



Request for Proposals

For the period of July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2023

Allegheny County EARN Program: Employment, Advancement and Retention Network

Workforce Development Services

Proposals Due:

February 4, 2019 at 5:00 PM

Partner4Work
650 Smithfield Street, Suite 2600
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

RFP Release Date:

December 19, 2018

Partner4Work (TRWIB, Inc.) is an equal opportunity employer.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to persons with disabilities.

Partner4Work's EARN Program is funded by a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) grant provided by the US Department of Health and Human Services (USHHS) via the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (PADHS). CFDA # 93.558. Any agreements resulting from this RFP may be funded by Partner4Work through the TANF grant provided by USHHS and PADHS. The subrecipient must comply with all applicable regulations and the terms and conditions of the TANF grant provided by USHHS.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

This section provides general and background information needed to understand the regulatory and programmatic context of this RFP. This section also describes important details regarding the services and stakeholders related to this RFP, as well as characteristics of any agreements that may result from this RFP.

About Partner4Work

Partner4Work (P4W) is the Workforce Development Board (WDB) for Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. We connect funding, expertise and opportunities to develop a thriving workforce in the Pittsburgh region. Nationally recognized for innovation, P4W delivers workforce development solutions to meet the current and future needs of businesses and job seekers. Through collaboration with 100+ partners, P4W connects more than 60,000 adults and more than 8,000 young adults to training and employment opportunities each year. We help employers, job seekers, public agencies and policymakers by:

- Providing labor-market insights to help employers and policy-makers make informed decisions.
- Bridging the gap between job seekers and businesses in need of talent.
- Preparing young adults for their career paths.

Helping businesses find and prepare the talent they need to thrive

As a non-profit organization, P4W offers a wide variety of no-cost services to help regional employers attract the talent they need to thrive. From customized labor market data to assistance with finding diverse talent, P4W is the resource to deliver customized employment solutions for any business.

Breaking down barriers to career opportunities

P4W helps provide adult and young job seekers with the opportunities to find meaningful employment. Through our providers, we provide access to career training and exploration programs; employment assistance; job search help; and a robust summer jobs program. P4W opens the door to career opportunities.

Providing community organizations with resources to make an impact

P4W proudly partners with more than 80 organizations in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County to provide opportunities for job seekers and businesses alike. We partner with community-based organizations, economic development agencies, training providers, businesses and educators to collectively bridge the gap between people looking for work and employers in need of talent.

Purpose of this RFP

Partner4Work (P4W) is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify one or more qualified agencies to deliver the workforce services of the Allegheny County EARN Program—Employment, Advancement and Retention Network—which provides case management, career services, supportive services, training services, and job placement and retention services to clients of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) in Allegheny County. Selected applicants will propose and implement a workforce development model proven effective with TANF clients, combining strong case management and supportive services with effective job preparation, placement and retention, aligning with the P4W vision of a world-class workforce development system. The period of performance will include a base contract year that begins on July 1, 2019 and ends on June 30, 2020, and three subsequent option years, exercised at the discretion of P4W.

Overview

P4W seeks qualified service providers to ensure clients of the EARN Program participate in a high-quality service strategy that will assist them in developing and attaining meaningful goals related to career planning, skill attainment, educational attainment, advanced training, job placement, job retention and self-sufficiency outcomes.

The EARN program is designed to engage recipients of TANF in activities that prepare them for employment and provide them with opportunities to become self-sufficient. Participants of the program are referred exclusively through the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (PADHS) by staff of local County Assistance Offices (CAO). TANF recipients whose benefits are contingent on their participation in EARN, as determined by CAO caseworkers, can choose which EARN program they would like to participate in. As clients participate in EARN, they remain connected with their CAO caseworker, fulfilling any further conditions of their cash assistance and other benefits. Although P4W and its contracted EARN providers work closely with the CAO, the EARN Program does not directly administer cash assistance or any other TANF benefits, which is handled exclusively by the CAO.

EARN programs in Allegheny County are administered by P4W and the City of Pittsburgh, separately, although clients may choose to participate in the EARN programs of either administrator regardless of whether they live in or outside the City of Pittsburgh. See the following section for more details regarding EARN program locations administered by P4W. P4W administers the EARN Program with funding provided by TANF through a grant from PADHS, the state agency responsible for the fiscal, administrative and programmatic oversight of the TANF Program in Pennsylvania. As such, the federal, state and local rules and regulations governing TANF apply to any agreement resulting from this RFP. All qualified parties interested in submitting an application in response to this RFP must be familiar with the federal and state goals and requirements related to TANF and all its implementing guidelines.

Key sources of guidance and regulation for the EARN program can be found through the following. The selected applicant(s) must be familiar with these and other relevant sources of guidance.

- EARN Program Policy and Procedures Manual (PADHS), referred to herein as the EARN Manual.¹
- Cash Assistance Handbook (PADHS), especially Chapter 135: Employment and Training.²
- TANF State Plan for Pennsylvania.³

EARN Centers

Presently, P4W maintains contracts for EARN service delivery in three different locations, known as EARN centers—Downtown Pittsburgh, McKeesport and Wilkinsburg—each currently operated by a different contracted service provider. As TANF recipients are referred to the EARN Program by their CAO caseworker, they have the option to choose which EARN center they would like to enroll in. Under the current model, the Downtown EARN Center provides a central, convenient location for EARN participants throughout Allegheny County, while the EARN Centers in McKeesport and Wilkinsburg reflect areas with large concentrations of TANF recipients, making the composition of those centers more representative of the surrounding neighborhoods. In program year 2017-2018, the Allegheny County EARN Program enrolled 1,020 clients, approximately 45% of whom were served by the downtown EARN center and 55% of whom we served evenly between the McKeesport and Wilkinsburg

¹ The EARN Manual can be found on the P4W webpage dedicated to this RFP.

² PADHS Cash Assistance Handbook: http://services.dpw.state.pa.us/oimpolicymanuals/cash/Cash_Assistance_Handbook.htm

³ TANF State Plan for Pennsylvania: http://www.dhs.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/c_095465.pdf

centers. P4W does not maintain site control or ownership of any of the EARN Centers, rather, each center is managed by separate agencies through contracts with P4W, through the same agreements that govern delivery of EARN services.

All proposals must clearly describe the exact location(s) proposed for EARN centers, including description of the physical space, and meet the site standards described in the Statement of Work below. Through this RFP, P4W intends to procure service provision for the EARN Program in geographic locations similar to those currently existing; however, applicants are welcome to propose different geographic locations. Proposals with different geographic locations must provide justification based on clear rationale and well-established data, including but not limited to ease of access, proximity to prospective EARN clients (see Appendix B), added value of additional services or resources, and any other factor supporting the proposed location. Qualified applicants are welcome to submit proposals to deliver EARN services in one or more locations.

Regardless of location, proposed EARN centers must provide consistent and convenient access to the full spectrum of services defined by the Statement of Work below and have the capacity to serve at least several hundred EARN clients per year, during normal business hours, at minimum.

Population to be Served

The EARN Program receives referrals from the general population of TANF recipients in Allegheny County, which represents a diverse range of individuals who present differing levels of experience, skills and barriers to employment. In program year 2017-2018, between the three EARN centers currently in operation, the EARN Program in Allegheny County enrolled 1,020 cases referred from the County Assistance Office (CAO). Clients who enroll in EARN generally seek various career and educational goals, requiring an EARN staff capable of differentiating services to accommodate client backgrounds and experiences. Appendix B of this RFP provides an overview of TANF participation and past demographic data for the EARN Program in Allegheny County. Selected applicants will have demonstrated experience in delivering workforce development services to a similarly diverse population on a comparable scale. Selected applicants will be required to fully serve participants already enrolled in the EARN Program as of July 1, 2019.

Program Dates

Selected applicants will begin delivering the full range of services as described herein on July 1, 2019. Any agreements resulting from this RFP will include four 12-month contract periods, as shown in the table below, with the second, third and fourth contract periods renewable at the discretion of P4W, based on performance of selected applicants and funds available. P4W reserves the option to modify contracts on a year-to-year basis. The Agreement is not renewable after the fourth 12-month period. Should the outcome of this procurement result in a change of service providers and EARN centers in Allegheny County, P4W reserves the right to negotiate a transition period during which incoming and outgoing providers work concurrently to ensure a smooth transition and minimize disruptions to job seekers and employers. Such a transition period could accelerate the start date of any agreements resulting from this RFP by an estimated period of one month, requiring the selected applicant(s) to begin on June 1, 2019.

Anticipated Program Dates and Contract Periods		
Contract period 1 (base)	July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020	Base contract award
Contract period 2 (option)	July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021	Renewable by P4W

Contract period 3 (option)	July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022	Renewable by P4W
Contract period 4 (option)	July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023	Renewable by P4W

Anticipated Award

As a result of this RFP, P4W expects to award one or more contracts with both cost-reimbursement and performance payment components. P4W intends to provide up to \$2.65 million (in total) for delivery of all services described in this RFP, made available through cost-reimbursement, for the period of July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. In addition, P4W anticipates up to \$350,000 (in total) will be available based on performance of selected providers. See sections on cost reimbursement and performance payments below.

The actual amount of award will be based on the proposed budgets, availability of funds, and standards for the use of public funds (all costs must be reasonable and necessary to carry out the planned functions, allowable, and allocable to the proper grant/cost categories). P4W is unable to define with certainty the TANF allocation (administrative and programmatic funds) that will be made available for any agreement resulting from this RFP. Final funding awards will be based upon TANF funding allocations, P4W priorities and other factors, at the discretion of P4W. P4W reserves the right to vary or change the terms of any contract executed as a result of this RFP, including funding levels, the scope of work, performance standards, and shortening or extending the contract period, as it deems necessary and in the best interests of P4W. The proposal(s) most advantageous to P4W in terms of quality and cost will be recommended for funding.

Program Cost Reimbursement

The majority of funds for any agreement resulting from this RFP will be made available on a cost reimbursement basis. See the section on anticipated award for estimated amounts. This means your organization must have the financial capacity to pay all program costs up front. P4W will require an invoice, proof of expenses, and required documentation to process a reimbursement. P4W will only reimburse the provider for actual expenses incurred during the effective dates of the contract. The reimbursement timeline will be finalized during the contract negotiation. Allowable costs will be determined by all applicable federal, state and local regulations, including but not limited to the Uniform Guidance⁴ and TANF regulations.

Performance Payments

In addition to the reimbursable amount of any agreement resulting from this RFP, selected applicants(s) will be eligible to receive performance payments based on the standards defined by the EARN Manual and reflected in the Statement of Work below—job placement, job retention and credentialing. Performance payments will be made according to the following criteria, up to the estimated amount available for such payments described in section on anticipated award. P4W reserves the right to change the criteria and amounts for performance payments shown below at any time during the contract period, including discontinuing performance payments completely. See *Statement of Work, Performance Requirements and Standards*, as well as the EARN Manual for further detail regarding the definition of the below performance standards.

⁴ See the Office of Management and Budget’s Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 CFR 200.

PERFORMANCE PAYMENT CRITERIA ⁵	
Placement Tier 1	Contracted provider will receive \$450 for each EARN case who achieves a Tier 1 Placement, as defined by the EARN Manual, within the contract period.
Placement Tier 2	Contracted provider will receive \$150 for each EARN case who achieves a Tier 2 Placement, as defined by the EARN Manual, within the contract period.
Self-Sufficiency Wage ⁶	Contracted provider will receive \$100 for each EARN case who achieves a Tier 1 placement with an hourly wage that meets or exceeds the P4W self-sufficiency wage - \$14.59 per hour at the time of this RFP. This payment is in addition to the payment for Placement Tier 2.
Retention	Contracted provider will receive \$550 for each EARN case who completes all six consecutive months of retention, as defined by the EARN Manual, within the contract period. ⁷
Credentialing	Contracted provider will receive \$250 for each case who obtains a credential, as defined by the EARN Manual, within the contract period.

Performance payments made to selected applicants must be reinvested in the EARN program. Plans and activities related to spending performance payments are subject to approval by P4W and selected applicants will be required to maintain and make available documentation demonstrating how performance payments were spent. P4W intends to calculate and distribute performance payments on a quarterly basis; however, selected applicants should expect to receive performance payments several months after the quarter of performance due to the time required for data collection and validation.

How can you partner with us?

Through this RFP, P4W seeks to identify one or more qualified agencies to provide a broad range of career, training and supportive services to EARN clients in a highly collaborative environment, the goal of which is to connect EARN clients with employer-driven job placement and educational opportunities, creating pathways for economic and career success. P4W encourages potential applicants to consider ideas for collaboration with or integration of additional programs and services delivered or overseen by P4W, including any other programs and services for which P4W is currently seeking proposals. Selected applicants(s) will be a subrecipient of TANF funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (PADHS) through an agreement with P4W.

Potential applicants must think strategically and innovatively about proposing a service delivery model that best meets the needs of EARN clients and will lead to long-term success while also satisfying the requirements of TANF, PADHS and P4W. Applicants are encouraged to include two-generation program components into their proposed model that meet the needs of both parents and children in a family unit, as described in the EARN Manual. P4W also encourages potential applicants to consider ideas for collaboration with or integration of additional programs and services delivered or overseen by P4W, including any other programs and services for which P4W is currently seeking proposals. Qualified applicants must demonstrate programmatic capacity to successfully deliver EARN services, site management capacity to effectively operate the proposed EARN center(s), and administrative capacity to ensure all fiscal requirements of any agreement resulting from this RFP are met.

⁵ P4W anticipates up to \$350,000 (in total) will be available to contracted providers based on performance payment criteria. This is a total amount for all agreements resulting from this RFP, not an amount per agreement.

⁶ The self-sufficiency wage is subject to change at any time throughout the contract period, per the P4W Self-Sufficiency Policy: <https://www.partner4work.org/uploads/p4w-self-sufficiency-policy-py2018.pdf>

⁷ P4W will not offer performance payments for months of retention completed before all six consecutive months of retention.

Through this RFP, P4W intends to procure service provision for the EARN Program in geographic locations similar to those currently existing (see the section on EARN centers above); however, applicants are welcome to propose different geographic locations. Proposals with different geographic locations must provide justification based on clear rationale and well-established data, including but not limited to ease of access, proximity to prospective EARN clients (see Appendix B), added value of additional services or resources, and any other factors supporting the proposed location. Qualified applicants are welcome to submit proposals to deliver EARN services in one or more locations.

Who can apply?

Eligible applicants include non-profit and for-profit organizations, private sector entities, educational institutions, community-based organizations and other entities operating in accordance with federal, state and local law, and in business for at least three years. Applicants must be an incorporated organization. **Eligible applicants must be in good standing with the federal government, not debarred, and have proof of insurance and a DUNS number.** Organizations currently barred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by a Federal, State, City or County department/agency, quasi-governmental agency, or Partner4Work (P4W) are ineligible to apply. See Appendix C for more information on administrative requirements for selected applicants.

A group of two or more applicants may apply as a consortium, but the lead applicant/fiscal agent must be clearly identified. In this scenario, P4W will contract with one lead organization. All entities whether directly contracted or subcontracted via the lead applicant/fiscal agent will be held to the requirements of federal, state, and local policies. Please be aware that additional monitoring, compliance, and assessment requirements will become the responsibility of the lead applicant/fiscal agent.

Selected applicants will have demonstrated experience and expertise in the provision of high-quality workforce development services to the target populations described in this RFP. Programs should be grounded in the communities they serve, with staff focused on providing culturally competent services and a history of successful workforce development programming.

Applicant Competency – All applicants must have the technical competence, knowledge and expertise, management and administrative capabilities and capacity, professional staff, financial resources and stability, and administrative and fiscal systems to carry-out the work described in this RFP. Applicants must meet high standards of public service and fiduciary responsibility. P4W requires assurance that the selected applicant(s)'s performance of the terms and conditions of any agreement resulting from this RFP be undertaken in accordance with the highest level of integrity and business ethics. Applicants must be able to implement a system of self-monitoring, including the review of key data related to performance, quality assurance, financial integrity and accuracy and one-stop center operations. Applicants are responsible for being knowledgeable of all laws, regulations, rules, and policies of the funding sources identified in this RFP. If P4W determines, at its sole discretion, that the selected applicant(s) is not responsible, that it does not possess the administrative, fiscal, and/or technical resources and capabilities necessary to successfully perform under the terms and conditions of an agreement, it shall terminate the agreement immediately.

Labor Market Dynamics in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County

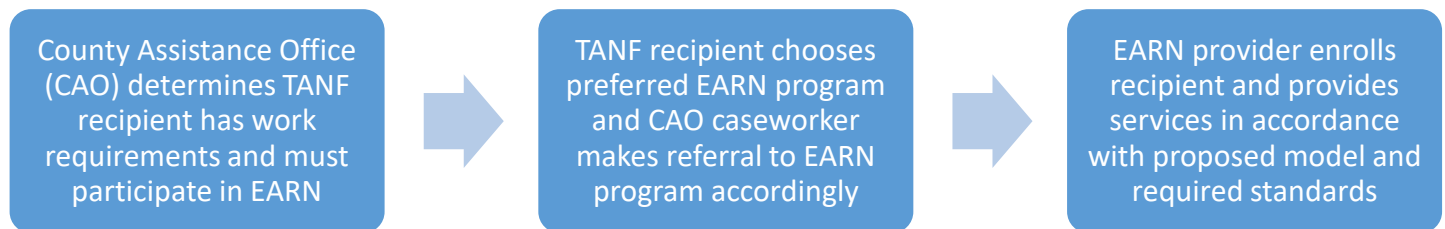
Allegheny County is home to approximately 1,231,500 residents, which represents 9.6% of Pennsylvania’s population and 49.7% of the population in the Southwest Pennsylvania Region (counties of Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Washington, and Westmoreland). With a job base of about 756,000, Allegheny County comprises about 12% of Pennsylvania’s and 60% of the regional labor market. Local average wages are above the regional and state average. However, in 2017, almost 38% of jobs in Allegheny County paid less than \$15 per hour, and 56% paid less than \$20 an hour. Although some in-demand and opportunity industries and occupations pay well and require strong technical skills and base knowledge, 37.2% of jobs in this area require less than a four-year degree.

Please review Partner4Work’s WIOA Multi-Year Local Plan (PY2017 – PY2019) for more information on the labor force, population and employer dynamics in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County.⁸ Also visit the P4W website for current information on the job market, industry profiles, special reports on a wide range of workforce issue and more.

STATEMENT OF WORK

The Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) program is designed to assist participants of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in their transition from receiving public benefits to sustained participation in the workforce, moving clients toward self-sufficiency and meaningful employment and eliminating their need for public assistance. Selected applicants(s) will implement an innovative and tested employment and training model to deliver EARN services that aligns with the P4W vision of a world-class workforce development system and complies with all federal, state and local rules and regulations governing EARN and other TANF activities.

Selected applicants will provide workforce development services, including but not limited to job readiness, vocational training and education, work-based training, job search, job placement, job retention, credentialing, case management and other job-related services to eligible TANF clients in Allegheny County per the requirements of the EARN program. The County Assistance Office (CAO) of the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (PADHS) will determine client eligibility for the EARN program and refer clients to the EARN Program based on CAO policies and procedures. The selected applicants will work closely with P4W to promote their program to the CAO and provide a high level of customer service to CAO staff at all points of interaction.



In providing the services described herein, selected applicants will maintain and employ a current knowledge of effective workforce development practices, ensure meaningful client participation in required work and work-related activities, as determined by the CAO, leverage the resources of the broader workforce development system in Allegheny County and follow all applicable federal, state and local laws and policies.

⁸ P4W’s WIOA Local Plan <https://www.partner4work.org/uploads/partner4work-local-plan-state-approved-12212017.pdf>

Central to successful delivery of services solicited by this RFP is compliance with all provisions of the **EARN Program Policy and Procedures Manual** (referred to hereafter as “the **EARN Manual**”), published by PADHS, including any subsequent changes to the Manual. See the EARN Manual for a listing of employment and training activities that selected applicants must be prepared to provide for EARN clients.⁹ Selected applicants should also be familiar and compliant with the PADHS Cash Assistance Handbook,¹⁰ especially Chapter 135: Employment and Training Requirements, and the TANF State Plan for Pennsylvania.¹¹

As a provider of EARN services in Allegheny County, selected applicants will actively participate with P4W in shaping and informing the local workforce development system. As such, selected applicants will maintain current knowledge of and expertise in:

- Federal, state, and local policies, including TANF and its implementing guidance;
- Evidence-based workforce development practices and viable career pathways; and
- Local workforce development programs, services and related resources.

1. Referral and Enrollment

Selected applicants will accept and engage all eligible client referrals from the CAO for the EARN Program, including conducting outreach to clients referred by the CAO to encourage EARN participation and address any questions or concerns before enrollment. Selected applicants will conduct a case review for all referrals to become familiar with the client’s background and circumstances, including, if available:

- Case narratives (if applicable)
- Agreement of Mutual Responsibility (AMR) – a written individualized document establishing responsibilities of TANF recipients, including participation in approved work and work-related activities
- Medical information, including physician, clinic and hospital records (if applicable)
- Work, family and social history
- Identified barriers to employment or participation in the EARN program
- Information regarding the client’s current and past participation in employment, training and educational programs, including outcomes of such experiences
- Information regarding services the client is receiving from other agencies/providers, and
- Any other pertinent information

Upon reporting to the EARN center, selected applicants will complete enrollment and orient all EARN clients to program requirements and policies, including all responsibilities of the client and selected applicant, resources and staff of the EARN center, work and work-related activities and hourly participation requirements. Selected applicants will work with clients to ensure all requirements of EARN program enrollment are completed, including registration in required information systems and completion of forms required by the EARN Manual and P4W.

Selected applicants may choose the timing of orientation sessions for new EARN cases, pending approval from P4W; however, selected applicants should make reasonable attempts to accommodate referred individuals with legitimate scheduling conflicts. A referred individual must be given every opportunity to report to the program and should not be immediately rejected if late for orientation or a scheduled appointment date. It is recommended that selected applicants work with the CAO before rejecting a referred individual.

⁹ The EARN Manual can be found on the P4W webpage dedicated to this RFP.

¹⁰ PADHS Cash Assistance Handbook: http://services.dpw.state.pa.us/oimpolicymanuals/cash/Cash_Assistance_Handbook.htm

¹¹ TANF State Plan for Pennsylvania: http://www.dhs.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/c_095465.pdf

2. Participation and Attendance

Selected applicants will ensure EARN clients participate in the EARN Program for at least the minimum number of hours as determined by the CAO, recorded on the client's AMR, and maintain documentation verifying client participation and attendance in work and work-related activities per the EARN Manual.

3. Career Services

Selected applicants will deliver professional, high quality career services to all EARN clients that create opportunities for economic and career success by preparing for, securing and maintaining suitable employment, connecting clients with employer-driven job placement, education and training options. Such services include but are not limited to career counseling; provision of information and assistance regarding the labor market and available training programs; job readiness, job searching, job placement and retention services; and referral to partner organizations offering further career resources and services, as applicable. Selected applicants will also provide workshops to EARN clients. Workshops will cover but not be limited to job search and soft skills, such as interviewing techniques, resume preparation, networking, effective communications skills, conflict resolution, computer literacy and job readiness training.

Selected applicants will provide initial and ongoing assessment of EARN clients, including identification of strengths and barriers to employment, educational and employment experience, basic skill levels, supportive service needs and any other factors relevant to achieving personal and programmatic goals. Selected applicants will assist EARN clients in identifying employment goals and establishing individual service plans consistent with assessments to reach goals and fulfill required work and work-related activities. Service plans will address the needs and concerns of the client and the household and contain all recommended services, referrals, activities and supports. In planning and delivering career services, selected applicants will employ an evidence-based triage process that effectively assesses clients to determine and provide the most appropriate career services.

Selected applicants will also maintain a "resource room" containing current job listings; local labor market information; information on job search methods; lists of current training opportunities; information on partner community services and resources; computers for internet job search; workstations for resume preparation; telephones and fax machines for employer contacts; and a schedule of workshops, job fairs, and other events.

Upon placement in unsubsidized employment (see the EARN Manual for definitions of job placement), selected applicants will provide retention services to help EARN clients stay employed and move along a defined career pathway. Retention services involve more than asking for paystubs and attempted contact with clients. Retention services must focus on helping ensure the transition to work goes well. Retention services may include but are not limited to contact to determine work status; counseling regarding the workplace; additional career planning and counseling; job re-placement; and referral to supportive services.

Additional services, if determined appropriate for obtaining or retaining employment as identified by assessment, skill deficiency, or length of unemployment may consist of, but are not limited to:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs which may include diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools and in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals.

- Development of an individualized employment plan to identify participant career pathway and employment goals, related objectives, and appropriate services to achieve goals.
- Group, individual, and career counseling which may include networking and job clubs.
- Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills and professional conduct.
- Internships and work experiences linked to career pathways.
- Provision of information and referral to additional services as appropriate including financial literacy services and English language acquisition programs.

4. Case Management and Supportive Services

Central to the success of the EARN program is quality case management and provision of supportive services that enable EARN clients to overcome barriers to employment and complete the goals of the EARN program.

Selected applicants will provide case management services to EARN clients throughout their participation in the EARN program, including during retention. Case management will involve continually assessing the comprehensive needs of clients and facilitating the coordination of services and supports to address those needs, which may include involvement of multiple agencies and resources, to ensure clients can fully participate in the EARN program. Selected applicants will encourage self-determination and individual agency of EARN clients throughout provision of case management to promote self-sufficiency and ensure suitability of services.

Selected applicants will ensure EARN clients have access to basic supports needed to fully participate in the EARN Program, especially individuals with barriers to employment, either by providing supportive services directly or leveraging a referral network of service agencies, according to the common needs of EARN clients. The proposed case management model and related supportive services must consider both parents and children in a family unit, incorporating two generational components, as described in the EARN Manual. Applicants should also consider additional, innovative approaches to case management and supportive services, including trauma-informed care and motivational interviewing. Selected applicants will maintain current information and provide assistance related to such services and supports, including but not limited to mental and behavioral health services, housing assistance, support for domestic abuse, child care, legal assistance, child support, medical assistance, food and clothing assistance, the Earned Income Tax Credit and other supportive services, as appropriate.

Selected applicants will administer transportation assistance to eligible clients at the direction of P4W, mainly in the form of bus passes and gas cards, including requesting such assistance from a third party designated by P4W, distributing assistance to eligible clients and tracking usage of assistance.

Selected applicants will not issue special allowances to EARN clients, but if appropriate, may assist the clients in making the request for supportive services to the CAO.

5. Training, Education and Credentialing Services

Training and education services can be critical to the employment success of EARN clients. Selected applicants will implement an approach to training and education services for EARN clients in close coordination and

consultation with P4W, driven by in-demand employment opportunities that provide career pathways and self-sustaining wages. Selected applicants will provide or connect eligible EARN clients to training and educational opportunities including but not limited to vocational training, adult basic education, English as a second language (ESL), on-the-job training and other types of vocational or work-based training likely to enhance client employability and career prospects. Selected applicants will ensure that participation in training and educational programs is well-aligned with AMR requirements and provides a meaningful opportunity for clients to progress toward goals of individual service plans. Eligibility to participate in training and education services will be determined by the CAO and must comply with the provisions of the Manual. As appropriate, and as allowed by applicable rules and regulations, selected providers will provide or connect EARN clients with adult basic education and remediation services who require such services in order to participate in training.

P4W prioritizes the achievement of credentials by EARN clients that reflect valuable and marketable skills directly related to employment. Selected applicants will utilize a combination of in-house and third-party activities to provide clients with the opportunity to obtain an EARN-recognized credential. Activities leading to an EARN-recognized credential may include vocational education, On-the-Job Training (OJT), Paid Work Experience (PWE) and other activities deemed suitable by PADHS and P4W. All credentialing activities are subject to P4W approval and must be submitted to P4W for review before EARN clients begin participating.

6. Community Service

Selected applicants will identify, establish and coordinate Community Service (CS) activities for EARN clients, in accordance with the EARN Manual. CS is a beneficial activity available for individuals with minimal work history or who live in communities with limited employment. CS allows individuals who receive TANF the opportunity to work in their community and gain valuable work experience. The CAO calculates the number of weekly hours an individual may participate in CS, which must be listed on the Agreement of Mutual Responsibility (AMR). A Community Service Agency Agreement (PA 1694) conveys the maximum number of weekly hours of participation. Upon agreement by the CS agency and the client, this form must be to the CAO to identify the location of the CS site and describe the job duties.

7. Client Incentives

Client incentives are positive reinforcements to promote client participation and achievement. Incentives are available to clients upon meeting an objective or standard. Incentives are not based on need. Selected applicants will administer, distribute and document all incentives to EARN clients in accordance with the EARN Manual and P4W policies and protocols. Selected applicants will maintain a list of all incentives issued that includes the following information, at minimum: amount and type of incentive issued, name of individual receiving incentive, date issued and reason for issuance of incentive. All incentives given to a participant should also be recorded in the CWDS case narrative. The issuance of client incentives is subject to monitoring. To be eligible for an incentive, an EARN participant must be enrolled, in compliance with required hours and Activity Compliance Rate (ACR), and meeting all other program expectations, including expectations regarding conduct and active involvement in activities.

8. Employer Engagement

Strong connections with employers is pivotal to creating job opportunities and sustainable careers for EARN clients. Selected applicants will coordinate employer engagement activities closely with P4W, including PA CareerLink® Pittsburgh/Allegheny County, to promote the EARN Program and ensure an aligned approach that secures job openings for EARN clients and assists employers in overcoming the challenges of recruiting and retaining talent.

Selected applicants will build and maintain relationships with local employers and ensure EARN programming reflects employer needs and preferences so participants can experience relevant and realistic career exploration, work-based learning, subsidized employment, mentoring, volunteer opportunities, and ultimately, sustainable employment. Selected applicants will strive to position EARN clients to help employers overcome the challenges of recruiting, retaining, and developing talent. To support area employers and industry sectors most effectively, selected applicants will have a clear understanding of industry skill needs; identify appropriate strategies for assisting employers; and employ an integrated business services strategy that aligns with the efforts of P4W.

Selected applicants will perform the employer engagement activities:

- Establish relationships with employers that lead to use of the EARN Program as viable source of talent.
- Assist employers in effectively understanding and utilizing the EARN Program.
- Explore hiring needs and requirements with employers to develop job opportunities for EARN clients.
- Develop and promote employer job openings to EARN clients.
- Prepare job seekers for applications and interviews with engaged employers.
- Facilitate access to space for employers to conduct interviews, recruitment events and other meetings.
- Connect employers with resources and opportunities available through P4W and the larger workforce development system.
- Work with P4W and employers to identify and develop customized training and pre-employment opportunities.

9. Site Administration and Operations

Selected applicants will make available a convenient, accessible location,¹² referred to as an EARN center, from which clients and partner organizations can fully participate in the EARN Program. The location and space arrangements for the EARN center must be approved by P4W; however, selected applicants will be responsible for site administration, operations and service delivery within the EARN center. P4W does not currently maintain site control or ownership of EARN centers.¹³ Selected applicants must provide access to the EARN center for clients during normal business hours, at minimum, and maintain a safe, professional and ADA compliant environment for EARN participants and staff. As a responsible site administrator, selected applicants must maintain written policies and procedures governing the security, delivery of services and use of space within the EARN center.

10. Partner Collaboration and Referrals

P4W is committed to effectively leading the workforce development system in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, including funding and supporting various workforce activities outside the scope of this RFP. Selected applicants

¹² Qualified applicants are welcome to submit proposals to deliver EARN services in one or more locations. See the *General Information* section for more information on EARN centers and location.

¹³ P4W reserves the right to exercise site control or change the location of EARN centers at any time during the contract period.

will work closely with P4W to collaborate and coordinate activities with the stakeholders and initiatives that comprise the larger workforce development system led by P4W, especially PA CareerLink Pittsburgh/Allegheny County. Such initiatives include but are not limited to P4W programs funded by WIOA, TANF, and other public and private funds. To facilitate collaboration and coordination of activities, selected applicants will:

- Share information and best practices with P4W and its network of providers
- Coordinate service delivery with partners to increase efficiency and reduce duplication, including career services, training services, business services and supportive services
- Assist P4W in developing a strong portfolio of workforce programs
- Assist P4W in developing strategies for co-enrollment with partner programs
- Participate in meetings, conference calls, pilot programs and recruitment events organized by P4W and its network of providers
- Assist P4W in obtaining additional public and private funds that build capacity of the local workforce development system

P4W also expects selected applicants to coordinate program management closely with other agencies contracted by P4W to deliver services for the Allegheny County EARN Program. Such coordination is needed to ensure consistency of services, share best practices that could improve performance of partner agencies, and present a unified message to stakeholders of the Allegheny County EARN Program.

To ensure all EARN clients have access to the services that best meet their needs, the selected applicants will readily embrace collaboration and coordination with partner agencies, providing referrals to other workforce and supportive service organizations appropriately, including but not limited to PA CareerLink® and P4W provider networks. Selected applicants will track, monitor and report on referrals made by and received from community partners to identify trends and opportunities for system improvements. Additionally, selected applicants will work closely with P4W to identify and integrate complimentary services and enhancements at EARN centers that help to better serve job seekers. Examples include but are not limited to providing basic counseling services, financial education and assistance with tax preparation.

11. Staff Training and Development

Selected applicants must employ highly qualified and professional staff at all levels throughout the period of performance whose quality of work is reflective of the world-class workforce development system sought by P4W. Staff are required to maintain current knowledge and expertise in the following:

- Career counseling and customer service best practices
- Case management competencies and strategies for integrating supportive services into programming
- Labor market information, including characteristics of supply (labor) and demand (employers)
- Initiatives, programs and services of P4W and the broader workforce development system
- Viable career pathways and how to connect EARN clients appropriately
- Availability of industry and employer-recognized training and educational programs and opportunities
- Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS)
- Impact of trauma and poverty on job seekers and related interpersonal strategies
- Local resources and services to assist individuals facing barriers to employment

- Culturally competent service delivery

12. Performance Requirements and Standards

The primary standards of performance for the EARN Program, established by PADHS and used as measures of success for any agreement resulting from this RFP, are job placement, job retention and credentialing. Basic definitions of each measure are provided below. For complete definitions, refer to the EARN Manual.

EARN PERFORMANCE DEFINITIONS	
Placement Tier 1	Clients must attain Unsubsidized Employment (AC 33), working a minimum of 80 hours in a four-consecutive week period. The four-week period must begin within 180 days of enrollment. Certain circumstances allow for the 180-day period to be extended (see the EARN Manual for full details).
Placement Tier 2	Client must meet all of the standards for Tier 1 placement. Additionally, client is making at least \$10 per hour at any time during the current EARN enrollment.
Placement Tier 3	Client must meet all of the standards for Tier 1 placement. Additionally, client must have earnings that result in the closure of their TANF budget. Tier 2 is not required to meet Tier 3.
Retention	After a client meets the Placement Tier 1 goal, the client must retain Unsubsidized Employment (AC 33) of at least 80 hours in any calendar month for up to six consecutive months following the placement month. A client may meet the retention goal up to six times in the six months following the placement month. A client may not have hours counted in the same calendar month for both placement and retention.
Credentialing	In the credentialing component, a client must receive a diploma or certification that will provide the client with a valuable and marketable skill directly related to employment.

Selected applicants must meet or exceed the following performance goals for each of the above standards, set by P4W, during the term of any agreement resulting from this RFP. These goals are based on historical performance of EARN service providers in recent years.

REQUIRED CONTRACT PERFORMANCE GOALS		
Placement Rate: Tier 1	Number of cases who achieve Tier 1 placement within the contract period divided by number of new EARN cases within the contract period.	50%
Placement Rate: Tier 2	Number of cases who achieve Tier 2 placement within the contract period divided by number of cases who achieved Tier 1 Placement within the contact period.	60%
Placement Rate: Tier 3	Number of cases who achieve Tier 3 placement within the contract period divided by number of cases who achieved Tier 1 Placement within the contact period.	75%

Retention Rate	Number of cases who complete all six consecutive months of retention within the contract period divided by number of cases who achieved Tier 1 Placement within the contract period.	30%
Credentialing Rate	Number of cases who obtain an EARN-recognized credential within the contract period divided by number of new EARN cases within the contract period.	20%
Activity Compliance Rate	Number of cases fulfilling the activity requirements of their EARN participation divided by number of new EARN cases within the contract period.	60%
Referral to Enrollment Rate	Number of cases enrolled in the EARN program within the contract period divided by number of referrals made to the EARN program by the County Assistance Office (CAO) within the contract period.	65%

Poor Performance: In the event selected applicant’s performance of the services described herein does not result in the goals defined above, P4W will work with selected applicants to improve performance; however, especially in cases of chronic underperformance, P4W may implement corrective measures or terminate the Agreement upon notice to selected applicants.

13.Data Management and Reporting

Selected applicants must regularly track and monitor data related to EARN participation and outcomes, using observations and evaluation to ensure continuous program improvement. Such efforts must be supported by strong internal systems and applications. Selected applicants are required to provide P4W with timely reports and supporting documentation that clearly demonstrate program enrollment, participation, activity compliance, progress, outputs and outcomes. P4W will work with selected applicants to understand reporting requirements and program exiting procedures, and to determine the appropriate template for reporting outcomes and performance. Reporting frequency and content are subject to change at the discretion of P4W. Possible areas of reporting include but are not limited to:

- Referrals and enrollments
- Activities and services clients are engaged in
- Credentials attained
- Job placements and retentions
- Client wages and benefits
- Incentives issued to clients
- Partner referrals
- Customer satisfaction rates
- Number and volume of employer engagement

14.Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS)

Selected applicants will be required to utilize the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) as the information system of record for all participant and employer communication, service provision and other program activity and must ensure that all data is entered accurately and in a timely manner, adhering to all

applicable data rules, regulations and entry time requirements. Staff must be fully competent in utilizing CWDS and providing basic guidance regarding CWDS to other service providers within the P4W network, including querying and producing reports from CWDS regarding the EARN Program. P4W will utilize data from CWDS, as well as data collected from other sources, to determine program compliance and evaluate performance of selected applicants.

Selected applicants will follow guidelines for proper use of CWDS provided by PADHS and/or P4W and maintain internal protocols for uniformed and detailed case notes to ensure clear and consistent tracking and documentation of progress throughout the program. The selected applicant will participate in data quality, validation and compliance activities required by PADHS and/or P4W, as well as regular meetings and review of performance reports, and other written reports when requested.

Selected applicants will identify staff members whose work requires access to CWDS and submit applications for CWDS access per local protocols, subject to approval by P4W. Appropriate staff members to receive CWDS access include case managers, employment specialists, job developers, and other staff members who have regular contact with participants or whose work requires monitoring and oversight of participant data maintained in CWDS. CWDS account credentials and login information may not be shared between staff members or other individuals. Selected applicants must submit notification if any staff member with CWDS access is terminated, voluntarily or involuntarily, within 24 hours of termination. Failure to do so may result in revocation of CWDS access for selected applicants and contract termination.

15. Records and Documentation

The selected applicants must retain, secure and ensure the accuracy of all program files and records, whether related to clients, employers or general operations, in compliance with related federal and state regulations, and P4W's record retention requirements. Files must be retained for seven years after P4W reports final expenditures to the funding source. The selected applicant(s) must allow P4W and representatives of other regulatory authorities access to all records, program materials, staff and participants related to any agreements resulting from this RFP.

The selected applicant(s) are responsible for maintaining and securing participant case files at all times, as well as ensuring privacy and protection of all personal information collected from participants per the EARN Manual and applicable laws, regulations and P4W policies. Accurate documentation showing evidence of time spent in activities and work are critical to meeting performance. Case files are the property of P4W and must contain a variety of documentation including but not limited to:

- Identification and contact information
- Release of Information Form
- Assessment information and service plans
- Attendance forms, time sheets and excused absences
- Client contacts and updates
- Job search logs, time and attendance sheets
- Employment Verification Forms (EVF) and paystubs
- Verification of retention
- Other relevant forms and information

Selected applicants are also responsible for maintaining clear and detailed narratives for each client in their case file. Case narratives must include but are not limited to:

- Date, time and location of all EARN-related contacts
- Purpose and outcome of all EARN-related contacts
- Any changes in the client's conditions or circumstances
- Solutions offered and related client responses
- Services and supports needed, requested or provided
- Pertinent information received from the CAO
- Other relevant information.

Confidentiality of client information must be maintained to meet the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 and any other confidentiality requirements applicable to the services described here. All case files must be properly stored in a secured space with limited staff access. Each staff member who has contact with clients or client information must receive training on HIPAA and other confidentiality requirements. New staff members must be trained in HIPAA requirements within 14 days of the start of employment. Selected applicants must maintain documentation demonstrating completion of confidentiality training for each staff member who has contact with clients or client information related to the services described in this RFP. Selected applicants acknowledge that the use or disclosure of client information, including information of applicants or recipients of public assistance, for purposes other than the effective delivery of the services described here is strictly prohibited by state and federal law. Staff of selected applicants may have access to this information only on a “need to know” basis. Selected applicants must inform employees that inappropriate use of such information may result in disciplinary action, including discharge, or criminal prosecution if the employee knowingly uses the information for fraudulent purposes. Selected applicants will require staff members accessing confidential information related to the services described here to sign an acknowledgement evidencing their understanding and agreement concerning the confidential nature of the information. These obligations will survive the expiration or termination of any agreement resulting from this RFP.

16.Contract Oversight and Evaluation

P4W is responsible for all levels of program monitoring, compliance and evaluation for all activities of the Allegheny County EARN Program. Selected applicants will be required to keep good records and collect data that will help P4W comply with such requirements and sustain highly effective workforce development programming.

P4W Responsibilities: P4W will monitor, evaluate and provide guidance and direction to selected applicants in the conduct of services performed under any agreement resulting from this RFP. P4W has the responsibility to determine whether selected applicants has spent funds in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, including federal audit requirements and will monitor the activities of selected applicants to ensure such requirements are met. P4W may require selected applicants to take corrective action if deficiencies are found.

SUBRECIPIENT Responsibilities: Selected applicants will permit P4W to carry out monitoring and evaluation activities, including any performance measurement system required by applicable law, regulation, and funding source guidelines, and selected applicants agrees to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, the cooperation of its agents, employees and board members in such monitoring and evaluation efforts. This provision shall survive the expiration or termination of any agreement resulting from this RFP.

Selected applicants shall cooperate fully with any reviews or audits of the activities under any agreement resulting from this RFP by authorized representatives of P4W or federal or state agencies and selected applicants agrees to ensure to the extent possible the cooperation of its agents, employees and board members in any such reviews and audits. This provision shall survive the expiration or termination of any agreement resulting from this RFP.

Selected applicants understands that all books and records pertaining to any agreement resulting from this RFP, including payroll and attendance records of participating employees, are subject to inspection by P4W, federal or state agencies and others for auditing, monitoring or investigating activities pursuant to any agreement resulting from this RFP. Said books and records shall be maintained for a period of SEVEN (7) years beyond the completion of any agreement resulting from this RFP. If selected applicants receives notice of any litigation or claim involving the grant award or otherwise relating to any agreement resulting from this RFP, selected applicants shall retain records until otherwise instructed by P4W.

PROPOSAL PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS

This section provides instructions for preparing and submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, including required proposal contents and format, important dates and deadlines, and how to find out more about the RFP. Before preparing and submitting a proposal, interested and qualified applicants are highly encouraged to read all other sections of this RFP and key source documents referenced throughout, especially the Statement of Work, to gain a full understanding of the services requested and provider characteristics and competencies sought.

How to Apply

All proposals must be submitted to Partner4Work (P4W) electronically via email to EARN@partner4work.org and physically to 650 Smithfield Street, Suite 2600, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Five physical copies of the proposal must be submitted. Both electronic and physical proposals must be identical and received by P4W no later than Monday, February 4, 2019 at 5:00 pm EST in order to be considered. Emails must have the subject line "EARN Proposal [Organization name]." Late proposals will not be considered. Proposals must be submitted in 12-point, Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch page margins. Your proposal may not be considered if page limitations and formatting requirements are not met. Your proposal must contain all the content below in the same general order illustrated. Strong proposals will demonstrate a full understanding of the requirements described throughout this RFP and establish the capacity, expertise and program design needed to meet the required standards and goals.

1. **Cover Sheet** – Use template provided. (See P4W webpage for this RFP)
2. **Executive Summary** (maximum 2 pages) – Include each of the following:
 - a. Overview of the organization’s qualifications and alignment with the services sought by this RFP.
 - b. Organization’s philosophy and approach to workforce development programs and services.
 - c. Synopsis of the proposed program.
 - d. The amount of TANF funding requested for the period beginning on July 1, 2019 and ending on June 30, 2020. See *General Information* section for further detail on funding amounts and types available. Your total funding request should not include performance payments.
3. **Organization Overview** (maximum 3 pages) – Describe each of the following for your organization:

- a. Basic organizational description, including but not limited to year established, legal status, governance structure, mission, principal programs and services, executive leadership, annual budget and number of full-time staff.
 - b. Past experience in managing quality workforce development programs similar in size and scope to that required by this RFP, including but not limited to individuals served, services and activities delivered, contract values and related performance outcomes. Attach three (3) reference letters (along with contact information) from funders (other than P4W) that can directly attest to the work you describe and verify your ability to serve customers, achieve deliverables and meet performance goals similar to those required by this RFP. Please ensure the accuracy of contact information. P4W will not contact respondents for updated reference information. P4W reserves the right to consider any previous performance data from workforce development programs.
 - c. Administrative and fiscal capacity, including but not limited to your organization's proven ability to provide fiscal support and oversight, utilize information systems, manage resources and personnel, and produce timely and accurate program reports.
4. **Program Narrative** (maximum 15 pages) – Working within allowable EARN activities, program design should be centered on the individuals served and focused on preparation for and attainment of unsubsidized employment along a career pathway, retention and self-sufficiency. P4W values a holistic approach to EARN program delivery that considers the comprehensive needs of clients and collaboration with partners that leverages resources to help participants succeed.

Describe each of the following for your proposed program:

Applicants should directly respond to each of the sections below; however, strong program descriptions will clearly demonstrate how the applicant will meet all the standards, expectations and desired outcomes found in this RFP. Responses will also be strengthened by connecting proposed program components with evidence-based practices or well-established success in other projects. Applicants are encouraged to think creatively and strategically in developing program design, exceeding basic requirements and incorporating innovative ideas and technologies. Attach a flow chart¹⁴ depicting program entry, client engagement and participation, progress and exit that clearly connects the services and activities of your proposal with desired outcomes.

- a. EARN center location(s): Indicate whether you are applying to deliver EARN services in one or more locations, as described in the preceding sections of this RFP. For each EARN center proposed, specify the address and describe the physical location. EARN centers must provide a convenient, accessible location and space in which EARN clients can fully participate in programming. P4W intends to procure service provision for the EARN Program in geographic locations similar to those currently existing (see the section on EARN centers above); however, applicants are welcome to propose different geographic locations. Proposals with different geographic locations must provide justification based on clear rationale and well-established data, including but not limited to ease of access, proximity to prospective EARN clients (see Appendix B), added value of additional services or resources, and any other factors supporting the proposed location. Qualified applicants are welcome to submit proposals to deliver EARN services in one or more locations.

¹⁴ The attached service flow chart will not count toward the 15-page limitation of the program narrative.

- b. Staffing plan:¹⁵ Describe your proposed staffing plan to support the programmatic, administrative and executive components of the program. Attach an organizational chart to your proposal illustrating all positions with substantive involvement in the proposed program and lines of authority and responsibility. Use this section of the narrative to clearly describe the organizational chart, including brief job descriptions for key positions. Also attach staff resumes (or minimum qualifications) for key positions of your proposed model involving director-level responsibilities. Be sure to address how you will accomplish the following:
- i. Employ professional staff with the knowledge and expertise in the Statement of Work.
 - ii. Provide training and professional development relevant to the services sought by this RFP.
 - iii. Ensure a high level of staff performance, competency and quality customer service.
 - iv. Maintain regular and clear communication between proposed staff and P4W.
- P4W encourages applicants to ensure that all staff members employed through any agreements resulting from this RFP receive a minimum salary of \$30,347 per year or \$14.59 per hour, the P4W self-sufficiency wage effective at the time of this RFP. If you are not currently providing EARN services administered by P4W, see the below section on transition planning for further guidance on staffing.
- c. Enrollment and orientation: Describe your proposed strategies for contacting, enrolling and orienting clients to the EARN program and related services. Be sure to describe how you will ensure a professional level of customer service during initial engagement that continues throughout your proposed program to ensure positive interactions for all clients.
- d. Communication with the CAO: Your ability to develop and maintain effective and positive working relationships with the County Assistance Office (CAO) is critical. Describe how you will establish and maintain productive connections with the CAO, receive and respond to requests and guidance from the CAO, and ensure your staff provide a high level of customer service to the CAO.
- e. Career services: Describe your proposed model and approach for effectively delivering the career services described in the Statement of Work. Highly rated responses will strongly demonstrate how the proposed program components connect clients with job opportunities along sustainable career pathways. Be sure to address how you will accomplish the items below and describe any other components vital to the success of your proposed model:
- i. Assess clients comprehensively and create individualized plans and goals accordingly.
 - ii. Structure EARN work activities for clients in customized arrangements that move them toward desired outcomes.
 - iii. Provide quality career counseling and provision of current labor market information.
 - iv. Provide work readiness, job searching and placement services to clients.
 - v. Offer workshops to support job search, skills development, placement and retention.
 - vi. Provide timely, quality retention and follow-up services that encourage job sustainability and advancement.
- f. Case management and supportive services: Describe how you will provide case management to assess the holistic needs of clients, identify barriers to employment, and coordinate services and supports to address needs and barriers. Be sure to include any innovative ideas, including use of trauma-informed care, motivational interviewing and two generational program components that meet the needs of parents and children.
- g. Partnership and referrals: Describe how you will collaborate, coordinate and establish strong referral relationships with the stakeholders and initiatives that comprise the larger workforce

¹⁵ The attached organizational chart and staff resumes will not count toward the 15-page limitation of the program narrative.

development and social service systems in Allegheny County, including other EARN service providers and the PA CareerLink® system. Include specific examples of agencies you have worked with that provide services and supports beneficial to EARN clients, including your process for identifying such partners, integrating them into your program model and connecting them to your case management efforts. Highly rated responses will include letters of support from partnering organizations, which can be attached to your proposal.

- h. Training, credentialing and community service: Describe your proposed model and approach for effectively delivering the training, credentialing and community service activities described in the Statement of Work, ensuring a combination of these activities that results in the desired outcomes of the EARN program. Highly rated responses will describe specific opportunities that will be made available to EARN clients, or steps that will be taken to make such opportunities available. Be sure to address how you will accomplish the items below and describe any other components vital to the success of your proposed model:
 - i. Provide credentialing opportunities, aligned with employer needs, including vocational education, On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Paid Work Experience (PWE).
 - ii. Determine training suitability and provide counseling to participants regarding training.
 - iii. Facilitate application and participation in vocational and work-based training.
 - iv. Arrange meaningful community service activities to increase client employability.
- i. Activity tracking and engagement: Describe how you will track client participation in the EARN program and ensure adherence to the activity compliance rate required by this RFP. Also explain the optimal level and frequency of engagement with clients and how you will ensure such engagement occurs.
- j. Client incentives: Client incentives are positive reinforcements based on client performance to promote participation and achievement. Describe your proposed model for issuing incentives to EARN clients, including the client performance standards you will incentivize and the form and value of each incentive you will make available to clients. Standards on which to provide client incentives may include activity completion, job placement, job retention, and other achievements. All incentives must be reasonable, allowable and comply with the EARN Manual and other applicable guidance. All plans for and distribution of incentives are subject to approval by P4W. See *Statement of Work, Client Incentives* for further information.
- k. Business engagement: Describe how you will work closely with P4W to develop, promote, and deliver quality business services that assist employers in identifying candidates for employment from the EARN program. Describe the strategies you will use to engage and successfully serve employers, including related goals and specific outcomes. Be sure to address how you will effectively accomplish the items below and describe any other components vital to the success of your proposed model:
 - i. Assist employers in effectively utilizing the EARN Program and related benefits.
 - ii. Collaborate with P4W to ensure business engagement is closely coordinated.
 - iii. Recruit and place clients in job openings to meet the hiring needs of employers.
 - iv. Connect employers with resources and opportunities available through P4W and the larger workforce development system.
 - v. Recruit and place participants in work-based learning and training programs, such as On-the-Job Training (OJT), Paid Work Experience (PWE), and Subsidized Employment.
 - vi. Leverage business engagement efforts of partner agencies to enhance EARN.

- I. Performance: Describe the strategies and mechanisms you will use to ensure success and meet or exceed the performance goals described in the Statement of Work. Be sure to address how you will effectively accomplish the items below and describe any other components vital to the success of your proposed model:
 - i. Track performance and communicate results to P4W and other stakeholders.
 - ii. Utilize data to continuously monitor operations and inform and improve your program.
 - iii. Employ outreach and engagement strategies to achieve enrollment that meets or exceeds the required referral to enrollment rate.
 - iv. Utilize an employer-driven job placement and retention model that meets or exceeds the required placement and retention goals.
 - v. Provide robust credentialing opportunities and facilitate a level of client participation that meets or exceeds the required credentialing rate. Include specific recommendations for credentialing activities, understanding that such activities are subject to approval from P4W and PADHS.
 - vi. Ensure strong participation of clients in the EARN program that meets or exceeds the required Activity Compliance Rate (ACR).
 - vii. Regularly and clearly communicate status of required standards and goals, including related key performance indicators, to P4W and other stakeholders.
 - viii. Conduct self-monitoring of contract performance and ensure continuous improvement.
- m. Use of performance funds: Describe how you will use performance funds received to enhance the EARN program (see *General Information, Performance Payments*). Performance payments made to selected applicants must be reinvested in the EARN program. Plans and activities related to spending performance payments are subject to approval by P4W.
- n. Site administration and operations: If your proposal is successful, you will be responsible for site administration, operations and service delivery at the EARN center(s) approved by P4W. P4W does not currently maintain site control or ownership of EARN centers. Describe how you will accomplish the items below and describe any other components vital to the success of your proposed model:
 - i. Establish and maintain a safe, secure and professional environment in the EARN center(s).
 - ii. Ensure convenient access to the EARN center(s) for clients.
 - iii. Arrange space in the EARN center conducive to effective delivery of services
 - iv. Maintain policies and procedures governing security, service delivery and use of space.
- o. Technology: Describe the technologies you will use and how you will use them to support service delivery, program reporting and other key elements of your proposed model. Be sure to address how you will utilize CWDS and other information systems to track customer participation in EARN activities. Also describe how you will ensure clear policies and procedures are in place to enter and validate data in CWDS and other information systems.
- p. Administration: Describe how you will utilize the administrative capacity of your agency to carry-out the work described in this RFP. Be sure to address how you will use fiscal and technical competence, financial and administrative resources, and information systems to support the proposed program model. The selected applicant(s) must also meet the administrative requirements described in Appendix C.
- q. Transition plan (if applicable): Should the outcome of this procurement result in a change of contracted agencies currently providing services for the Allegheny County EARN Program, P4W reserves the right to negotiate a transition period during which incoming and outgoing EARN providers work concurrently to ensure a smooth transition and minimize disruptions to clients and

employers. If you are not currently providing contracted services for the Allegheny County EARN Program, describe how you would handle the transition of services and responsibility from the existing EARN provider(s) if your proposal is selected, including establishing relationships with EARN clients and program stakeholders, potential employment of existing EARN staff members, and transfer of important data and documentation. Selected applicants will be required to fully serve participants already enrolled in the EARN Program as of July 1, 2019. P4W expects that parties involved in a transition will work together to ensure that services to clients are not negatively affected. P4W expects the selected applicant to give first consideration in employment to current employees providing services who may be displaced because of this procurement.

5. **Budget** – Provide a budget including all program-related and administrative costs, using the required budget template provided (See P4W webpage for this RFP). If you are proposing to deliver EARN services in multiple locations, do not break down your budget according to location; instead, provide total budget amounts that include costs for all locations proposed (breakdown by location to be provided in your budget narrative). All costs must be allowable according to applicable federal, state and local regulations, including but not limited to the Uniform Guidance and regulations of the funding source, and allocable to the proposed program. Effective budgets will enable the proposed program to meet the intent and requirements of the contract, while being realistic, reasonable and prudent, avoiding unnecessary or unusual expenditures. Your budget should only include cost reimbursable components; in calculating your budgets, do not include performance payments. See *General Information* sections on *Anticipated Award*, *Program Cost Reimbursement* and *Performance Payments* for further information. Refer to the appropriate regulations per the funding source in conjunction with the uniform guidance to identify disallowed costs associated with this grant. See Appendix C for further guidance regarding the budget and budget narrative.
6. **Budget narrative** (maximum 3 pages) – Provide a narrative to accompany the budget that describes the purpose of each cost, explains how all costs were estimated and justifies the need for all costs in meeting contract requirements. In your narrative, be sure to clearly communicate the calculation for staff, space, training, credentialing, supportive services, general operations, equipment, technology, administrative, indirect and any other costs necessary to perform the services described in this RFP. A strong budget narrative will minimize or eliminate the need for clarifications from evaluators reading the proposal. If you are submitting a proposal to provide EARN services in multiple locations, your budget narrative must clearly allocate all costs of your proposal to each location. See Appendix C for further guidance regarding the budget and budget narrative. See Appendix C for further guidance regarding the budget and budget narrative. If your proposal includes leveraged resources of your organization or another organization, use the budget narrative to describe the actual or estimated value of the leveraged resources. If applicable, also attach a letter of support from any organization providing leveraged resources in support of your proposal.
7. **Attachments**
 - a. Required attachments
 - i. Reference letters. See *Organization Overview*, *Past Experience*.
 - ii. Service flow chart. See *Program Narrative*.
 - iii. Program organizational chart. See *Program Narrative*, *Staffing Plan*.
 - iv. Key staff resumes or minimum qualifications. See *Program Narrative*, *Staffing Plan*.
 - b. Optional attachments

- i. Letters of support. Only attach letters of support attesting to partnerships and relationships with other organizations, including related services and resources, that you plan to leverage or involve directly in your program model, as described in your proposal. See *Program Narrative, Partnership and Referrals* for further information. Strong letters of support will agree with the description of the support in your proposal and quantify the value of services or resources leveraged in support of your proposed program.

Review and Selection Process

All proposals received by the submission deadline will be initially reviewed by P4W for responsiveness and compliance with the specifications and requirements contained in this RFP. Proposals passing the initial review will be scored by internal and external evaluators according to the criteria below, with attention to clarity, completeness and quality. High scoring proposals will clearly demonstrate an ability and likelihood to effectively perform the Statement of Work and meet the standards and intended outcomes of this RFP. Select applicants may be requested to participate in presentations or discussions with proposal evaluators and other P4W staff. Award recommendations of the evaluators will be presented to the Board for final decision. Selection of a proposal for contract award will be subject to successful contract negotiations.

Scoring for the required sections of the proposal will be assigned as follows:

Proposal Review Scoring Rubric	
Cover Sheet	Required, but not scored
Executive Summary	Required, but not scored
Organization Overview	20 points
Program Narrative	55 points
Budget & Budget Narrative	15 points
Attachments	10 points; will also support the scores of related proposal sections
Total points available	100 points

Selected applicants will be invited to negotiate a contract for services based on the project described in the proposal and stipulations of the funding source.

Review Timeline (all dates are subject to change):

Release of RFP:	December 19, 2018
Proposal due date:	February 4, 2019 by 5:00 PM EST
Bidder’s conference questions due:	January 7, 2019 by 12:00 PM EST
Bidder’s conference:	January 9, 2019 from 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM EST
Questions regarding this RFP due:	January 25, 2019 by 5:00 PM EST
Selection of providers:	Mid-April 2019

Questions

All questions or requests for additional information must be made in writing to EARN@partner4work.org by 5:00 PM EST on January 25, 2019. Answers will be posted publicly at www.partner4work.org. Interested parties are encouraged to check the website frequently for updates. Questions received after 5:00 PM EST on January 25, 2019 will not be answered.

Bidder's Conference

P4W will conduct a bidder's conference on Wednesday, January 9, 2019 from 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM EST at 650 Smithfield Street, Suite 2600, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. All interested applicants are highly encouraged to attend the bidder's conference. Attendees must register in advance of the conference by emailing EARN@partner4work.org and including organizational name and name(s) of attendee(s). During the conference, P4W staff will review the requirements of the RFP and proposal content. Questions may be posed during the bidder's conference, but complete answers may not be available until a question/answer document is released following the conference. Interested applicants are encouraged to submit questions in advance of the bidder's conference in writing to EARN@partner4work.org by 12:00 PM EST on January 7, 2019. Interested applicants should view the bidder's conference and resulting question/answer document as vital opportunities to obtain guidance on the scope and nature of the work required in this RFP or to ask technical questions concerning this solicitation.

Disclaimers

- This Request for Proposals (RFP) does not commit Partner4Work to award a contract.
- Partner4Work may select a firm based on its initial proposal received, without discussion of the proposal. Accordingly, each proposal should be submitted on the most favorable terms, from a price and technical standpoint, that the bidder can submit to Partner4Work. Partner4Work may, however, have discussions with those firms it deems in its discretion to fall within a competitive range.
- Partner4Work reserves the right to request additional information from any applicant, request oral presentations from applicants, or conduct site visits from any applicant before a contract award.
- Partner4Work reserves the right to fund portions of a proposal, or to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part. Rejection of a portion of a proposal does not necessarily negate the entire proposal.
- Partner4Work may, at its discretion, adjust the level of funding provided to successful bidders under this RFP and/or consider the funding of proposals not initially funded under this RFP at a later date.
- No costs will be paid to cover the expense of preparing a proposal or procuring a contract for services or supplies.
- All data, material, and documentation originated and prepared by the bidder pursuant to the contract shall belong exclusively to Partner4Work and be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, Right to Know Law, or other applicable legislation.
- The contract award will not be final until Partner4Work and the successful bidder have executed a mutually satisfactory contractual agreement. Partner4Work reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposal submitted. No activity may begin prior to final Partner4Work approval of the award and execution of a contractual agreement between the successful bidder and Partner4Work.
- The submission of the proposal warrants that the costs quoted for services in response to the RFP are not in excess of those that would be charged any other individual for the same services performed by the bidder.
- Applicants are advised that most documents in the possession of Partner4Work are considered public records and subject to disclosure. Partner4Work reserves the right to issue additional RFPs if and when it is in Partner4Work's best interest to do so and, may elect to negotiate and issue multi-year contracts to

successful bidders under this or subsequent RFPs.

- All programs and activities are designated as equal opportunity employers/programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Contact staff to request assistance with access to this RFP.

Appendix A – Terms and Definitions

CAO: County Assistance Office's throughout Allegheny County assist residents and families in applying for/renew cash assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), help with child care, health care coverage, home heating assistance (LIHEAP), school meals, family planning services, and long term living services. The CAO is responsible for referring eligible individuals to the EARN program.

CWDS: The Commonwealth Workforce Development System, known as CWDS, is the state of Pennsylvania's internet-based record system for employment and training programs. The successful applicant(s) will utilize CWDS to track and manage participant progress throughout their time in EARN.

EARN: Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) is designed to assist clients in their transition from public benefit receipt, to the workforce. The focus of all programming is to move the clients towards self-sufficiency, eliminating their need for public assistance. As the primary focus of the program is to move clients into the workforce, the program will provide activities that aid in the pursuit of that goal.

OJT: On the Job Training provides public or private sector employers with a wage subsidy for a negotiated period of time. OJT programs require the employer to provide specialized training to the participant. To use OJT as an EARN activity, programs must enter into a written agreement with the employer.

PADHS: As the primary funder of statewide TANF employment and training programs, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services offers policy guidance for EARN programming across the state.

PWE: Paid Work Experience is subsidized employment that provides an opportunity for clients to enhance workplace skills and employability.

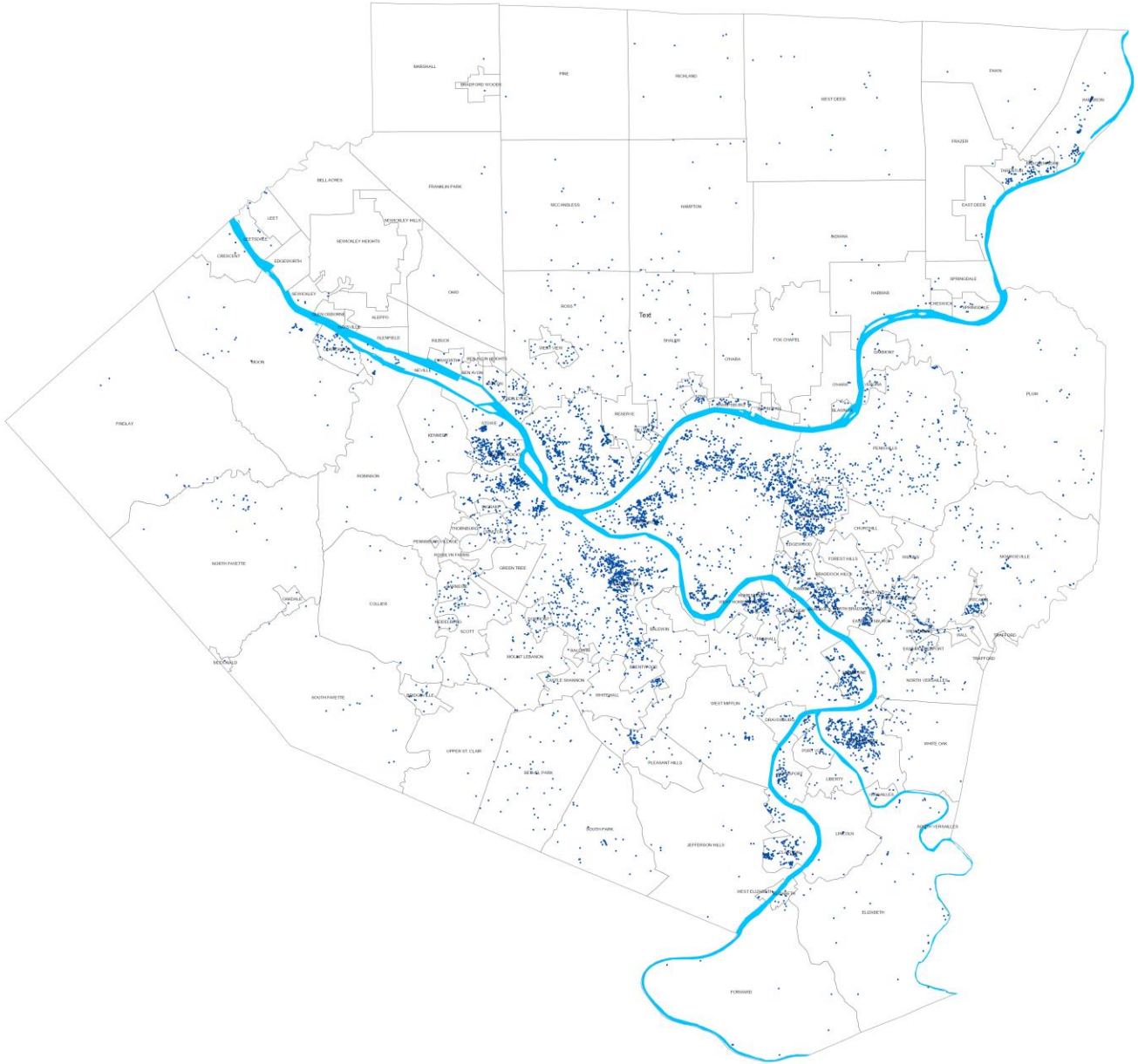
TANF: The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant was created in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The program is designed to help families achieve self-sufficiency and transition off public assistance.

Appendix B – TANF and EARN Data for Allegheny County

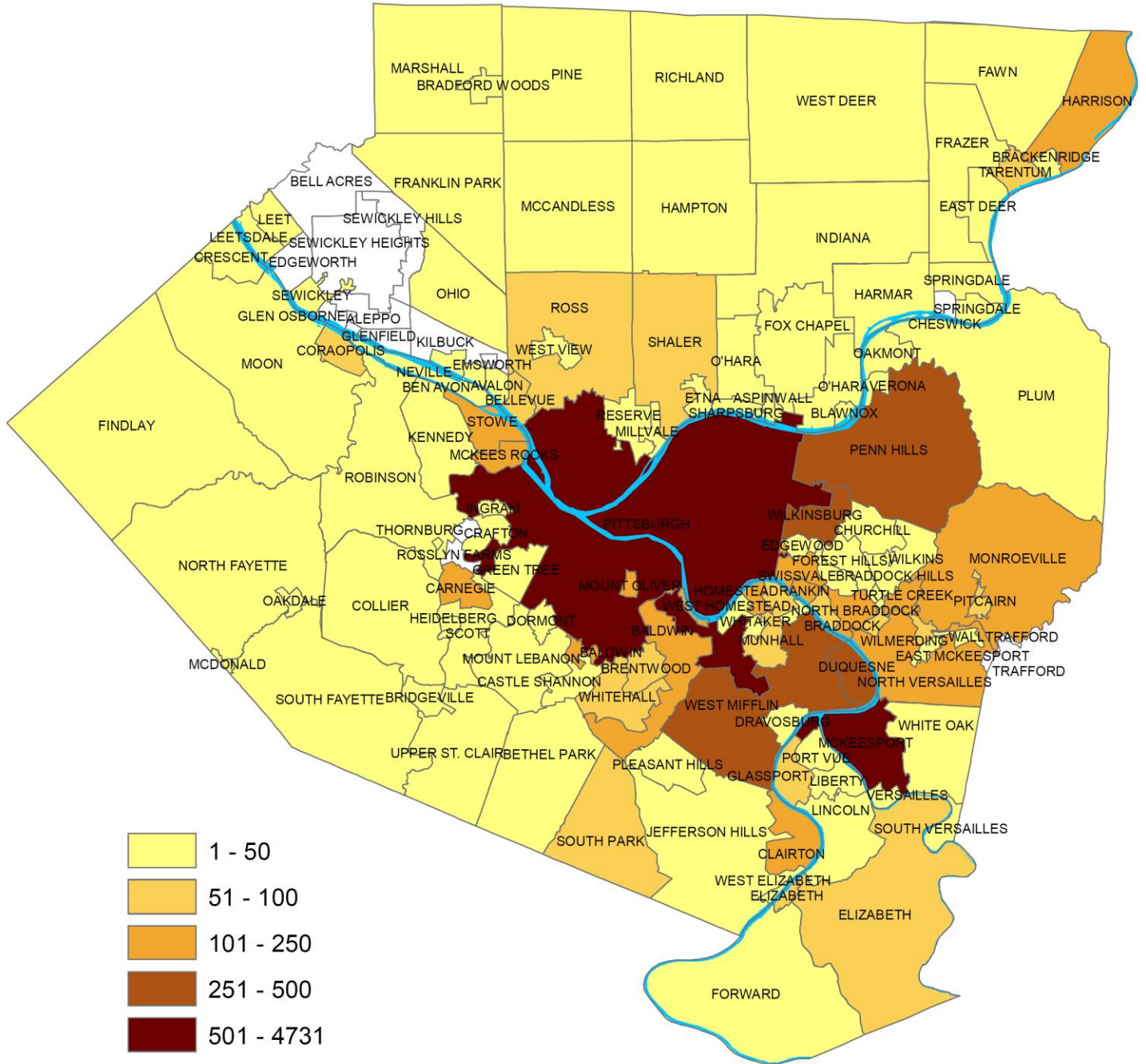
TANF Recipient Maps for Allegheny County

The following maps illustrate the geographic distribution of a large proportion of total TANF recipients in Allegheny County (estimated 80%), provided for general reference. Data used to produce these maps represent only TANF recipients who also had a service record with the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (ACDHS) during the period of January 2017 to November 2018. As such, these data do not represent all Allegheny County residents who received TANF assistance.

INDIVIDUAL LOCATIONS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY TANF RECIPIENTS



NUMBER OF TANF CLIENTS BY ALLEGHENY COUNTY MUNICIPALITY¹⁶



¹⁶ See description and limitations of data used to produce this map on the preceding page.

Demographic Data for the Allegheny County EARN Program

The following table provides basic demographic data related to the Allegheny County Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) program. The EARN data presented reflect the 2017-2018 program year, retrieved from the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS). In the 2017 calendar year, there were over 9,000 TANF recipients in Allegheny County between the ages of 20-59.¹⁷ This population represents individuals who may qualify and be referred to the EARN program. In program year 2017-2018, between the three Allegheny County EARN centers currently in operation, the EARN Program enrolled 1,020 cases referred from the County Assistance Office (CAO) (see *General Information, EARN Centers* for more detail regarding location).

Allegheny County EARN Participants (2017/18)	
TOTAL ENROLLMENTS	1,020
Gender	
Male	7.5%
Female	92.5%
Race	
African American	85.6%
White	13.4%
Other/not disclosed/unknown	1%
Age	
20-29	58.3%
30-39	30.9%
40-49	9.1%
50-59	1.7%
Education	
No Formal Schooling	.2%
Grades 8-11	17%
High School Diploma/GED	69.5%
Associates Degree	.9%
Some college/vocational school	4.8%
Bachelor's Degree/equivalent	.6%
Master's Degree or higher	6.8%

¹⁷ Retrieved from the Allegheny County Analytics website at www.alleghenycountyanalytics.us.

Appendix C – Overview of Administrative and Budget Narrative Requirements

Overview of Administrative Requirements

At a minimum, all subrecipient organizations must meet the Standards for Financial and Program Management found at 2 CFR 200 in the OMB Uniform Guidance, as well as any regulatory requirements related to the funds. Your organization's financial management system must provide for the following:

1. Tracking spending on multiple individual funding streams

Identification, in its accounts, of all Federal awards received and expended and the Federal programs under which they were received. Federal program and Federal award identification must include, as applicable, the CFDA title and number, Federal award identification number and year, name of the Federal Agency, and name of the pass-through entity (i.e., Partner4Work).

2. Fiscal reporting on an accrual basis

Accurate, current, and complete disclosure of the financial results of each Federal award or program in accordance with the reporting requirements set forth in 2 CFR 200.327 Financial Reporting and 200.328 Monitoring and Reporting Program Performance. If a Federal awarding agency requires reporting on an accrual basis from a recipient that maintains its records on other than an accrual basis, the recipient may develop accrual data for its reports on the basis of an analysis of the documentation on hand. Similarly, a pass-through entity must not require a subrecipient to establish and accrual accounting system and must allow the subrecipient to develop accrual data for its reports on the basis of an analysis of the documentation on hand.

3. Maintaining documentation supporting all spending and assets

Records that identify adequately the source and application of funds for federally-funded activities. These records must contain information pertaining to Federal awards, authorizations, obligation, unobligated balances, assets, expenditures, income and interest and be supported by source documentation.

4. Maintaining internal controls that ensure compliance with all funding regulations

Control over, and accountability for, all funds, property, and other assets. The non-Federal entity must adequately safeguard all assets and assure that they are used solely for authorized purposes. See § 200.303 Internal Controls.

5. Producing a budget to actual report

Comparison of expenditures with budget amounts for each Federal award.

6. Processing payments on a reimbursement basis

Written procedures to implement the requirements of § 200.305 Payment.

7. Budgeting and spending funds in allowable cost categories (i.e., direct, indirect, program, and admin costs)

Written procedures for determining the allowability of costs in accordance with Subpart E - Cost Principles of this part and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

Budget Narrative Instructions

The budget narrative must provide a description of costs associated with each line item in the budget template. It should also include a description of leveraged resources provided (as applicable) to support grant activities.

In addition to a description of costs included in each line item on the budget template, please include the following in the budget narrative:

Personnel: List all staff positions by title (both current and proposed). Give the annual salary of each position, the percentage of each position's time and salary devoted to the project, and the total personnel cost for the period of performance.

Fringe Benefits: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, FICA, retirement, etc.

Other: Provide clear and specific detail, including costs, for each item so that Partner4Work can determine whether the costs are necessary, reasonable and allocable. List any item not covered elsewhere here.

Indirect Costs: If you include indirect costs in the budget, then include one of the following:

a) If you have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), provide an explanation of how the indirect costs are calculated. This explanation should include which portion of each line item, along with the associated costs, are included in your cost allocation base. Also, provide a current version of the NICRA.

or

b) If you intend to claim indirect costs using the 10 percent de minimis rate, please confirm that your organization meets the requirements as described in 2 CFR 200.414(f). Clearly state that your organization has never received a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), and your organization is not one described in Appendix VII of 2 CFR 200, paragraph (D)(1)(b).

Applicants choosing to claim indirect costs using the de minimis rate must use Modified Total Direct Costs (see 2 CFR 200.68 below for definition) as their cost allocation base. Provide an explanation of which portion of each line item, along with the associated costs, are included in your cost allocation base. Note that there are various items not included in the calculation of Modified Total Direct Costs. See below the definitions to assist you in your calculation.

2 CFR 200.68 Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) means all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.

The definition of MTDC in 2 CFR 200.68 no longer allows for any sub-contracts to be included in the calculation. You will also note that participant support costs are not included in modified total direct cost.

2 CFR 200.75 Participant Support Cost means direct costs for items such as stipends, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with conferences, or training projects.

See Section IV.B.4. and Section IV.E.1 for more information. Additionally, the following link contains information regarding the negotiation of Indirect Cost Rates at DOL: <https://www.dol.gov/oasam/boc/dcd/index.htm>