If not Job Ready, Partner will inform client of areas of concern and steps to improve. (Client can request reassessment once items have been addressed.)
4. SonomaWORKS ETC will use the internal **OJT Referral Form** to refer client to OJT. Participant will not be required to attend Job Link Orientation.
5. Submit completed WIOA Application to Job Link ETPC for eligibility review.
 - a. ETPC will enroll the client.
6. Assign case to their CalJOBS caseload.
 - a. Participants with an OJT placement will remain on the OJT Coordinator's caseload for retention and follow-up services.

Employer Identified/Reverse Referral:

An individual referred to Job Link by an employer may be considered for OJT with that employer only after the individual has met the Participant Eligibility requirements. The documentation of a participant's appropriateness for OJT is required prior to employment start date.

Employer Referred Referral Steps:

Step 1: An employer expresses an interest in referring a potential hire to participate in the OJT program. The employer will be given the contact information for the OJT Coordinator.

Step 2: The OJT Coordinator will do the following:

- a) Discuss the OJT program with the employer to determine if the employer is an appropriate OJT employer, and
- b) Complete the **OJT Pre-Screening** form (HSD1677).
- c) Contacts the potential hire through a phone call or email to provide general information on the OJT program.
- d) Complete an eligibility interview to determine if the participant meets WIOA eligibility requirements.
- e) Contact and inform employer of eligibility determination.
 - i. If eligible, OJT Coordinator will submit completed WIOA Application to Job Link Employment and Training Program Coordinator for eligibility review.
 - i. The ETPC will enroll the participant.
 - ii. The OJT Coordinator will assign case to their CalJOBS caseload. Participants with an OJT placement will remain on the OJT Coordinator's caseload for retention and follow-up services.

Contract:

The OJT Coordinator will prepare and review the **OJT Worksite Agreement** (HSD1589) with the eligible employer. It will contain:

- Employer Information
- Participant Information
- Program Duration
- Training Description
- Training Cost Reimbursement Schedule
- Provisions, Assurances and Certifications
- W-9

The OJT Coordinator will send employer the **OJT Welcome Letter** (HSD1587), detailing the following invoicing process:

- a. On a monthly basis, the employer shall submit a complete and accurate Sonoma County Human Services Department **OJT Reimbursement Invoice** (HSD1570), on or before the tenth working day following the end of the previous month. (See OJT Invoice Processing for more information)
 - i. Copies of all supporting documentation (i.e.: payroll registers, pay stubs, and timesheets) must be attached.
- b. The OJT Coordinator will do the following:
 - i. Review the documentation for accuracy by checking the recorded hours against the pay stubs.
 - ii. After signing off

1. Submit the invoices to the HSA, who does the following:
 - a. Updates TED
 - b. Sends to fiscal
 - c. Scans to OnBase
2. Update the ITA and OJT database
3. Forward to the fiscal department for payment.

Contract Modification:

OJT enrollments resulting in a change in the terms of the contract require a contract modification. Changes could consist of the following:

- Change in acquired skills
- Wage increase (participant gets a raise)
- Extended training hours
- Length of training

A completed Request for **OJT Worksite Agreement Amendment** (HSD1588) must be completed and signed off by the OJT Coordinator or Job Link Supervisor.

Monitoring:

On-site monitoring will be conducted at least once during the course of the OJT Worksite Agreement (within the first quarter of contract if possible) to determine compliance with WIOA and progress toward completion of training.

The Monitoring Guide (HSD1569) will be completed for all OJT Worksite Agreements.

If terms and conditions of the Agreement are not being met, an effort should be made to resolve the issue at the time of the on-site monitoring. If violations of law are taking place, steps to terminate the OJT Worksite Agreement will be implemented immediately.

Tools:

Tools may be purchased for trainee in order to enter into an OJT placement when:

- The tools are a specific requirement of the occupation to be trained in and will enhance the training potential of the trainee.
- The employer does not normally provide workers tools for new hires/incumbent.
- Trainee does not possess the tools to be purchased.
- Trainee cannot participate in the OJT without the purchase of these tools.

Tools are the property of Sonoma County Job Link during OJT training; and upon successful completion of the OJT, the tools purchased will become the property of the trainee.

A tool request will be submitted in accordance with Supportive Services Policy. In addition, an itemized list of tools with unit price and total cost will be attached to the Supportive Services Request Form (HSD 1538) as explained in the policy. The sum of all training costs and supportive services shall not exceed \$10,000 per participant.

Question & Answers:

1. Are there particular intensive services an individual must receive before OJT?
 - a. Yes, at a minimum, an individual must receive at least one intensive service, such as individual counseling and career planning which determines a need for OJT unless an employer referred participant has been deemed eligible by the employer and OJT Coordinator completing the eligibility process. If referred by an employer and not completing any assessments or services, the employer must sign the acknowledgement of Understanding form.

2. How long must an individual participant be in intensive service before entering the OJT program?
 - a. There is no Federally-required minimum time period for participation in intensive services before receiving training services. The period of time an individual spends in intensive services should be sufficient to prepare the individual for training or employment.

3. Can a previous ITA client participate in the OJT program?
 - a. Yes: On 2/11/15 the Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) approved increased flexibility allowing clients to potentially utilize the maximum funds for an Individual Training Accounts and On-the-Job Training if determined necessary to retain or obtain employment. Previously funded clients must meet all other eligibility and documentation requirements at the time of requesting (see the Previously Funded Clients Policy for details.)

4. When and to whom do we give out OJT Coordinator phone number?
 - a. Only employer's referring a potential hire to participate in the OJT program may be given the OJT Coordinator contact information (see OJT Referral Processes - Employer Identified/Reverse Referral section step 1, for details).

5. To whom should the front desk route calls asking about OJT information?
 - a. Employers should be referred to Business Services Team or OJT Coordinator.
 - b. Job Seekers should be referred to the Business Services Team or OJT Coordinator.

6. How do we make sure that any employer we talk to understands how this process works?

a. Employers interested in the OJT program review the general details with the Business Services Representative; additionally, they are given the HSD1677 **Pre-Screening Employer Eligibility Questionnaire**.

References:

WIOA Section 101(31) (B)
WIOA Section 134(d)(4)(A)(i)
Title 20 CFR 663.240
Title 20 CFR 663.250
Title 20 CFR 663.700
Title 20 CFR 663.705
Title 20 CFR 663.710
Title 20 CFR 667.268
Title 20 CFR 667.272

Supplemental Documents:

- HSD 1677 Pre-Screening Employer Eligibility Questionnaire
- Job Readiness Assessment
- Job Search Plan
- OJT Referral Form
- OJT Partner Referral Form
- OJT Participant Expectations
- HSD1589 OJT Worksite Agreement
- HSD1570 OJT Reimbursement Invoice
- HSD1587 OJT Welcome Letter
- HSD1588 OJT Worksite Agreement Amendment
- HSD1569 OJT Monitor Guide
- Employer Referral Acknowledgement