



**2019 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)**  
for  
**Southwestern Connecticut American Job Center**  
**One Stop Operator and Provider**

**RELEASE DATE:** **Tuesday, April 9, 2019**

**BIDDER'S CONFERENCE CALL:** **Wednesday, April 17, 2019**  
**11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. EST**

*Call in information will be provided to organizations that submit a letter of intent.*

**LETTER OF INTENT:** **Due by 4 p.m. EST**  
**Monday, April 15, 2019**

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE:** **12:00 p.m. (Noon) EST**  
**Wednesday, May 15, 2019**

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## INTRODUCTION

Under the provisions of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA), P.L. 113-128, the Governor of the State of Connecticut has designated The WorkPlace to serve as the Workforce Development Board (WDB) to serve the municipalities of the Bridgeport-Norwalk-Stamford-Valley (BNSV) service delivery area (SDA) of Southwestern Connecticut. As such, The WorkPlace serves as the local WIOA administrative entity for all workforce development activities pursuant to the legislation for the following twenty (20) municipalities:

*Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Bridgeport, Darien, Derby, Easton, Fairfield, Greenwich, Monroe, New Canaan, Norwalk, Oxford, Seymour, Shelton, Stamford, Stratford, Trumbull, Westport, Weston and Wilton.*

The WorkPlace and its partners provide a comprehensive, integrated workforce development system that utilizes local American Job Centers (AJCs) as the primary vehicles for delivering workforce services to the public. Funding for these services is available under WIOA. President Barack Obama signed WIOA into law on July 22, 2014. WIOA replaces the Workforce Investment Act of 1988 and became effective on July 1, 2015. Proposals must comply with the performance standards and requirements set out in WIOA as well as federal regulations issued by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). A link to the full text of WIOA can be located here: <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>.

There are four (4) geographically dispersed AJCs in the BSNV service delivery area. These centers are currently located at the following locations:

<b>Bridgeport</b>	<b>Stamford</b>	<b>Derby</b>	<b>Ansonia</b>
350 Fairfield Avenue Bridgeport, CT 06604	141 Franklin Street Stamford, CT 06901	33 Elizabeth Street Derby, CT 06418	4 Fourth Street Ansonia, CT 06401

The WorkPlace is soliciting competitive proposals from qualified organizations with the expertise and capacity to effectively **operate and deliver services** throughout the Southwestern Connecticut AJC (SWCT AJC) System. The selected proposer shall, at a minimum:

1. Coordinate and report on the service delivery of participating One-Stop partners and serve as the service provider at the AJCs as agreed upon in the MOU.
2. Convene partners of the SWCT AJC System.
3. Draft agenda and record Partner meeting minutes for submission to The WorkPlace.
4. Provide updates on the coordination of services of all One-Stop partners and identify areas of improvement.
5. Provide quarterly updates on Partner MOU deliverables.
6. Draft agenda and provide minutes to Partners for each meeting.
7. Ensure American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and WIOA section 188 compliance, including adequate, up-to-date signage related to accessibility of space and programs in SWCT AJC locations.
8. Report annually to The WorkPlace on ADA and WIOA section 188 compliance.

9. Provide monthly reports to The WorkPlace.
10. Work with The WorkPlace as required for specific projects, initiatives and obtaining data.
11. Manage the flow of customers and deliver services in accordance with WIOA Title I, Jobs First Employment Services (JFES), state and federal regulations, and associated policies.
12. Develop and implement a fully integrated service strategy that is customer driven and leads to the successful acquisition of individual career/employment goals.
13. Develop and implement a strategy that integrates adult education with occupational education and training as well as development of career pathways options for customers.
14. Create a Business Services model that is fully integrated with the State of Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL), is demand driven and modeled to meet the needs of the employer.
15. Develop a plan to achieve the Southwestern Connecticut negotiated performance measures established by USDOL, CTDOL, and The WorkPlace.
16. Ensure the effective delivery of the Jobs First Employment Services (JFES) program in Southwestern Connecticut.

## **SECTION I – GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **A. Levels of Service**

The SWCT AJC will offer career and training services to eligible adult and dislocated workers. CTDOL delivers services funded by the Wagner-Peyser Act. The Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 established a nationwide system of public employment offices known as the Employment Service. The Act was amended in 1998 to integrate Employment Service into the One-Stop (AJC) services delivery system. Under the Wagner-Peyser Act, unemployed individuals and other job seekers obtain job search, assessment, and career guidance services to support them in obtaining and retaining employment. These services are provided in the SWCT SDA by CTDOL staff.

Services provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act may not be duplicated. Career and training services delivered in all four SWCT AJCs should be consistent, stable and cost effective. While the number of customers who will access the SWCT AJC for the contract period is unknown, information is available from past experience. Nearly thirty thousand (30,000) customers accessed through the SWCT AJC during the last program year (July 2018 through June 2019 which includes WIOA, JFES and WP).

### **B. Administrative Requirements**

The SWCT AJC Operator/Provider shall work cooperatively with The WorkPlace and workforce development programs funded by The WorkPlace and its partners, including any Federal, State or Public/Private Foundations. They shall also comply with any guidelines concerning case management issued by The WorkPlace, USDOL or CTDOL.

The SWCT AJC Operator/Provider shall maintain the confidentiality of all information regarding customers and their families. The SWCT AJC Operator/Provider shall secure a signed release of information for specific workforce development services before releasing such information and shall do so only where necessary to secure required services for the customer.

Customer files shall be maintained in an orderly, confidential and accessible manner, and must be available to authorized USDOL, CTDOL and The WorkPlace staff for the purposes of monitoring, auditing and data validation.

The SWCT AJC Operator/Provider's staff shall conduct reviews of the following: customer files, WIOA/JFES orientation, assessments, employment plan development, any applicable Management Information System utilization, referrals and follow-up tracking. These reviews shall be conducted, at a minimum, on a quarterly basis. Where it is observed that services are not in compliance with contract requirements or best practices, the Operator/Provider shall deliver staff training and issue written directives to staff to effectively address areas of concern. The WorkPlace management shall be advised of any trainings and written directives issued to staff. The Operator/Provider shall document the outcomes of the quarterly reviews as well as any subsequent trainings and directives.

The SWCT AJC Operator/Provider shall submit monthly reports to The WorkPlace by the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day of the month for the previous month's activities, in a manner prescribes by The WorkPlace.

### **C. Estimated Available Funds**

The WorkPlace utilizes multiple funding sources to support SWCT AJC operations. Funds for contractor services described in this RFP will be from the Southwest Region's allocation of federal WIOA funding – WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker and the Southwestern CT JFES allocation.

Two million, one hundred thousand dollars (\$2.1 million) is available to fund the activities of this RFP for initial time period of July 1, 2019 and ending on June 30, 2020. This budget is intended as a guideline for proposers and is subject to change based upon final 2019/2020 State and Federal allocations.

### **D. Period of Performance**

Any contract awarded as a result of this RFP shall be for a twelve (12) month period, commencing on July 1, 2019 and ending on June 30, 2020. The WorkPlace shall have the option, at its sole and absolute discretion, to renew the contract for two (2) additional terms not exceeding thirty-six (36) months. This option may be invoked by The WorkPlace based upon the quality of service provided, the availability of funds and other relevant criteria as determined by The WorkPlace.

### **E. Eligible Proposers**

All public or private not-for-profit corporations, local education agencies, governmental units, public agencies, or private-for-profit corporations properly organized in accordance with State and Federal law and in business for at least five (5) years may submit a proposal for funding. Minority and women-owned and operated businesses are encouraged to submit a proposal.

Per 2 CFR §25.200, all proposers are required to:

1. Be registered with the System of Award Management (SAM) prior to the submission of a proposal.
2. Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which a proposal is under consideration or, if selected, at all times during the contract period.
3. Provide its unique entity identification in the proposal.

Each proposer is advised that The WorkPlace shall hold the awardee responsible and accountable for effectively and efficiently managing and delivering the services and activities described in this RFP while providing excellent customer service and achieving the contracted performance outcomes.

All organizations with the knowledge, experience and capacity to provide services throughout the SWCT SDA as described in this RFP are encouraged to apply. It is the intention of The WorkPlace to contract with one SWCT AJC Operator/Provider. The selected proposer shall serve the entire

region and must deploy staff appropriately to provide services in Bridgeport, Stamford, Derby, and Ansonia. To ensure neutral brokerage of services, the SWCT AJC Operator/Provider shall provide no occupational skills training services to adults and dislocated workers in the region.

#### **F. Ineligible Proposers**

An organization shall not be considered if it:

- It is currently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation by an action of any governmental agency;
- It owes delinquent Federal and/or State taxes;
- It owes delinquent Unemployment Insurance taxes;
- It has existing contracts with any governmental entity in Connecticut that are suspended or otherwise not in good standing;
- It had previous contracts with any governmental entity in Connecticut terminated for cause;
- It has not complied with an official order of any agency of the State of Connecticut or the USDOL to repay disallowed costs incurred during its conduct of projects or services.

The WorkPlace, in its discretion, may determine there is good and just cause not to consider the proposer.



## SECTION II – WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

### A. Overview

WIOA has six main purposes:

1. Increasing access to and opportunities for the employment, education, training, and support services for individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment;
2. Supporting the alignment of workforce investment, education, and economic development systems in support of a comprehensive, accessible, and high-quality workforce development system;
3. Improving the quality and labor market relevance of workforce investment, education, and economic development efforts;
4. Promoting improvement in the structure and delivery of services;
5. Increasing the prosperity of workers and employers; and
6. Providing workforce development activities that increase employment, retention, and earnings of customers and that increase post-secondary credential attainment and as a result, improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, increase economic self-sufficiency, meet skill requirements of employers, and enhance productivity and competitiveness of the nation.

WIOA reaffirms the role of the AJC delivery system as the cornerstone of the public workforce development system, and enhances and increases coordination among several key employment, education, and training programs. This delivery system is the mechanism through which programs and services are integrated. WIOA eliminates the sequencing of core, intensive and training services established under WIA. WIOA establishes two levels of employment and training services for adults and dislocated workers: career services (WIOA §134 (c)(2)) and training services (WIOA §134(c)(3)). Career services for adults and dislocated workers must be made available in at least one comprehensive AJC in each area. Training services are provided to eligible individuals to enter the workforce and retain employment. Individuals determined to be in need of training may be placed in training services regardless of whether the individual received career services.

WIOA places a strong emphasis on the integration of career pathways within employment and training services for adults and dislocated workers. Career pathways programs provide a clear sequence of education courses and credentials that meet the skill needs of high-demand industries. Under §3(7) of WIOA, career pathway is defined as, a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that:

1. Aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
2. Prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options;
3. Includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;

4. Includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
5. Organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
6. Enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and
7. Helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

## **B. Mandated One-Stop Partners**

WIOA identifies a number of mandatory AJC partners. These required partners must make services accessible to customers through the AJC. Required partners and services include:

- Connecticut Department of Labor
  - Wagner-Peyser
  - Trade Act
  - Unemployment Compensation
  - Veteran Services
- State Department of Education
  - Adult Education and Literacy Programs
- State Department of Rehabilitation Services
  - Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)
  - Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB)
  - Department of Aging
    - Title V, Older Americans Act
- Department of Social Services
  - TANF
- Post-secondary vocational education under Carl Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act
- Community Service Block Grant
- Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Second Chance Act
- Title IV of Social Security Act

## **SECTION III – AJC OPERATOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. Overview**

The WorkPlace defines the role of the One-Stop Operator as one entity that will coordinate the service delivery of the One-Stop partners.

### **B. Responsibilities**

The SWCT AJC Operator, in collaboration with The WorkPlace and system partners, is responsible for the following, at a minimum:

- Working with WorkPlace staff to conduct meetings with stakeholders to negotiate service delivery commitments.
- Convening meetings to build upon current relationships between and among partners and streamline processes to create efficiencies and increase effectiveness.
- Documenting the objectives, delivery model, service offerings and eligibility requirements of all participating required partners.
- Establishing a process that defines how the One-Stop partners will coordinate services to referred customers, share data and define common metrics to track the success of the efforts of the One-Stop delivery system.
- Establishing a process between partners to articulate continuous improvement principles of plan, do, check, and adjust for the joint efforts identified.
- Participating in and coordinating the SWCT AJC partner meetings relating to program delivery needs and design to ensure the operational delivery of identified strategies.
- Producing monthly reports to include actions taken with respect to each of the deliverables highlighting the metrics, accomplishments, challenges using the prescribed WorkPlace reporting template.
- Meeting with a designee of The WorkPlace to review activities, plan efforts, and coordinate operational activities.
- Coordinate front desk services at all AJC office locations
- Provide Information Technology support to staff and partners in the AJC's

## **SECTION IV – AJC PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. Overview**

WIOA requires Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) to procure an entity to manage and deliver direct services in AJCs. The primary role of SWCT AJC Provider is to ensure that services provided through the centers meet the needs of customers (business and job seeker) in an efficient and effective manner.

The SWCT AJC Provider is responsible for managing and coordinating service delivery for the SWCT AJC. The core hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., although we are seeking nontraditional hours of services under this proposal.

The SWCT AJC Provider shall create a seamless system of services to provide workforce development, economic development, to meet the needs of businesses and job seekers in the SWCT SDA. The WorkPlace staff will work with the SWCT AJC Provider to effectively implement an integrated SWCT AJC system for businesses and job seekers.

As the sole organization operating career centers for the SWCT AJC, the SWCT AJC Provider must ensure that each SWCT AJC:

- Delivers quality and timely career services on a daily basis.
- Provides information and access to training services.
- Provides information and access to programs and activities carried out by the SW AJC partners as described in the Memorandum of Understanding between The WorkPlace and the partners.
- Provides coordination and access to labor market data, information and all job search, placement, recruitment, and other labor exchange services authorized by Wagner-Peyser (USDOL) which will be co-located at the Bridgeport SWCT AJC.
- Delivers services and outreach materials that are compliant with ADA and Equal Opportunity (EO) guidelines.

To accomplish the above responsibilities the selected proposer shall at a minimum:

1. Demonstrate equitable access to individuals with limited English, reading or writing proficiency;
2. Assess and address the need for additional basic literacy, ESL services and coordinate the provision of those services with partner and community-based entities;
3. Create and manage a collaborative work environment within SWCT AJC system;
4. Ensure that WIOA and JFES performance measures are met;
5. Develop, coordinate and ensure cross training of staff on SWCT AJC resources and obtain input from staff to improve service delivery process;
6. Make services broadly available to customers during times that meet the needs of the majority of customers;

7. Create a Business Services model that is fully integrated with CTDOL, demand driven, and modeled to meet the needs of the employer;
8. Evaluate and improve satellite offices of the SWCT AJC delivery system to be inclusive of increasing the use of the system by people with disabilities and other targeted populations- including, but not limited to veterans and ex-offenders;
9. Collaboratively participate with CTDOL to provide rapid response services to employers;
10. Establish a continuous improvement process that links all SWCT AJC resources which should result in recommending new strategies and evaluation tools to ensure cutting edge initiatives are standard with the SWCT AJC;
11. Provide outreach to meet the needs of business community.

The following activities are intended to be included among those provided by the SW AJC Provider: eligibility, assessment, basic skills testing, case management, career exploration, career information, career pathways, access to computer labs, referral to appropriate training, focus groups, job clubs, job development, business services, job fairs, job placement services, career pathways, referral, tracking and rapid response services.

## **B. Eligibility**

The SWCT AJC Provider is responsible for determining, verifying, and certifying WIOA eligibility for each Adult or Dislocated Worker customer by obtaining acceptable records/documents to verify each required eligibility item established under the law. The SWCT AJC Provider shall make eligibility determinations in accordance with federal and state laws, regulations and guidance, and local policy regarding priority of service.

The Provider must insure that an individual is eligible to receive WIOA-funded services prior to providing any WIOA-funded services or obligating/paying any expenses on the individual's behalf. Additionally, the selected SWCT AJC Provider shall continue services with currently enrolled WIOA Adults and Dislocated Workers.

For the full definitions on WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker eligibility Criteria please use the following link:  
<http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/wia/WIOAPolicyManual03192019.pdf>

## **C. Career Services**

Pursuant to WIOA §134 (c)(2), career services must be made available to adults and dislocated workers through the AJC in each SDA. There are three (3) types of career services: basic career services, individualized career services, and follow-up services. These services can be provided in any order; there is no sequence requirement for these services.

### **Basic Career Services**

Basic career services must be made available and, at minimum, must include the following:

1. WIOA eligibility determination.
2. Outreach/intake.

3. Orientation to information and other services available through the SWCT AJC system.
4. Initial assessment of skill levels, including literacy, numeracy, and English Language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skill gaps), and supportive service needs.
5. Labor exchange services including:
  - a. Job search and placement assistance, and when needed by an individual, career counseling including provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations and provision of information on nontraditional employment; and
  - b. Appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including information and referrals to specialized business services other than those traditionally offered through the SWCT AJC delivery system.
6. Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the SWCT AJC delivery system and, when appropriate, other workforce development programs.
7. Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including:
  - a. Job vacancy listings in labor market areas;
  - b. Information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed; and
  - c. Information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for those jobs.
8. Provision of information, in usable and understandable formats and languages, relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including:
  - a. Child care;
  - b. Child support; and
  - c. Medical or child health assistance available through the State's Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program, benefits under SNAP, assistance through the earned income tax credit, and assistance under a State program for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and other supportive services and transportation provided through that program.
9. Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs (non-WIOA).

### **Individualized Career Services**

Customers may receive individualized career services if determined appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment. These services must be made available in all AJCs. Per §134(c)(2)(A)(xii) of WIOA, individualized career services include the following:

1. Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include:

- a. Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools, and
  - b. In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals.
2. Development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the customer to achieve the employment goals, including a list of, and information about, the eligible training provider.
3. Group counseling.
4. Individual counseling.
5. Career planning.
6. Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training.
7. Internships and paid or unpaid work experiences that are linked to careers; internships and work experiences may be arranged within the private for-profit sector, the non-profit sector, or the public sector.
8. Workforce preparation activities, including programs or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of post-secondary education, or training, or employment.
9. Financial literacy services, including services which
  - a. Support the ability of customers to create budgets, initiate checking and savings accounts at banks, and make informed financial decisions;
  - b. Support customers in learning, credit, debt, including student loans, consumer credit, and credit cards;
  - c. Teach customers about the significance of credit reports and credit scores, what their rights are regarding their credit and financial information, how to determine the accuracy of a credit report and how to correct inaccuracies, and how to improve or maintain good credit;
  - d. Support a customer's ability to understand, evaluate, and compare financial products, services, and opportunities to make informed financial decisions;
  - e. Educate customers about identity theft, ways to protect themselves from identity theft, and how to resolve cases of identity theft, and in other ways understand their rights and protections related to personal identity and financial data;
  - f. Support activities that address the particular financial literacy needs of non-English speakers, including providing the support through the development and distribution of multilingual financial literacy and education materials;

- g. Provide financial education that is age appropriate, timely, and provides opportunities to put lessons into practice, such as by access to safe and affordable financial products that enable money management and savings; and
  - h. Implement other approaches to help customers gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed financial decisions that enable them to attain greater financial health and stability by using high-quality, age-appropriate, and relevant strategies and channels, including where possible, timely and customized information, guidance, tools, and instruction.
10. Out of area job search assistance and relocation assistance (as determined by LWDB).
  11. Relocation assistance (as determined by LWDB).
  12. English Language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

### **Follow-up Services**

Follow-up services must be made available as appropriate for adults and dislocated workers placed in unsubsidized employment for a minimum of twelve (12) months after the first day of employment. 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 customers. Customers 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. Other customers may identify an area of weakness in the training provided by the WIOA prior to placement that will affect their ability to progress further in their occupation or to retain their employment.

Follow-up services could include, but are not limited to:

- Additional career planning and counseling;
- Contact with the customer's employer, including assistance with work-related problems that may arise;
- Peer support groups;
- Information about additional educational opportunities, and referral to supportive services available in the community; and
- Case management administrative follow-up.

### **D. Training Services**

Note: Training Resources are retained by The WorkPlace.

Training services are provided to individuals after an interview, assessment, or evaluation determines that the individual requires training to obtain employment or remain employed. Under WIOA §134(c)(3)(D), training services are available regardless of whether an individual received basic or individualized career services first.

Training services may be made available to employed and unemployed adult and dislocated workers who:



1. SWCT AJC staff determines, after an interview, evaluation, or assessment, and career planning are:
  - a. Unlikely or unable to retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services;
  - b. 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
  - c. Have the skills and qualifications to participate in training services.
2. Have selected a program of training services that is directly linked to the employment opportunities either in the local area or planning region, or in another area to which the individual is willing to commute or relocate; and
3. Are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay for the training, including other grants such as State-funded training grants, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), and Federal Pell grants, or requires assistance beyond that available from other sources to pay for the cost of training.

To justify the need for training services, the SWCT AJC Provider staff must document each customer's eligibility for training services and explain how this determination was made – by interview, evaluation or assessment, career planning, or other career service, such as individual employment plan.

Training services may include the following: (as determined by LWDB)

- Registered apprenticeships.
- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment.
- On-the-Job training.
- Incumbent worker training.
- Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs.
- Training programs operated by the private sector.
- Skill upgrading and retraining.
- Entrepreneurial training programs that assist qualified unemployed individuals who are seriously interested in starting a business in Connecticut and becoming self-employed.
- Transitional jobs training, which is:
  - Time-limited work experiences that are subsidized and are in the public, private, or non-profit sectors for individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed and/or have an inconsistent work history;
  - Are combined with comprehensive employment and support services; and

- Are designed to assist individuals with barriers to employment to establish a work history, demonstrate success in the workplace, and develop the skills that lead to entry and retention into unsubsidized employment.
- Job readiness training provided in combination with any of the aforementioned training services with the exception of registered apprenticeships.
- Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language acquisition, and integrated education and training programs provided concurrently or in combination with any of the aforementioned training services, with the exception of registered apprenticeships and transitional jobs training.
- Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training.

## **E. Assessments**

Assessment involves gathering information, appraising, analyzing, and using it to assist customers. Assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers may include diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals. The goal of an assessment is to identify skills, strengths, deficiencies, and attitudes relating to vocational training, basic education, and employment. Assessments may be used for career discovery and specific job applications. It forms the basis for career services by measuring academic development, workplace skills, interests, job seeking and retention skills, financial situation, work readiness, employment and family barriers, and ability to learn to do work tasks. A thorough assessment of a customer should identify whether or not a customer has:

- Adequate basic education, skills, and work background for their choice of WIOA services or employment opportunities.
- Required occupational tasks and any skills the customers must develop to achieve their employment goals.
- Realistic job seeking skills and the work maturity (attitude) to get and keep a job.
- Sources of additional support needed for success and the agencies that can provide this support.

The SWCT AJC Provider will suggest appropriate assessment tools to use except for basic skills assessments. The SWCT AJC Provider must utilize the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) to determine a customer's basic skills level in reading and math to adults and dislocated workers. Further information on the CASAS is available at: [www.casas.org](http://www.casas.org). All assessment processes and tools must be approved by the WDB's staff prior to implementation and must be applied in a consistent and equitable manner.

## **F. Individual Employment Plans**

Each registered adult/dislocated worker customer enrolled into WIOA services will have an IEP to identify the employment goals, appropriate objectives, and appropriate combination of services

for the customer to achieve the employment goals, including providing information on eligible Provider of training services, and career pathways to attain career objectives. Employment plans should be flexible and responsive to the individual needs of each customer as they move through needed career services and/or training services, keeping in mind that employment is the ultimate goal for all customers. The IEP should be reviewed and updated at every case management session. Each plan will identify educational goals, pre-employment steps, selected learning objectives, training and work-based learning (when provided) and any other preparation for unsubsidized employment. The plan will set clear and realistic goals for educational advancement, entry into employment in a targeted industry, and any continued learning and development, as needed.

## **G. Case Management**

The SWCT AJC Provider shall be responsible for providing dedicated case management services to all individuals that receive WIOA and/ or JFES Services. Case management is recognized as a key component of the service delivery plan and critical to the ultimate success of the customers. Case management is necessary to assure that the needs of customers are met and information required for program and performance reporting is collected.

Dedicated case management means an individual who receives services under WIOA will interact with one (1) case manager from the beginning of their service delivery process through the provision of services and after exit. As well for JFES customers, customers will interact with one case manager from the beginning of their service delivery process through the provision of services and after exit. It is also a process activity that ensures that the customer is progressing through the service strategy that was agreed to and that on-going contact with the customer is maintained throughout the time of participation, including employment and following exit.

The SWCT AJC Provider shall ensure case management is provided in a manner that is customer-focused and designed to assist individuals with multiple needs and barriers. Case management shall balance sensitivity to the needs, aspirations and goals of the customers against a commitment to a well-managed, effective and efficient human services program. As a customer-focused strategy, case management must offer an array of interventions designed to address a customer's needs in a holistic and individualized manner. As a system strategy, case management encourages inter-organizational partnerships (both formal and informal) to ensure maximization and utilization of all available resources and to minimize fragmentation, duplication, rigidity and inaccessibility of services.

The case management approach invests significant time and energy in maintaining a focus on understanding and assisting the customer. Efforts should be made to guide and encourage customers to view themselves as capable of taking control of their own lives and making the decisions necessary to achieve their goals. It looks at the big picture, acknowledging that customers are complex individuals who require complicated and coordinated interventions.

### **WIOA Case Management Component**

Case management is the provision of a customer-centered approach in the delivery of services, designed:

- To prepare and coordinate comprehensive employment plans, such as service strategies, for customers to ensure access to necessary WIOA activities and supportive services, using, where feasible, computer-based technologies; and
- To provide job and career counseling during program participation and after job placement.

The selected proposer will be required to provide a sufficient number of experienced case managers to meet the needs of the active and follow-up WIOA customers. The current active WIOA caseload as of March 2019 is 613 adults and 522 dislocated workers.

Case management strategies should include, but are not limited to:

- Regularly scheduled contact must be maintained with all customers. The frequency of the contact is based on an assessment of the customer's needs as they move through the process. At a minimum, monthly contact must be made with each customer. More frequent contact may be needed in certain circumstances and encouraged. Any and all contact with customers must be documented.
- Use of the IEP benchmarks to measure progress such as increasing CASAS, or College entrance exam scores, finding unsubsidized employment, attaining occupational and work readiness skills, attaining a high school diploma or GED, occupational license, certificate, or degree, etc.
- Monthly case notes entered into CTHires in a timely manner. Case notes are not limited to but should detail contacts per customer, missed appointments and attempts to contact the customer, career services provided to the customer, progress, barriers, interventions, and successes of the customer, etc.
- Provision of linkages, referrals, coordination of services and resources that support the achievement of customers individualized goals (IEP).
- Collaboration with other service providers, training providers, businesses, and community agencies.
- Building soft skills and job retention skills in each customer.
- Follow-up services will be provided to all customers.

Case managers should know the name, family, and life situation of each customer. They should have a detailed and working knowledge of other community services, community resources, and cultivate a wide network of contacts. Where progress is slow or in reverse, case managers should be pro-active in identifying the problem and helping customers solve it before the customers quit without achieving a positive outcome.

**JFES Case Management Component**

The SWCT AJC Provider will provide services to all time-limited recipients of Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) in the region who are mandated (or volunteering) to participate in the JFES program, currently estimated (for planning purposes) to be on average 1,000 (one thousand) per month. All customers will meet State and Federal eligibility criteria and reside in SWCT SDA.

The "Balanced Work First" principle of welfare reform means that customers must be encouraged to engage in work or a work activity, if possible, prior to or concurrent with receiving training. (See Attachment C for TANF Work Activities)

Services shall be delivered through a client-centered approach that incorporates applicant orientation to the JFES systems, comprehensive assessment, pre- and post-employment service arrangement and coordination, authorization of support services, referrals to allowable activities and social services, customer tracking and monitoring, data reporting and job retention services. Case management services shall begin at the point at which the customer reports to intake at the SWCT AJC by referral from DSS. Services shall continue until the customer is no longer JFES eligible. All services must comply with State and Federal JFES regulations.

- Intake involves the creation of an employment plan for customers referred to the SWCT AJC but have not yet been deemed eligible by DSS. Staff must identify barriers and provide an overview of the SWCT AJC.
- For those customers deemed eligible by DSS, SWCT AJC staff must make available the plan and review session within a 10-day period via the CTHires system. It is at plan and review that the customers that show up get assigned a JFES case manager.
- A Plan and Review Orientation: involves introducing TFA customers to and enrolling them in CTHires, informing them of the services available to them, as well as their rights and responsibilities as (mandatory or voluntary) customers. During plan and review the following must happen:
  - Assessments (CCS Math and Reading);
  - Development of a signed employment plan;
  - Assignment of case manager;
  - Referral to employment, training partner services.
- Comprehensive Assessment: The SWCT AJC Provider shall be responsible for performing initial assessments on new TFA recipients as well as reassessments on those who have been unable to secure employment which would make them independent of cash assistance. For TFA recipients, the assessment builds upon the data collected by DSS and entered in the Service Needs Assessment section of the shared CTHires data collection system. For any existing cases transferred through this contract to the SWCT AJC Provider, the case manager shall also be responsible for implementing the existing employment plan or meeting with the customer to update the assessment and modify the plan, as needed.
- Employment Plan Development: specifies each customer's course of action while enrolled in JFES programming, shall be conducted by the case manager in collaboration with the customer. The plan shall focus on:
  - Removal of employment barriers;
  - Short and long term goals;
  - Strategy matrix to achieve employment;
  - Document the thirty (30) hours needed to meet participation.

Employment plan development shall occur at intake. Case managers shall record the plan through the CTHires system with time-frames assigned to each activity. The roles and responsibilities for both the case manager and customer shall be specified and both shall sign off on the document, indicating that each assumes his/ her respective responsibilities for its implementation.

- Plans need to be reviewed once every two (2) months and revised in response to needs that are identified after the initial assessment or due to changing circumstances. Where a significant modification is made to the plan, both the case manager and customer shall sign off a second time on the revised plan of action.
- Special Benefits Issuance: involves the authorization of special benefits for child care and transportation. Case management staff authorizes benefits by entering data into the DSS' EMS system. Case managers must note CTHires that Special Benefits were issued. Case managers shall assist in the following:
  - Completion of Care 4 Kids packets; and
  - Identifying a licensed primary and backup child care Operator/Provider.
- Arranging/Coordinating Referrals for Additional Services: includes making and documenting all referrals to services which shall enable the customer to carry out his/her employment plan. This may include, for example, a referral to the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services for the diagnosis of a suspected disability, or the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services for an evaluation of a substance abuse problem or diagnosis of a mental illness.

All referrals shall be documented in the customer's file (with the customer's permission) and shall be coordinated with the customer's work activity schedule to ensure on-going compliance with work participation requirements. Case managers shall follow up on each referral to ensure its appropriateness and to track the ability of each customer to benefit from the services he or she is receiving. Where necessary, the case manager shall meet jointly with the staff of other agencies, i.e., conduct a case conference, to coordinate services, develop common goals and confront individual and systemic barriers to success.

- Employment and Training Referrals: includes the referral of individual customers to the programs offered by training Provider through JFES, DOL, WIOA contracts/ITAs, as well as other vendors available in the community (e.g., literacy volunteers, refugee services, and local adult education). Referral forms must be filled out and sent to the training program prior to the date of enrollment, and case managers must follow-up on all referrals within one (1) working day of planned start date to confirm attendance.

All referrals shall be to allowable activities totaling an average of thirty to thirty-five (30-35) hours per week. Case managers are encouraged to offer a "mixed strategy" which responds to the needs of the individual, including job search assistance, education/ training, and employment, along with supportive social services. The SWCT AJC Provider shall also ensure that referrals are both appropriate and timely in keeping with specific training eligibility requirements and cycles.

- Referrals to JFES Programs: As described above, the SWCT AJC Provider shall make referrals to education and training programs funded by The WorkPlace specifically through JFES customers. Referrals must be made in a timely manner

that responds to program start dates and must comply with any allowable entry criteria identified by the training provider on the training order. At a minimum, 25% of all contracted JFES programs referrals should be made to the training provider quarterly. The SWCT AJC Provider shall be responsible for working closely with staff to develop systems to ensure appropriate and timely referrals.

- Referrals to DSS for Conciliation and Sanctioning: shall be the responsibility of case managers once customers have attended their orientation/intake appointment. If customers fail to comply with program activities that are agreed upon in the employment plan, case managers shall:
  - Submit a sanction through the CTHires system to DSS;
  - Continue to work with customer (i.e., reengage);
  - Be available to attend fair hearings.
- Customer Tracking and Monitoring: must be done monthly by reviewing the customer's progress against his or her employment plan, as well as entering any changes in activities or life conditions. Case managers must:
  - Update employment plan and activities changes at every meeting;
  - Document performance;
  - Maintain ongoing case notes;
  - Track referrals.

Case managers shall review each customer's progress toward the goals described in the Employment Plan and update the Plan as needed. Follow-up contact may be accomplished via telephone, correspondence or personal contact. All contacts shall be *documented* in the case notes in an individual's file.

Case managers shall be responsible for monitoring and managing the quality of the client services to provide maximum opportunity for success. S/he shall ensure IEP compliance, and where there is lack of compliance, shall make a referral to DSS for conciliation and sanctioning.

Customer files shall be maintained to document compliance with federal regulations for at least three years after they leave assistance (or longer if needed for monitoring purposes.) Information in files shall be kept confidential and shall be maintained in a professional and ethical manner.

- Post-Placement Job Retention Services shall be provided to ensure that customers who obtain employment have the maximum opportunities for long-term labor market success. Case managers shall provide the following:
  - Post placement follow up for one hundred and eighty (180) days;
  - Compile, verify, and document employment, hours and wages.



## H. Business Services

Serving the talent needs of employers is a principle focus for WIOA and The WorkPlace. Many of these services are delivered by an assortment of agencies with limited coordination. The envisioned business service delivery system will be highly coordinated to avoid confusion by the business community and improve the quality of every business service. Business service staff, in conjunction with the CTDOL and WorkPlace staff, is responsible for this function, and collectively shall take a lead role in understanding the needs of employers and in communicating those needs to the broader workforce system.

WIOA emphasizes sector partnerships as a key method to engage businesses in the design of workforce services, including education available through public schools, colleges, and universities with the goal that education agencies and career centers understand and deliver training, education, credentials and guidance to provide defined Career Pathways into targeted industry sectors. These sectors must also be aligned with economic and business development efforts to maximize effectiveness. Business service staff is expected to work with The WorkPlace, DOL and AJC partners to develop and support sector partnership efforts.

In addition to working strategically to align the workforce system with employer needs, staff shall also ensure coordination and quality of a suite of fundamental services. All SWCT AJC staff shall offer a broad range of integrated services that are provided at no cost to employers to support economic and workforce development efforts. Staff providing business services should be fully integrated into the customer flow of employers and job seekers.

The successful proposer will be responsible for coordinating or delivering the following business services in coordination with partner staff:

- Number of Direct placements;
- Coordination of job clubs;
- Interviewing workshops held at the SWCT AJC;
- Access to labor market and related information through CTDOL's Online System (<http://www1.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi/index.asp>);
- Information regarding workplace accommodations for persons with disabilities;
- Information and referral to business start-up, retention, and expansion services;
- Information and referral to sources for developing customized training programs;
- Information on career preparation activities and career pathways;
- Information on TAA and certification;
- Information, development and coordination of work-based learning opportunities including: work experiences, OJT contracts, and apprenticeships.
- Information and development of incumbent worker training;
- State and/or federally generated information on tax credits for new hires;
- State and/or federal program information on federal bonding;



- Access to information and services through the SWCT AJC and online;
- Referrals of well-qualified SWCT AJC customers;
- Staff-assisted employee pre-screening;
- Basic job matching of résumés and applications;
- Industry specific job fairs;
- Recruitments;
- Relevant business seminars and information sessions;
- Development and coordination of job orders;
- Assist CTDOL's rapid response unit by providing one-stop information;
- Coordination with other business-serving organizations;
- Other business services approved by The WorkPlace, as applicable.

As part of the SWCT AJC contract, The WorkPlace is requiring a dedicated Business Services Unit (BSU) to directly serve the workforce development and business needs of the Southwestern CT business community. The BSU will coordinate all business engagement with The WorkPlace sector initiatives in Healthcare, Retail, Advanced Manufacturing, and Construction.

All customers receiving services from the Business Services Unit must be entered into CTHires following the policy established by The WorkPlace.

## **I. Assistive Service Center**

The SWCT AJC will provide assistance to customers with disabilities who may need to avail themselves of technology and staff dedicated to persons who need assistance.

The Assisted Service center is a center within the Bridgeport AJC that has adaptive technologies capable of providing access to job search tools and the internet. The selected proposer shall be responsible for maintaining the technology in an operative state. The overarching goal of the center is to place customers with disabilities into employment. The SWCT AJC Provider shall ensure services are available to ensure individuals move into employment. The SWCT AJC will provide information on education and training programs for persons with disabilities. Also, the SWCT AJC will integrate persons with disabilities into the customer flow of the SWCT AJC and provide access to all SWCT AJC services.

The SWCT AJC Provider must coordinate all services for customers with disabilities from this center. The center must have a dedicated FTE to assist customers in accessing the centers services. It must partner with the vocational rehabilitation system in an effort to reduce duplication of services. All customers receiving services from the Assistive Services Center must be entered into CTHires following the policy established by The WorkPlace.

## **J. Individual Training Account (ITA)**

ITAs allow customers the opportunity to choose the training provider that best meets their needs. Under WIOA, ITAs also support placing customers into registered apprenticeship programs, as available.

It is encouraged that adults, dislocated workers, and JFES eligible customers avail themselves of the ITAs. Training providers and programs of study are approved LWDB and CTDOL then placed on the Statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

All customers receiving services through ITAs must be entered into CTHires following the policy established by The WorkPlace.

Note: The WorkPlace retains the funding for ITAs and will determine an annual allocation the SWCT AJC Provider will be required to disperse to eligible participants.

## **K. Career Coach**

The SWCT Career Coach is a 39ft mobile unit designed to provide WIOA/JFES orientation sessions, job search activities and basic digital literacy to the community. The Career Coach provides AJC services within the region where access to services may be a challenge to residents.

The SWCT AJC Provider will assume responsibility for the existing staff, including one (1) Workforce Specialist Instructor and one (1) Career Coach Driver.

Services of the Career Coach should be made available at various venues including but not limited to: public housing, libraries, senior community centers, veteran centers, schools as well as community and faith based organizations. Site visits and scheduling will be done in coordination with The WorkPlace. A monthly calendar of activities will be provided by the SWCT AJC Provider to The WorkPlace to post on the SWCT AJC website a week in advance of the next upcoming month.

Services that may be provided on the Career Coach include but are not limited to:

- Outreach Materials – explaining what services (case management, access to job training, etc.) are available in the SDA.
- Access to computers for self-directed job search services, resume writing, digital literacy etc.
- Informational workshops
- Access to job postings, and informational sessions on how to apply online
- Information on accessing support services
- Access to career related tools and information
- Information regarding employers in the region
- Referrals to community programs (i.e. – Energy Assistance)

Customers receiving services on the Career Coach that have been deemed either WIOA or JFES qualified are considered “registrants” and thus their activities aboard the Coach shall be entered into the CTHires system and tracked accordingly. Customers actively registered in CTHires and receiving services on the Career Coach must have services posted within forty-eight (48) hours if connectivity is not available on the Coach.

#### **L. Community Resource Center**

The Community Resource Center (CRC) is designed to integrate supportive services in the SWCT AJC. The CRC coordinates services such as energy assistance, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and other supportive services so that customers can access these supports seamlessly.

The CRC houses (1) one Full Time Equivalent (FTE) to triage customers and coordinate services within the center. Additionally, the staff person will at a minimum will:

- Coordinate a comprehensive listing of “work supports” and referrals such as:
  - Rental assistance;
  - Food pantry;
  - Tax assistance;
  - Medical insurance sign-up; and
  - Transportation assistance.
- Coordinate CBO’s Faith Based and State agencies services that could be provided in the CRC.
- Determine customer needs in an effort to seek additional services for the CRC.

**SECTION V – PERFORMANCE STANDARDS/OUTCOMES**

**A. WIOA Common Performance Measures**

<b>Common Measure</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Entered Employment Rate</b>	Percentage of customers who are in unsubsidized employment during the second (2nd) quarter after exit from the program
<b>Retention Rate</b>	Percentage of customers who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth (4th) quarter after exit from the program
<b>Median Earnings</b>	Median earnings of customers who are in unsubsidized employment during the second (2nd) quarter after exit from the program
<b>Credential</b>	Percentage of customers who obtain a recognized post-secondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (if the customers have obtained or retained employment or are in an education or training program leading to a recognized post-secondary within 1 year after exit), during participation in or within one (1) year after exit from the program
<b>Measurable Skills Gain</b>	Percentage of customers who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains towards a credential or employment
<b>Effectiveness of Serving Employers</b>	Indicators of effectiveness in serving employers prior to the commencement of the second (2nd) full program year after the date of enactment, 1 or more primary indicators of performance will be developed to that indicate the effectiveness of the core programs serving employers

Our current approved WIOA performance standards are as follows:

<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>PY 2019 Goals</b>
<b>WIOA Title I Adults</b>	
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	71.50%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	69.50%
Median Earnings	\$4,900.00
Credential Attainment Rate	70.50%
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Baseline
<b>WIOA Title I Dislocated Workers</b>	
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	76.50%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	77%
Median Earnings	\$7,300.00
Credential Attainment Rate	70.50%
Measurable Skill Gains	Baseline
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Baseline

In addition to the WIOA common measures, SWCT AJC services will also be annually reviewed for performance against the following indicators:

- AJC Customer Assistance/Satisfaction surveys;
- AJC Employer Satisfaction surveys;
- Staff Development Plan;
- Technology Skills Offerings;

**B. JFES Performance Measures**

The SWCT AJC Provider shall be expected to achieve the performance standards listed below by the first quarter of the program year (October 1, 2019) and continue on an ongoing basis:

- Each month, sixty percent (60%) of all JFES families that are served under the agreement shall be enrolled in countable JFES work activities which meet the minimum federal JFES participation requirements of a weekly average of thirty (30) hours for all families (refer to Attachment B).
- Activity updates (in CTHires) shall be accurate and timely (completed within one working day of receipt of the information).
- File audits shall document that customers are being referred to appropriate, allowable activities.
- The SW AJC Provider shall maintain a caseload balance for each Case Manager of no more than one hundred and ten (110) JFES cases.

Any proposer awarded funds to provide services for the programs shall be expected to operate a program of professional quality, maintain proper programmatic and fiscal controls, submit timely reports as required, and comply with the requirements of JFES regulations.

## **SECTION VI – DATA TRACKING AND MAINTENANCE**

The SWCT AJC Provider shall be responsible for maintaining a case file for every JFES, adult and dislocated worker who has completed eligibility. The information must be collected, and data entered into CTHires within forty-eight (48) hours of completion. The case file must contain the combination of the electronic file (CTHires) and a hard copy file as appropriate. At a minimum, the case file shall include information and documentation of each of the following, as applicable: WIOA-Pre registration, WIOA application, WIOA enrollment form, the initial and comprehensive assessments, the Individual Employment Plan and its updates, progress reports, time and attendance records, training completion certification, counseling notes, release of information, photo release, Sexual Harassment Policy, Equal Opportunity, hardship exemption request, job placement information and job retention verification.

These files are the property of The WorkPlace and must be turned over to The WorkPlace upon request or at the end of the contract. All original copies of WIOA forms (application, enrollment, status, outcome, etc.) must be available to The WorkPlace for review within five (5) business days.

The SWCT AJC Provider shall ensure that all customers' files, both hard copy and electronic, are up-to-date and correct at all times. By submitting each monthly invoice, the SWCT AJC Operator/Provider shall certify the accuracy and timeliness of the information in the case files.

Data validation against all JFES, adult and dislocated worker file must be conducted quarterly. The WorkPlace will provide the template to be completed by the provider staff.

### **A. Reporting and Performance Management**

The SWCT AJC Provider shall maintain documentation necessary to generate information for required Federal, State and The WorkPlace reports and provide financial and other information on daily operations as requested.

The SWCT AJC Operator/Provider shall ensure coordination with The WorkPlace for further development of management reporting. The SWCT AJC Provider shall ensure that the combination of the various systems and processes produce all the information needed to manage the daily operations of the SWCT AJC system, including performance measures, common measures, unduplicated client and transaction counts, training enrollments by location and vendor, and job placement across integrated enrollment programs.

A monthly report must be submitted to The WorkPlace describing progress toward goals and activities to include progress of the customers, goals and objectives and how they are being met, problems encountered, corrective actions taken, placements into employment and training, coordination strategies, etc. Monthly reports are due to The Workplace by the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day of the month for the previous month activity. The monthly report consists of a program narrative and a data overview. These templates will be provided by the WorkPlace.

The SWCT AJC Provider shall provide all other reports deemed necessary by any appropriate Federal or State agency and The WorkPlace.

## **B. Use of Forms**

The SWCT AJC Provider will ensure the effective use of forms and documents, initially by using existing documents, then by initiating a review process to streamline the use of forms and reduce redundancy of data in form and document creation. Forms should always be complete and easy to understand by our customers, professionally written and presented, and not overwhelming in terms of the frequency or number. Reproduction of forms should produce quality documents of a professional appearance. Language used in creating forms should emphasize the positive, with instructions focusing on what can, rather than what can't, be done.



## **SECTION VII – BUDGET AND FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. Budget**

A detailed line item budget must be submitted on the attached Budget Form (see Attachment D).

Costs included must be actual costs incurred in delivering the proposed services, and these funds cannot supplant funds already received by the proposing agency from other programs.

All proposals will be evaluated on the basis of cost-effectiveness in relation to proposed high quality service delivery. To accomplish this, the Board of Directors and The WorkPlace's staff will conduct an analysis of projected costs during the proposal review process. Proposers are therefore encouraged to submit their best offer for providing the program solicited in this RFP and to thoroughly describe and justify the proposed costs. This analysis will be conducted to ensure that the proposed costs are necessary, fair and reasonable; to determine if the proposed costs are allowable and allocable; to determine if there is duplication of costs with other programs; to ensure that the costs are directly associated with carrying out only the proposed services; and to ensure that the proposed costs will benefit the SW AJC.

### **B. Facility Costs - Office Space**

The SWCT AJC Operator/Provider in Bridgeport shall be assigned space at 350 Fairfield Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> floor which is co-located with CTDOL. The monthly rental and maintenance costs provided by the lease terms for this space are the responsibility of The WorkPlace. Office furniture will be provided by The WorkPlace and the SWCT AJC Operator will be responsible for its daily maintenance and operations. A complete listing of equipment on site will be provided and agreed to by both parties. Annual inventories must be conducted and submitted to The WorkPlace for verification. No asset may be disposed of without prior consent of The WorkPlace. Telephone equipment systems and ongoing associated operational costs for internet and telephone will be the responsibility of the SWCT AJC Operator. Any offset funding provided by SWCT AJC partners for operation of this space will accrue to The WorkPlace only.

Additional space requirements such as access points proposed by the proposer must be detailed in the budget narrative and will be negotiated during contract process. An agreement to the above terms will be required at contract signing.

**Bridgeport AJC Location:** 350 Fairfield Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06604

At a minimum, all Bridgeport-based career services, case management, eligibility, ITA Orientations, career and computer workshops and WIOA/JFES case management activities must take place at the 350 Fairfield Avenue facility.

Parking located in the privately-owned parking garage directly across from 350 Fairfield Avenue is available for staff and customer use. Parking passes may be purchased directly from the garage owner. Customer parking fees will be the responsibility of the SWCT AJC Operator and may or may not be offset by the funds provided herein at the discretion of the SWCT AJC Operator. In no

circumstance may the amount allocated for customer parking exceed \$5,000 per year of the contract.

**Insurance:** The selected proposer shall purchase a Commercial General Liability, Fire, Personal Property and EDP insurance policy and name The WorkPlace as additional ensured under the policy.

- Minimum aggregate liability coverage \$3,000,000; fire coverage \$500,000 and personal property coverage \$100,000, EDP coverage \$60,000 and EDP coverage in transit \$15,000.

**Stamford AJC Location: 141 Franklin Street, Stamford, CT 06901**

At a minimum, all Stamford-based career services, case management, eligibility, ITA Orientations, career and computer workshops and WIOA/JFES case management activities must take place at the 141 Franklin Street facility.

There is approximately 2,700 square feet of office space available at this site. The space consists of a career resource area, a classroom, a large conference room and five modular workstations for staff and other activities. Office furniture will initially be provided by The Workplace and SWCT AJC Operator will be responsible for its daily maintenance and operations. A complete listing of equipment on site will be provided and agreed to by both parties. Annual inventories must be conducted and submitted to The WorkPlace for verification. No asset may be disposed of without prior consent of The WorkPlace. The space includes an existing telephone system.

Operational costs for internet and telephone will be the responsibility of The WorkPlace. Any offset funding provided by SWCT AJC partners for operation of this space for infrastructure cost will accrue to The WorkPlace.

Maintenance and software upgrades as required for the customer resource area computer equipment are the responsibility of SWCT AJC Operator. There are currently

The rent and utilities are paid by The WorkPlace. Employee and customer parking is limited and available at no cost at the discretion of the landlord.

**Derby AJC Location: 33 Elizabeth Street, Derby, CT 06418**

There is approximately 1,900 square feet of office space consisting of offices on the third floor.

The rent and utilities for this space are paid by The WorkPlace. Telephone and internet costs and connectivity are the responsibility of the SWCT AJC Operator/Provider. Employee and customer parking are available near the facility in a public parking garage. The cost for parking for three (3) staff is included in this contract and paid by the WorkPlace.

At a minimum, career services, case management, eligibility, ITA Orientations, career and computer workshops and WIOA/JFES case management activities must take place at 33 Elizabeth Street facility.

**Ansonia AJC Location: 4 Fourth Street, Ansonia, CT 06401**

There is approximately 1,950 square feet of office space available at this site. The space consists of a career resource area, a classroom, a large conference room and three offices for staff and other activities. Office furniture is provided by The WorkPlace and SWCT AJC Operator/Provider will be responsible for its daily maintenance and operations. A complete listing of equipment on site will be provided and agreed to by both parties. Annual inventories must be conducted and submitted to The WorkPlace for verification. No asset may be disposed of without prior consent of The WorkPlace. The space includes an existing telephone system.

At a minimum, career services, case management, career and computer workshops will take place at the Ansonia facility.

The rent and utilities for this space are paid by The WorkPlace as are the telephone and internet costs and connectivity. Employee and customer parking are available in the rear of the facility in a restricted parking area.

## SECTION VIII – ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL CAPABILITIES CHECKLIST

Proposers must respond to each statement or question with a “yes” or “no” answer. Briefly explain any “no” answer on another page or in the limited space provided.

	Yes	No
1. All W-2s and I-9s with appropriate documentation are on file.	_____	_____
2. Withholding and FICA deposits are being made on a timely basis.	_____	_____
3. Insurance and bonding policies are current and all appropriate staff is covered.	_____	_____
4. Accounting Records follow generally accepted accounting standards, are in compliance with OMB Circulars and Federal Accounting Regulations.	_____	_____
5. Administrative and internal accounting controls are adequate to safeguard program assets.	_____	_____
6. The accounting system adequately accounts for program funds.	_____	_____
7. Fiscal reports fairly present accrued program expenditures by established cost categories.	_____	_____
8. Budgetary procedures are adequate to control expenditures and identify variances in a timely manner.	_____	_____
9. The agency has a written accounting procedures manual that includes procedures for:		
a. Coding of expenditures by:		
(i) Contract year or program year	_____	_____
(ii) Funding source	_____	_____
(iii) Cost category	_____	_____
b. Bank reconciliations;	_____	_____
c. Posting of entries and adjusting entries	_____	_____
d. Development of accruals;	_____	_____
e. Segregation of duties;	_____	_____
f. Cost allocation system;	_____	_____
g. Budgetary control	_____	_____
h. Cash management;	_____	_____
i. Cash receipt and disbursement;	_____	_____
j. Payroll;	_____	_____
k. Reconciliation of petty cash funds.	_____	_____
10. Internal controls are established and followed:		
a. For Cash receipts:		
(i) Cash is properly controlled and promptly deposited when received.	_____	_____
(ii) Funds are deposited in a bank in interest bearing checking and secured by FDIC or other security.	_____	_____
b. Checks are:		
(i) Pre-numbered	_____	_____
(ii) Adequately safeguarded	_____	_____
(iii) Properly mutilated when voided	_____	_____
(iv) Not allowed to be written for cash	_____	_____
(v) Not allowed to be signed in advance	_____	_____
c. For cash disbursements:		
(i) Invoices are approved prior to payment	_____	_____
(ii) Documentation accompanies checks to be signed	_____	_____
(iii) Documentation is stamped to prevent reuse	_____	_____
(iv) Control over signature machine is adequate	_____	_____
(v) Disbursements are made only by check	_____	_____
(vi) Checks are not returned to preparer after signing	_____	_____

- |  |       |       |
|--|-------|-------|
| d. For bank reconciliations:   | _____ | _____ |
| (i) They are performed on a regular basis  | _____ | _____ |
| (ii) They are performed by someone who does not perform cash functions                     | _____ | _____ |
| (iii) Unusual items are investigated promptly  | _____ | _____ |
| e. For payroll:  |       |       |
| (i) Time sheets are used and signed by both the employee and supervisor                    | _____ | _____ |
| (ii) Payrolls are approved by management for accuracy and existence of bona fide employees | _____ | _____ |
| (iii) Preparation and check distribution functions are segregated                          | _____ | _____ |
| (iv) Leave time is properly controlled   | _____ | _____ |
| f. For Purchases   |       |       |
| (i) Purchase orders are pre-numbered and controlled  | _____ | _____ |
| (ii) Receiving reports are prepared and compared to P.O. and invoice                       | _____ | _____ |
| (iii) Returned purchases are controlled  | _____ | _____ |
| (iv) Payments are made within discount periods   | _____ | _____ |

## **SECTION IX – PROPOSAL NARRATIVE**

All sections listed below are required and must be addressed in the proposal, following the instructions provided and answering all questions completely.

### **A. Program Proposal Synopsis - Executive Summary (5 Points)**

A brief summary highlighting such details as the Bidder's vision for the SW AJC Operations.

A snapshot of target customers and outcomes for the SW AJC should be provided via a table or chart within this section. A detailed explanation should be given later in the proposal narrative.

### **B. Management (10 Points)**

1. Please provide a compelling business case as to why your organization should be selected to provide the components in this RFP.
2. Please describe how each element of this RFP will be adequately staffed and managed. (Include reporting chain of command.)
3. Describe what tools you use to make decisions in existing positions, including the use of data.
4. Describe your overall management plan for delivering the services sought in this RFP (i.e., systems, procedures and controls that will ensure contract compliance, delivery of high quality services, and achievement of program objectives)

### **C. Organizational Experience and Capability (45 Points)**

#### **1. Previous Experience and Qualifications**

- a. Provide details of your organization's background and previous experience in performing work similar in size and scope of services in this proposal. Include information regarding populations served. Emphasize any experience your organization has in working with a broad range of customers, in terms of skills, education and barriers, and working with the TFA population or how other organizational experience relates to this RFP.
- b. Describe how you use technology applications in the management and operation of existing programs.
- c. Describe your experience in and knowledge of the workforce development system and the related services that are available in the community and your ability to provide a wider range of services at the AJC Centers that are available through this contract for WIOA/ JFES services.
- d. Describe your organization's current structure and how this would be adapted to accommodate the requirements of this program. Organizational charts may be used if they are specific to the needs of this program.

- e. Attach a resume for each managerial staff person who will be involved in the development, implementation or delivery of services; for unfilled positions attach a job description specifying the qualifications for the position.
- f. Provide letters from current or previous funders or other written documentation describing the populations served, the case management services provided by your organization, and the outcomes that resulted. For prior experience with The WorkPlace, The WorkPlace's internal data will be used in discussions of previous experience. The originally-signed letter(s) must be submitted with the proposal. If not available at time of proposal submission, original(s) must be received within five (5) business days after submission or the letter(s) will be disqualified from review. A minimum of three letters should be submitted. The letters must be signed after March 1, 2019.

2. **Financial Management**

- a. Provide a line item budget and narrative that justifies each proposed expense included on the  
  
Budget forms in terms of being necessary, allowable and reasonable. Show a detailed method of computation in each line's narrative.
- b. As part of the budget narrative, describe your experience and/or familiarity with OMB Circulars, specifically the new rules effective January 1, 2019.
- c. Provide details of your organization's cost allocation method, and your indirect cost rate plan as approved by your cognizant agency.
- d. Identify any in-kind resources/support for the service delivery system proposed beyond what is requested in the budget. Include each committed or proposed source of funding and the amount of funding.
- e. Clearly identify any leveraged funds, and the source, expected as a result of receiving a contract award under this RFP.
- f. State the source of funds available to repay disallowed costs as a result of an adverse audit or monitoring review.
- g. Describe how the proposing agency shall financially support the costs of operations, specifically the strength of its cash flow capabilities (i.e., back-up lines of credit, etc.). Note: advance payments shall be discussed during contract negotiations.
- h. If funded, what percentage of the proposing agency's total budget shall this contract represent?
- i. To the extent possible, identify costs associated with each service described herein following the format provided on the enclosed Budget Form (Attachment D). Allocate costs to each service category proposed.
- j. Has your agency ever been judged to have disallowed costs?
- k. Describe the financial structure and capabilities in place, specifically in the following:

- (i) Staffing functions of your organization's accounting department;
- (ii) Financial software used;
- (iii) Property management capabilities;
- (iv) Payroll services functions;
- (v) Cash management system and relationship with banking institutions;
- (vi) Account payable process;
- (vii) Reporting systems and software used;
- (viii) PC network, if any, supporting the agency structure.

**D. Coordination (30 Points)**

**1. Service Coordination**

- a. Provide a brief summary highlighting your vision of the SWCT AJC's operations. This may also include target customers, recruitment, and planned outcomes and/or goals for the SWCT AJC.
- b. Detail your outreach strategy to ensure we are reaching our customers in the twenty-town region we serve.
- c. Describe your approach to career preparation with jobseekers in each segment of the target population: individuals with barriers to employment, low income adults, individuals with disabilities, ex-offenders, veterans, and dislocated workers including mid-career professionals.
- d. Describe your plans to integrate services through the four existing AJCs in the SDA and the mobile Career Coach.
- e. Briefly describe how you would identify the services appropriate for inclusion at the SWCT AJC and how you will make those services accessible at the SWCT AJC or make referrals to services not provided through the SWCT AJC.
- f. Provide a detailed plan of how WIOA partner services will be coordinated, accessed and/or provided through the SWCT AJC. Include specific strategies to eliminate duplications, coordinate on-site service delivery, and encouraging the sharing of customer information.
- g. Describe the plan you will use to provide an effective seamless system of services. Be specific on how the coordination will include working with WIOA and JFES as well as the long-term unemployed, people with disabilities, ex-offenders, and the mature populations in your service delivery plan.
- h. Describe how you ensure the days and hours of operation accommodate the needs of the majority of the customers.

**2. Partnerships**

- a. How will you ensure that partnerships are established or maintained that can enhance social service, training, and education services to the customer?



- b. Describe how you will evaluate the existing resources and programs to reduce duplication and foster resource sharing.
- c. Detail how you will coordinate one stop partners.
- d. Describe how you will arrive at an integrated service menu.
- e. How will communication with partners happen?

**E. Service Delivery (60 Points)**

**1. Design**

- a. Explain the referral process you would propose to among partners for the effective delivery of services.
- b. How will staff development be assessed at both the point of hire and continuously.
- c. Describe (and provide examples of) your ability to provide and manage successful, innovative, and high-quality services, including your organizations capabilities to:
  - (i) Manage a seamless, integrated, multi-funded/multi-program system;
  - (ii) Coordinate services with partner organizations, including seeking their involvement in and sharing of resources; and
  - (iii) Transition into an already functioning SWCT AJC system while offering new and innovative solutions.
- d. Describe how you will serve large numbers of individuals with varying skill sets, work experience and education. Be specific and give concrete examples. In your description discuss service delivery for serving individuals with barriers to also include:
  - (i) Individuals with limited English proficiency
  - (ii) Persons with limited literacy skills
  - (iii) Offenders
  - (iv) Highly skilled job seekers
- e. Describe staffing patterns, qualifications and experience of staff, and identify any professional development of AJC staff that will be designed, delivered and measured.
- f. Provide proposed professional development opportunities/suggestions for staff and partner's staff of the AJC.
- g. Describe the strategies that will be used to provide high quality customer service, including the mechanisms to be utilized in determining, analyzing and reporting customer satisfaction and continuous improvement strategies.
- h. State the techniques to be used to meet all performance measures.
- i. Describe and give examples of how you will monitor continuous improvement and quality assurance.

## 2. Career Services

- a. Career Services are the foundation for customer service delivery. Please describe how your WIOA funded staff will provide effective and relevant career services within an integrated service delivery system.
- b. Provide projected case load numbers for each funding stream (WIOA and JFES).
- c. Include in your plan any innovations and strategies that have been found to increase the likelihood of success for individuals and how you plan on using those strategies.
- d. Describe how your organization envisions managing the provision of WIOA funded training services (OJT may be addressed in the next question). Include specifics about determining individual customer need for training, assisting the customer to select an appropriate occupational sector, developing a comprehensive individual employment plan to include the training services, and management of the ITA process. Include other details about how you will engage the customer to be successful with the educational component and the transition from training to employment.
- e. Work-based training is a focus in the WIOA legislation. Describe how you propose providing paid on the job training including the pre award analysis, skill gap analysis, training plan development, monitoring, evaluation and any additional details that demonstrate your ability to successfully offer on the job training. Also, please provide any other program design ideas regarding short term work-based learning options, other than OJT, that you think would result in employment.
- f. Describe strategies that will ensure services are in alignment with current local and regional labor market demands.
- g. Provide narrative describing plans for service delivery that result in achievement of enrollment goals, performance measures and outreach and recruitment to target groups.
- h. For proposers not currently providing adult and dislocated worker services in the region, please describe your start-up plan and proposed transition period, including a timeline of events, to include hiring of staff, staff training, start-up of services and other critical steps in the process toward full scale service delivery.

## 3. Assisted Service Center

- a. Describe the process by which customers will be referred to and interact with the Assisted Services Center.
- b. Describe the mechanism by which customers and any disclosed disability will be documented.
- c. State how you propose to serve people with disabilities. What innovative service strategies do you propose?
- d. State any partners your agency will work to serve people with disabilities. Include system partners and how you will coordinate activities.

#### 4. **Business Services**

Describe your organization's experience in managing and providing services to businesses. Include in that description experience in:

- a. Provide evidence of best practices in engaging employers.
- b. Provide your current placement rates for programs. Please provide a list of employers you have worked with in the past to secure employment opportunities.
- c. Describe any technology that will be deployed to support contact, accountability and tracking of employer services.
- d. Describe the tools and activities staff will use to engage and retain employers.
- e. Provide the number of employers to be served based upon the Business Services staffing model.
- f. Identifying the workforce development needs of businesses that can be met currently by the SWCT AJC System and expanding services to meet future needs;
- g. Identify the priority industries and how they align with the SW Regional Plan.
- h. Matching the hiring needs of businesses with individuals who meet their minimum qualifications, thus eliminating referrals of unqualified candidates;
  - i. Training businesses; and
  - ii. Significantly improving the provision of services to businesses while also increasing the use of the SWCT AJC System by businesses.
- b. Describe your experience with business engagement. Include the number and types of businesses engaged, type of services provided, and number of job placements over the last two (2) years. Include the number of placements, average wages earned, and industry.
- c. What is your vision of a "job-driven" One Stop system? How might it differ from traditional One Stop structures and practices?
- d. Describe your organization's capacity to develop OJTs, subsidized employment and internship opportunities.
- e. Briefly describe the techniques that will be utilized in delivering business services in conjunction with partner agencies.
- f. State how consistency of service and employer single point of contact will be ensured.

#### 5. **Referral to Training**

- a. Describe the method you will use in determining that individual customers will be referred to the training service(s) into high growth/high demand occupations.
- b. Describe how you will ensure that customers have the basic skills, work experience and academic prerequisites necessary to successfully complete the specific training to which the customer is referred.

- c. Describe how the case managers and training program staff will interact to ensure accurate tracking of customer progress.
- d. What follow-up mechanisms will be used to ensure customers complete training and continue to be engaged in the process?
- e. Describe how job development services will be provided to those who are getting ready to complete training and those who have completed training.

**F. Case Management (50 points)**

**1. Service Design and Delivery**

- a. What innovative case management solutions would you deploy in the AJC system?
- b. How will you address barriers such as English as a Second Language (ESL), Ex-offenders, and Basic Skills Deficient (BSD).
- c. How will the priority of service under WIOA be coordinated in the AJCs?
- d. Describe how financial literacy and computer literacy will be addressed?
- e. Describe how you would provide the key features of case management to the three (3) distinct populations (Adults, Dislocated Workers and JFES customers) keeping in mind case management requirements.
- f. Briefly define the case management approach/model that would be used to accomplish the case management goals. How would case managers handle the multiplicity of duties required for the number of customers on their caseloads? What would be the case load levels of case managers? (WIOA and JFES)
- g. Describe the strategies to be used for effective assessment of customers' needs for employment, education, training and/or support services.
- h. Detail how the coordination between the BSU and Case Management will occur. How will placement information be captured?
- i. Describe the services and processes to be used to develop an appropriate Employment Plan to assist each customer in reaching his or her employment goals. How would plans differ between the target populations of WIOA and JFES?
- j. Describe the process for coordinating services among WIOA and JFES partners and how customer progress will be tracked.
- k. Describe the services and strategies to ensure post-placement job retention and support, as well as the encouragement of continuing education.
- l. Describe the capacity building activities needed to enhance existing organizational and/or case management services. Include a plan and timeline describing how and in what areas all case managers would be trained.
- m. Describe the strategy that will be used for follow-up. How will follow up differ among programs?
- n. How do you intend to serve any Adult and Dislocated worker carryovers?

## 2. Performance Management

- a. Detail how employer, job seeker and system satisfaction will be measured.
- b. Provide a plan for continuous improvement.
- c. Describe what methods the project will employ to manage performance as a participant progresses through the program from enrollment, employment placement and retention.
- d. Describe your internal quality assurance method to monitor performance including participant file review, data validation, customer service survey, required performance goals.
- e. Describe your exit strategy to ensure participants will achieve required performance measures.
- f. Describe how you will identify, develop and maintain relationships with employers and other partners, which will result in positive outcomes for employment and retention

## 3. JFES Case Management Service

- a. Describe the targeted TFA population in SWCT and what you believe to be the most relevant issues in relation to providing case management. How would the proposed services respond to their needs, keep them in compliance with program requirements and assist them in reaching the goal of self-sufficiency?
- b. Describe the process for determining and making appropriate referrals and methods for coordinating and integrating services, in conjunction with keeping the customers in compliance with the federal work participation rates.
- c. Briefly describe *appropriate assessment; training and/or support service arrangements* that might be made for customers from the following TFA subgroups (expand on the sample clients' possible histories and barriers, as needed):
  - (i) customer with some work history who wants to job search on his or her own;
  - (ii) customer within the first twenty-one (21) months of TFA receipt who lacks a high school diploma, occupational skills and work experience, and has a pre-school age child and/or several school-aged children;
  - (iii) customer within the twenty-one (21) month time limit who is working part-time with earnings not over the payment standard;
  - (iv) customer within the twenty-one (21) month time limit who is working but with earnings not over the Federal Poverty Level;
  - (v) customer approaching sixty (60) months who is working but does not have earnings over the payment standard;
  - (vi) customer in his or her third (3<sup>rd</sup>) extension who is not working.
- d. How would case managers keep in touch with customers who are working and proactively assist them in resolving problems that arise?

- e. How would customers speaking foreign languages be served?
- f. Describe how JFES participants will be integrated into the AJC operations.
- g. Describe how referrals to contracted training providers will be monitored. How will you ensure that contracted slots are utilized appropriately?

## SECTION X – SUBMISSION PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

### A. Bidders' Conference

The WorkPlace shall conduct a Bidder's Conference Call on Wednesday, April 17th, 2019, from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM EST.

**Call in information will be provided to those who submit a letter of intent.**

During the bidders' conference call, The WorkPlace staff will answer questions regarding this RFP, thus it is imperative that potential bidders read the RFP thoroughly prior to the bidders' conference. All interested proposers are strongly encouraged to call into the conference as *The WorkPlace staff will not be allowed to answer questions about the RFP after the conference* call (unless the questions pertain specifically to the technical aspects of the RFP or the RFP format). All proposers are asked to ***thoroughly* READ THE ENTIRE RFP PRIOR TO THE CONFERENCE CALL.**

Questions regarding the RFP may be made, **in writing**, to Nestor Leon, email [nleon@workplace.org](mailto:nleon@workplace.org) prior to the Bidder's Conference Call. The WorkPlace will publish the questions and answers after the bidder's conference.

### B. Letter of Intent

**A Letter of Intent to Bid must be emailed Nestor Leon at [nleon@workplace.org](mailto:nleon@workplace.org) no later than 4 p.m. EST by Wednesday, April 15th, 2019.** Said letter does not commit bidder to submit a proposal. The Letter of Intent must contain the company name, address, contact person, and contact information.

All of the Letters of Intent to Bid will be kept confidential and will be released upon written request and only after a selection has been made for the SWCT AJC Operator/Provider.

### C. Submission Instructions

To be considered for funding, proposers must submit **one (1) original proposal and four (4) copies of the proposal along with a USB flash drive which contains an electronic copy of the proposal and any attachments.** All proposals must comply with the following guidelines:

- 8½ x 11 letter size paper
- One inch margins
- No smaller than 12 point font
- Numbered pages
- Single-sided printing
- Proposal attachments must be formatted and saved in Microsoft Word.
- Proposers may NOT submit extraneous material such as brochures or newspaper articles.
- Proposals must be sequenced in accordance with the instructions provided in this RFP.

#### **D. Proposal Format**

Proposals must be prepared and sequenced in accordance with the instructions given in this part. **Proposals received after the submission deadline will be returned to the proposer.** Timely delivery of proposals to The WorkPlace is the sole responsibility of the proposer.

When complete, the proposals must contain the following sections in the order indicated:

1. Proposal Cover Page (Attachment E)
2. Previous Experience and Qualifications
3. Financial Management and Budget Form
4. Service Coordination
5. Partnerships

#### **E. Deadline for Submission of Completed Proposal**

To be considered for funding, proposers must submit one (1) original and four (4) copies of the proposal along with a Flash Drive containing a copy of the proposal in MS Office Word 2007 or higher version

to:

The WorkPlace  
Attention: Millie Brighindi  
350 Fairfield Avenue (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor)  
Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604

**American Job Center Operator/Provider  
proposals are due by:**

**Wednesday, May 15th, 2019 at 12:00 Noon EST**

Proposals must be mailed or hand delivered.  
Hand delivered proposals will be date and time stamped.  
No fax or email proposals will be accepted.

**THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS DEADLINE.**



## SECTION XI – REVIEW PROCESS

### A. Screening and Evaluation

The award of a contract for any services under this RFP is contingent upon:

1. Favorable evaluation of the proposal in relation to other proposals;
2. Approval of the proposal by The WorkPlace Board of Directors; and
3. Successful negotiation of any changes to the proposal.

An initial screening of all proposals will be conducted by staff of The WorkPlace to insure (1) the proposal was submitted on time, in the proper format and with the required number of copies attached; (2) the proposal is responsive to the RFP and all RFP questions and sections; and (3) all required signatures appear on the document. **If a proposal does not meet the technical requirements of the screening process, it may not continue through the review and rating process and will be returned to the proposer.**

If the proposal meets the requirements of the screening process, it will then be evaluated by The WorkPlace Proposal Review Team using a point system based on a Proposal Evaluation/ Rating Form. Proposals will be scored (in accordance with the schedule which follows) and recommendations made to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of The WorkPlace which will approve tentative funding. All decisions of the Executive Committee must be ratified by the full Board of Directors at its quarterly meetings.

All prospective proposers are prohibited from contacting any of The WorkPlace's Board members, Board committee members or staff (other than contact persons identified in this RFP), regarding this solicitation to avoid actual conflicts, the appearance of conflicts, or undue influence over the process. Contact with anyone for purposes of influencing the outcome of the procurement process shall result in the disqualification of the prospective proposer.

The WorkPlace maintains a policy that an organization must possess the demonstrated ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed contract prior to the contract being executed. Determinations of demonstrated performance shall take into consideration such matters as to whether the organization has:

- Adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain them;
- The ability to meet the RFP design specifications at a reasonable cost, as well as the ability to meet performance goals;
- A satisfactory record of past performance in delivering the proposed services, including demonstrated quality of services and successful outcome rates from past programs;
- The ability to provide services and/or programs that can meet the need identified;
- A satisfactory record of integrity, business ethics and fiscal accountability;
- The necessary organization, accounting and operational controls; and
- The technical skills to perform the work.

## B. Proposal Rating Criteria

Proposals will be rated according to the following criteria:

Criteria	Points
Management	15
Organizational Experience and Capacity	45
Coordination	30
Service Delivery	60
Case Management	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>

## C. Contract Award

A contract may be awarded based on offers received, without discussion of such offers with the proposers. Each offer should, therefore, be submitted in the most favorable terms, from a price and technical standpoint. However, the review team reserves the right to request additional data, oral discussion or presentation in support of written proposals. Final award of a contract shall be contingent upon:

- Successful negotiation of a contract;
- Acceptance by the proposer of the contract terms and conditions;
- Satisfactory verification of past performance and systems (e.g., financial), where applicable; and
- Availability of funding.

Applicants whose proposals were not funded shall also be notified.

## D. Contract Negotiation

The amount approved by The WorkPlace will be a maximum funding level. The WorkPlace staff will meet with the approved SWCT AJC Operator/Provider to finalize funding and project design. Staff will notify the approved SWCT AJC Operator/Provider of any modifications that are required to their original proposal to ensure that it fulfills all Board recommendations and meets the required contract format. The SWCT AJC Operator/Provider is expected to comply with all requested revisions in a timely manner so that the contract may be executed without delay. Only after authorized representatives of the SWCT AJC Operator/Provider and The WorkPlace have signed the contract may any payments be made.

If necessary, The WorkPlace may advance a maximum of ten percent (10%) of the total contract allocation to the SWCT AJC Operator/Provider as start-up funds to enable it to carry out required activities.

**Type of Contract:** The SWCT AJC Operator/Provider services will be ninety-five percent (95%) cost-reimbursement for actual expenditures and five percent (5%) for demonstrated performance. Performance will be based on achieving the WIOA Common Performance Measures.

## **Section XII – GENERAL CONDITIONS**

### **A. Conditions of this RFP**

This RFP does not commit or obligate The WorkPlace to award a contract, to commit any funds identified in this RFP document, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation or presentation of a proposal to this RFP, to pay for any costs incurred in advance of the execution of a contract, or to procure or contract for services or supplies.

The following conditions are applicable to all proposals. The WorkPlace reserves the right to:

- Accept or reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, which it considers not to be in its best interest.
- Change or waive any provisions set forth in this RFP.
- Reject non-conforming proposals without review.
- Waive informalities and minor irregularities in proposals received.
- Negotiate any and all proposed terms, conditions, costs, staffing level, services/activities mix, and all other specifics.
- Request: a) additional data, b) technical or price revisions, and/or c) oral presentations in support of the written proposal.
- Determine that an arms-length agreement exists between the proposer and any subcontractor or vendors they might choose to use.
- Conduct a pre-award review that may include, but is not limited to, a review of the proposer's record keeping procedures, management systems, accounting and administrative systems, and program materials.
- Use additional or de-obligated grant funds to increase the slot level of successful programs.
- Change specifications and modify the contract as necessary to: a) facilitate compliance with the legislation, regulations and policy directives, b) to manage funding and c) to meet the needs of the customers.
- End contract negotiations if acceptable progress, as determined by The WorkPlace is not being made within a reasonable time frame.

### **B. General Conditions**

- This RFP does not commit The WorkPlace to award a contract to any proposer. The WorkPlace shall not pay any costs incurred by any proposer in the preparation of a proposal. The WorkPlace may accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this RFP or cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP if it is in the best interest of The WorkPlace to do so.
- The WorkPlace is responsible for final review and evaluation of proposals and selection of the SWCT AJC Operator/Provider and reserves the right not to fund any or all proposals. Proposals must be complete and must follow the format outlined in the Proposal

Instructions. The WorkPlace may incorporate site visits and/or applicant interviews into the proposal review process.

- The award of a contract for any proposed service is contingent upon:
  - Favorable evaluation of the proposal in relation to other proposals;
  - Approval of the proposal by The WorkPlace Board of Directors;
  - Successful negotiation of any changes to the proposal or budget required by the Proposal Review Team.
- The WorkPlace may request additional data or an oral presentation in support of written proposals.
- The WorkPlace may require the proposer selected to participate in negotiations and to submit any price, technical or other revisions of their proposal as may result from negotiation.
- The WorkPlace reserves the right to negotiate the final terms of all contracts with the successful proposer. Items that may be negotiated include but are not limited to type and scope of services, costs and prices, service delivery timelines, target groups, management and staffing configurations and number of personnel, location of service delivery and service levels.
- The WorkPlace also reserves the right to accept any proposal as submitted for contract award, without substantive negotiation of offered terms, services, or costs. Therefore, proposers are advised to propose their most favorable terms initially.
- By submission of a proposal, the proposing organization certifies as to its legally constituted status, and that in connection with this proposal:
  - The costs in the proposal have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication or agreement, for the purpose of restricting competition as to any matter relating to such costs with any other proposer or with any competition;
  - Unless otherwise required by law, the costs which have been quoted in the proposal have not been knowingly disclosed by the proposer, and shall not be disclosed by the proposer, prior to award directly or indirectly to any other proposer or to any competition; and
  - No attempt has been made by the proposer to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition.
- Selection of the SWCT AJC Operator/Provider shall be conducted in accordance with The WorkPlace, federal and state procurement provisions. The WorkPlace may choose not to fund the proposer who has the proposal with either the lowest cost or the highest score on the proposal. In addition to the scores obtained through the rating process, The WorkPlace may consider previous experience the proposer has had in implementing similar projects, as well as the proposer's capability of initiating services throughout the SWCT SDA in a timely fashion.
- All contract awards are subject to the availability of federal and/or state funds and the execution of a contract acceptable to The WorkPlace and the selected proposer.

- **Drug Free and Smoke Free Workplace:** Proposers should note that if awarded a contract under this RFP, a drug free and smoke free workplace for both employees and customers must be maintained.
- **Non-Discrimination:** No individual shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with this solicitation on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, disability and/or any other rights protected under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Each individual shall have such rights as are available under any applicable Federal, State, or local law prohibiting discrimination. Moreover, programs must comply with the ADA, which requires, among other things, that all programs be fully accessible to persons with disabilities.
- **Job Vacancies:** the selected proposer must list all of its organization's job vacancies with the AJC.
- The WorkPlace shall perform contract compliance, programmatic and financial monitoring in connection with all provisions of this RFP.
- Selected proposer must be in compliance with Connecticut State Ethics Reform provisions.
- **Community Resources Utilization:** Proposers may involve local organizations in the development of their projects. However, joint proposers and the SWCT AJC Operator/Provider are subject to the federal procurement requirements as cited in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 2900. Joint proposers and subcontractors are subject to the approval of The WorkPlace. **No subcontracting will be allowed for case management services.**

To the extent possible Wagner-Peyser will fund services in the SWCT AJC and will be delivered by employees of the CTDOL. It is expected that the selected SWCT AJC Operator/Provider will provide those services activities which CTDOL cannot provide and that do not duplicate existing service activities.

### C. Proprietary Information

Proposals shall be received and maintained consistent with applicable Connecticut Open Records laws. Due regard will be given to the protection of proprietary information contained in all proposals received. However, proposers should be aware that all materials associated with this procurement are subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, the Privacy Act and all rules, regulations and interpretations resulting therefrom. It will not be sufficient for proposers merely to state generally that a proposal is proprietary in nature and therefore not subject to release to third parties. Those particular pages which a proposer believes to be proprietary must be specifically identified as such. Convincing explanation and rationale to justify exception from release consistent with § 1-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes must accompany the proposal. The rationale and explanation must be stated in terms of: (1) the prospective harm to the competitive position of the proposer that would result if the identified material were to be released, and (2) the reasons why the materials are legally exempt from release pursuant to the above-cited statute. Rationale and explanation of the proprietary nature of all such pages or portions thereof, as described above, should be included as an attachment.

#### **D. Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility, and Voluntary Exclusion**

Federal regulations require workforce boards to determine if a proposer is debarred, suspended, ineligible or voluntarily excluded from applying for federal funds. This will be done at the same time the "Notice of Approval" is sent to selected proposers. Proposers will be asked to sign a form certifying they are NOT currently debarred, suspended, ineligible or voluntarily excluded from applying for federal funds. **Contract negotiations will not begin until this certification form is signed and returned to The WorkPlace.**

#### **E. Equipment**

USDOL requires that property/equipment purchased with WIOA funds must be used for the purposes authorized under the Act and that all property/equipment purchased by a selected proposer with WIOA funds shall become the property of The WorkPlace.

The WorkPlace will retain title to all equipment with a value of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or more purchased with WIOA funds, and a useful life of at least twelve (12) months. Also, selected proposers are required to receive prior approval from The WorkPlace on all purchases in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

**BIDDER'S CONFERENCE CALL**

**DATE:**                    **Wednesday, April 17, 2019**

**TIME:**                    **11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. EST**

*Call in information will be provided to organizations that submit a letter of intent.*



**JFES CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS**

For additional resources governing the Jobs First Employment services Program (JFES) please use the following link:

<https://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/weltowrk/2016/PART%20II%20-%20Terms%20and%20Conditions%20SFY%2016.pdf>

## TANF Work Activities – Explanatory Guidance and Definitions

The purpose of this document is to provide explanatory and interpretive guidance regarding TANF countable work activities under the delivery of JFES for TFA recipients consistent with the requirements of the federal Deficit Reduction Act (DRA). DRA requires states to document that a certain percentage of recipients of TANF funds are employed or are engaged in work-related activities for an average number of hours per week. Only certain types of work-related activities count, and there are restriction and or limits as how some activities may be counted.

### A. Participation Rates

During federal fiscal year 2007 Connecticut must demonstrate that it has 60% of all TANF families working or engaged in an allowable and countable work-related activity for a minimum average of 30 hours per week.

Efforts should be focused on attaining the TANF All Families Participation Rate for FFY 2007, which is 60% of all families engaged in countable TANF activities for a minimum of 30 hours per week.

**Certain individuals are considered to meet the minimum federal TANF participation requirement when engaged in activities for less than 30 hours per week. These circumstances include:**

- 1. single custodial parents with a child under the age of six are determined to meet participation requirements at the rate of an average 20 hours per week in any combination of threshold and/or incremental activities;**
- 2. teen heads of households or married teen parents who have not completed high school and who are enrolled in a high school or alternative high school diploma program, or a General Equivalency Diploma program, irrespective of the number of hours of participation;**
- 3. teen heads of households or married teen parents who have completed high school or the equivalent and who are enrolled in education directly related to employment for a minimum average of 20 hours per week;**

### B. Allowable Activities

DRA specifies twelve work, training, and education activities in which individuals may participate in order to be “engaged in work” for the purpose of counting toward the work participation rate requirements. These are the “allowable activities.” DRA also establishes conditions for when

certain activities count toward participation, places limitations on certain activities, and provides exceptions for certain categories of recipients of TANF.

Allowable work activities are divided into two groups. A minimum of 20 hours per week must be spent on activities from the first group of activities. Participation in activities from the second group only counts after 20 hours of participation in the first group of activities.

ACTIVITIES COUNTING TOWARDS 20 HOUR MINIMUM (AND BEYOND)	ACTIVITIES COUNTING AFTER 20 HOUR MINIMUM IS MET
1. Unsubsidized Employment	
2. Subsidized Private Sector Employment	
3. Subsidized Public Sector Employment	
4. Paid Work Experience	
5. On-the-Job Training	
6. Job Search/Job Readiness	
7. Vocational Education Training	
8. Community Service	
9. Providing Child Care for Others Doing Community Service	
	10. Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment
	11. Education Directly Related to Employment
	12. High School Completion/GED

**First Group of Activities (counts toward 2-hour threshold):**

**Unsubsidized Employment:** Work in which wages are paid solely by the employer without public sector subsidy. Includes self-employment.

**Subsidized Private Sector Employment:** Work in the for-profit or private not-for-profit sector of the economy in which wages are paid for by the employer and another entity, usually through state or federal government assistance. Includes work study and stipends.

**Subsidized Public Sector Employment:** Work in the government sector of the economy, that is, federal, state or local governmental organizations, in which wages are paid for by the employer and another entity, usually through state or federal government assistance. Includes work-study and stipend programs.

**Paid Work Experience:** Time-limited, paid (at least the State's minimum wage), supervised work activity in the public or private sector which is intended to improve the employability of individuals.

**On-the-Job Training (OJT):** Paid and supervised work activity in the public or private sector in which the worker receives training that provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of a specific job.

**Job Search and Job Readiness:** Supervised group and individual job search activity. May include:

- classroom instruction in job search techniques, completing job applications, interviewing, resumes;
- life skills training, orientation to the world of work, motivational exercises, family budgeting, etc.;
- job placement and job development;
- job seekers support groups (job clubs).

**Vocational Education Training:** Formal occupational skills training conducted in a classroom setting, in a workplace setting, or in some combination of the two.

**Community Service:** Volunteer activity in community-based programs, the primary goal of which is community enhancement as opposed to improving the employability of individuals.

**Child Care for Others Doing Community Service:** Provision of child care services for an individual performing community service regardless of whether that person is a TFA recipient. Care for a dependent child by the second adult in a two-parent TFA household does not count.

**Second Group of Activities (counts after 20-hour threshold is met):**

**Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment:** Any suitable occupational or vocational training leading to employment.

**Education Directly Related to Employment:** in the case of recipients without a high school diploma or GED - Preparatory programs in ABE, GED and ESL when not a part of a vocational educational program.

*Exception: For married and single teen parent heads of household without a high school diploma or GED, the first 20 hours of participation meets the work participation rate.*

**High School / GED:** Participation in a high school or GED program in the case of recipients who have not completed high school.

*Exception: For married or single teen parent heads of household without a high school diploma or GED, satisfactory attendance at a secondary school or the equivalent meets the all families work participation rate.*

### **Limitations on Counting Activities**

- 1. Individuals participating in job search or job readiness activities may only be counted toward participation for a maximum of 6 weeks in any fiscal year. An individual's participation in job search and job readiness assistance does not count for a week that immediately follows four consecutive week of such participation in a fiscal year. Not more than once for any individual in a fiscal year may a state count three or four days of job search and job readiness assistance during a week as a full week of participation.**
- 2. Effective 10/1/01, enrollments in vocational education (occupational skill training) only count toward participation for a maximum of 12 months in the lifetime of a customer. Also, no more than 30% of the TANF participation rate numerator may be comprised of individuals participating in vocational education. Included in this category are married single-parent heads of household under the age of 20 who are participating in high school completion or education directly related to employment.**

### **Calculation of Monthly Participation Rate for All Families**

A state's annual participation rate is the average of the rates for each of the 12 months during a federal fiscal year. A simplified explanation of the rate calculation from a *CT Works* perspective would be as follows.

**Numerator:** Number of families receiving assistance that include an adult or minor head of household who is participating in work activities for the required number of hours.

Divided by

**Denominator:** Number of families that include an adult or minor head of household receiving assistance; **minus** the number of families sanctioned in that month for failure to participate in work activities (Note: sanction reduction limited to 3 months in preceding 12 month period).

### **Reduction of Participation Rate Due to Net Caseload Reduction**

A state may receive a pro rata reduction of its TANF participation rate goal for a current fiscal year in accordance with the percentage by which its assistance caseload in the preceding federal fiscal year was below FY 1995 levels (the former Title IV-A, AFDC caseload). The reduction may not be attributed to changes in a state's eligibility criteria.

### **Potential Penalties for Failing to Attain TANF Participation Rates**

Failure to attain the TANF participation rates (adjusted for caseload reduction) without good cause may result in a base penalty that reduces the State Family Assistance Grant (SFAG) by 5%,

For each subsequent year, the base penalty (5%) is increased by two percentage points, up to a maximum of 21%.

The penalty percentages may be reduced if the state achieved a participation rate equal to a threshold level of 60% of the minimum rate minus any caseload reduction credits.

A penalty of between 1% and 5% may be imposed if a state's failure to achieve the minimum participation rates is attributed to a failure to impose penalties against individuals who do not engage in work activities without good cause.

Failure demonstrate attainment of participation rate goals increases the percentage a state must contribute as its minimum basic Maintenance of Effort increases from 75% to 80%.

RFP for Southwestern Connecticut American Job Center Operator/Provider

BUDGET SUMMARY

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

	(1) Budget Line Items	(2) Budget Totals
<b>A. DIRECT PROGRAM COSTS</b>		
1	Staff Salaries	
2	Staff Fringe	
3	Travel	
4	Rent / Utilities	
5	Equipment - Lease/ Maintenance/ Purchase	
6	Other Direct Costs	
	a. Supplies - Office/ Postage/ Other	
	b. Telephone/ Internet	
	c. Staff Training	
	d. Conferences/ Meetings	
	e. Marketing/ Printing	
	f. Other:	
7	Insurance & Bonding	
8	Contractual/ Outsourced - identify	
9	Sub-Total Program Costs	
<b>B. PARTICIPANT COSTS</b>		
1	Participant Wages/ Stipends	
2	Participant Taxes/ Fringe	
3	Participant Supplies/ Training Needs Supplies	
4	Participant Travel	
5	Sub-Total Participant Cost	
<b>C. ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS</b>		
1	Staff Salaries	
2	Staff Fringe	
3	Other Direct Costs (Supplies, Staff Training, Conferences/Meetings)	
4	Audit/ Legal	
5	Insurance & Bonding	
6	Contractual/ Outsourced - identify	
7	Sub-Total Administrative Costs	
<b>D. TOTAL AMOUNT (A+B+C):</b>		
Signature: _____		
Title: _____		
Date: _____		

Please provide a detailed budget narrative and any budget schedules for each of the above line items.

**RFP for Southwestern Connecticut American Job Center Operator/Provider**

**COVER PAGE**

<b>Vendor Information</b>		
<b>Name</b>		
<b>Address</b>		
<b>Federal EIN #</b>		
<b>U.I. #</b>		
<b>DUNS #</b>		
<b>Contact Person</b>	<b>Name</b>	
	<b>Title</b>	
	<b>Telephone #</b>	
	<b>Fax #</b>	
	<b>Email</b>	

	<b>Amount of Request</b>
<b>Program Cost</b>	
<b>Administration</b> <i>\$25,000 maximum allowed for administrative costs associated with the AJC Operator/Provider services</i>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Authorized Representative*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Name and Title of Authorized Representative*