



On-the-job training

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On-the-job training covers partial wages while participants' learn the job

More than 400 received on-the-job training in FY 2007-08

Goal is long-term employment and wage increases

On-the-job training is a good way for many people to learn new skills while earning a wage and benefits. But what's in it for employers? The On-the-Job Training (OJT) Program run by the Employment Security Department reimburses employers for part of each participating employee's wages during the training period, while the business has the benefit of a full-time employee.

The Employment Security Department offers OJT to eligible individuals through two federally funded programs: the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and WorkFirst (welfare-to-work). Military veterans also have access to OJT opportunities via federal and state veterans programs. These services are available at local WorkSource offices, the state's one-stop career-services system.

In the July 2007-June 2008 fiscal year, more than 400 Washington residents participated in these programs.

WIA on-the-job training

WIA provides funding for employment and training activities that help individuals gain or maintain employment and helps employers find the skilled workers they need. The goal of OJT offered through WIA is to lead an individual to long-term employment and advancement with the employer who provides the training.

Under WIA, on-the-job training is provided under a contract with an employer in the public, non-profit or private sectors. An employer hires an eligible WIA participant and provides occupational skill training on the job, in the classroom, or both. The participant receives wages and benefits equal to those performing the same or similar work for the employer. To compensate for the costs of providing the training, the employer is reimbursed for up to 50 percent of the wages paid to the employee. Training and reimbursement levels are limited to a pre-set period of time, during which it is expected that the participant can gain the necessary skills to do the job.

To qualify for OJT, an individual must be having trouble finding a job for which he/she is qualified and the employer must be having a hard time finding applicants who are fully qualified. On-the-job training also may be appropriate for an employed individual who needs additional training to earn a self-sufficient wage. WIA OJT was provided to 333 people in Washington from July 2007 through June 2008.

WorkFirst on-the-job training

WorkFirst is Washington's welfare-reform program designed to help low-income parents prepare for and go to work. Under WorkFirst, OJT offers 32 to 40 hours per week of subsidized employment for parents receiving a Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) grant. The training is provided by an employer at the employer's place of business.

On-the-job training can help welfare clients gain skills and experience

Private companies and non-profit organizations are eligible to participate in WorkFirst OJT. Public agencies also are eligible as long as they are not providing any services directly to the parent or family.

The goals of on-the-job training offered through WorkFirst are to enable employed parents to get off of welfare, to place participants in full-time jobs, and to help participants obtain job skills that allow them to increase their wages over time.

WorkFirst allows full-time OJT to help people learn skills needed to obtain a job or to take on new job duties that will lead to a raise. WorkFirst OJT also may be combined with classroom training. Wages start at a minimum of \$9 per hour. Employers can be reimbursed for up to 50 percent of the total gross wages for regular hours of work and 100 percent of the initial starting wage for pre-approved release time for classroom or skills training provided by someone other than the employer.

Ninety-five WorkFirst clients participated in OJT from July 2007 through June 2008.

Veterans can use on-the-job training to learn how to apply military skills to civilian jobs

Other on-the-job training opportunities

WorkSource also can place military veterans into OJT using such programs as the Veterans Administration's Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Program and the Washington Department of Veteran Affairs' Veteran Innovations Program. Both programs help veterans apply skills that they gained in military service to civilian jobs. Veterans that qualify for these programs also are eligible for WIA and WorkFirst on-the-job training programs.

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