



# Talent Development Program

The Talent Development Program (TDP) is a business-driven funding assistance resource for qualifying Minnesota entities to provide skills training to full-time, permanent employees.

TDP offsets employer costs to train and upgrade the skills of current employees. Eligible entities must articulate that funding assistance will not only improve the skills of their workforce but also improve their business processes and competitiveness and/or avert a layoff.

## Talent Development Program Guidelines

**Eligible Employers:** Private, non-profit, or government entities located in Minnesota with at least one employee that have been in business for at least one year, are financially viable, and are current on all tax obligations. Groups of employers may collaborate on training for workers across organizations.

**Eligible Training Providers:** Public or private educational institutions; Trade associations or industry-specific trainers; Community-based organizations; Economic development agencies; Unions; Government agencies; In-house trainers.

**Eligible Types of Training:** Industry or business-specific skills; Technical or computer skills; 'Soft skills' such as leadership or management training; Training programs accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI); Training for improved efficiency as identified by industry professionals; Training from a national, regional, or state trade association that offers an independently certified curriculum and testing; Training provided in conjunction with the purchase of a new piece of equipment.

Seminars/workshops/webinars are eligible; however they must have an assessment or test tied to the training to be eligible for funding.

### **Training activities NOT eligible for TDP:**

- Personal development courses
- Onboarding or new-hire trainings
- Non-skill related assessment
- Mandated safety training (such as OSHA)
- English as a second language courses

- Basic skills or remedial education
- Non-job related training
- Directly or indirectly assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing

**Eligible Employees:** Must be at least 18 years of age, be a U.S. Citizen or have legal work authorization, employed in a permanent position for at least 6 months\* with the applicant employer and be committed to attending all trainings. Must earn an hourly wage above the state minimum wage and agree to cooperate with data collection requirements. Training may be provided to individuals or groups of employees. Seasonal, temporary, and W-9 contract employees are not eligible.

\* If the incumbent worker training is provided to a cohort, or group, of employees, not every employee in the cohort must have an established employment history with the employer for 6 months or more as long as a majority (at least 51%) of those employees being trained do meet the employment history requirement.

**Employer Responsibilities:** Entities must contribute a portion of training costs through direct cost contribution or in-kind contributions based on employer size. Examples of in-kind contributions include expenses associated with the use of on-site space and equipment during training; trainee wages, including benefits; required travel/lodging; or direct training costs.

Level of contribution required dependent on size of business:

- 50 or fewer employees = 10% of cost
- 51-100 employees = 25% of cost
- More than 100 employees = 50% of cost

## **TDP General Guidelines**

- Only one application per entity will be accepted per program year (July 1-June 30)
- One application may include multiple sets of employees and multiple training courses
- Businesses administering a current Minnesota Job Skills Partnership (MJSP) award are not eligible for TDP funds
- Maximum award per employer, per program year is \$10,000 except with special consideration and approval
- Awards are made on a first-come, first-served basis pending funding availability
- Trainings need to be completed by the end of the program year (June 30) in which they are approved. Exemptions to this expectation can be requested on a case by case basis.
- Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Applications will be reviewed by DWD staff monthly.
- Submissions meeting the intent of programming and where sufficient funds are available to support the project will receive provisional approval. Those not fundable or meeting the intent of TDP will be informed of denial.

## **TDP Steps at a Glance**

1. Employer submits proposal. Proposals submitted at the start of the program year are more likely to be funded.
2. DWD reviews proposal, asks clarifying questions.
3. DWD informs employer of provisional approval or denial.
4. DWD TDP representative conducts individual TDP employee enrollment(s) including all required forms and supporting documentation no later than two weeks before the start of training.
5. DWD matches employer application and employee enrollment(s) for correctness and informs employer that training may proceed.
6. Training proceeds. DWD representative may visit training site to verify.
7. Employer sends invoice to DWD with copies of any credentials issued or certificates of completion.
8. DWD issues payment to employer.
9. DWD conducts post-TDP follow-up with each training participant at 60 and 90 days after training completion to track service delivery, wage gains, success stories, new hiring, or for additional business services.

**Contact Betsy Hill, Employer Navigator with Duluth Workforce Development at 218-348-1322 or [bhill@duluthmn.gov](mailto:bhill@duluthmn.gov) with inquiries or to request an application.**