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WORKFORCE 101 FOR EMPLOYERS

A GUIDE TO OKLAHOMA'S WORKFORCE SYSTEM

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Introduction

Oklahoma's public workforce development system, known as Oklahoma Works, strives to ensure Oklahoma employers have access to the skilled talent they need to grow, and workers get the in-demand skills they need to succeed in our high-tech world. That means working diligently to ensure our statewide, federally-sponsored employment and training system is comprehensive and responsive to the needs of employers, job seekers, and state and regional economies.

Oklahoma Works' network of comprehensive programs and services support you in expanding, training, and restructuring your workforce.

HOW TO USE THE WORKFORCE TOOL KIT

This workforce toolkit is organized in sections that guide you through services that:

Expand Your Workforce. This section explains how employers can find and hire qualified workers, even in a tight labor market. You will learn how to team with state and local service providers to recruit workers who may be getting laid off and match them to your need for skilled workers. In addition, you can access untapped populations that are looking for jobs including youth, veterans and persons with disabilities. Labor market information is also readily available at the national, state and local level.

Train Your Workforce. This section shows how various types of training such as on-the-job and apprenticeship training will upgrade your employees' skills to maintain and improve your business's productivity and save you money by training current employees rather than hiring new ones. Available training options are described so you can assist your employees in accessing the training they need.

Restructure Your Workforce. This section details several strategies and programs that are available to you if your business is experiencing downsizing, restructuring or closings. Information on preventing and managing a layoff or closing is provided including assistance available to you and your employees so you can access services immediately, become familiar with the legal requirements during a layoff situation and provide your employees assistance in making the transition to a new job.

Finance Your Workforce. This section provides you with information on using available tax credits. The Workforce Glossary also assists you in deciphering the many terms you may encounter in your search for workforce information.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

The programs and services that are described in this toolkit have all been developed in your community with the valuable input of many of your fellow employers. As a part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, employers have a key role in guiding and monitoring the workforce system in every state and local area. Employers comprise a majority of the Workforce Boards that are set up in your community to oversee the local system of programs that serves you, your employees and your community.

As an employer, you are able to participate in the continuous improvement of the workforce development system and help to shape the future for the health and growth of your community through

your State and Local Workforce Boards. Use www.oklahomaworks.gov to find the Local Workforce Development Board or Oklahoma Works American Job Center nearest you to speak with a local representative about how you can get involved.

RECRUITING SKILLED EMPLOYEES

Employers are challenged to find qualified, available workers. Oklahoma Works American Job Centers offer convenient, no-cost resources available in your local community and online.

ONE-STOP SHOPPING FOR QUALIFIED EMPLOYEES

The local Oklahoma Works American Job Center is where workers and employers connect. The center provides job search and skills training services to workers and recruitment services to employers. Oklahoma Works American Job Centers can make the match between workers who need jobs and companies that need employees.

The Oklahoma Works American Job Centers will:

- Coordinate the initial communication between you and the pool of qualified workers in your area as well as outside your area.
- Offer pre-screening of workers so you know you are getting skilled applicants.
- Provide you access to detailed labor market information in your state and local area as well as nationally.
- Where to Go for Assistance — To find your nearest Oklahoma Works American Job Center, visit <https://oklahomaworks.gov/about/oklahoma-works-centers/>.

ONE-STOP SERVICE ONLINE

Oklahoma utilizes an online system, known as OKJobMatch, that makes it easy for job seekers to find jobs and for employers to find candidates. Unlike most job posting services, it is free for employers to use OKJobMatch.

Through OKJobMatch, <https://okjobmatch.com/>, you can:

- Post job listings.
- Search over 45,000 active resumes.
- Reach hundreds of workers who access OKJobMatch daily.
- Link to local Oklahoma Works American Job Centers to find qualified candidates.

OKJobMatch provides immediate one-stop access to skilled workers who are looking for jobs just like the one you are offering. It is one of the fastest ways to find workers.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Go to <https://okjobmatch.com/> to create and access your OKJobMatch account.
- Contact your local Oklahoma Works American Job Center for additional information at <https://oklahomaworks.gov/about/oklahoma-works-centers/>.

HIRING WORKERS FROM UNTAPPED SOURCES

Oklahoma Works American Job Centers help you access workers who have been trained in the skills that are in demand in your local labor market. When you use the Oklahoma Works American Job Center, you will find qualified workers, many of whom are available from sources you may not have tapped.

We link jobseekers to training and reemployment services to prepare workers who previously lacked the skills needed to succeed in today's workplace. Oklahoma Works American Job Centers put you in touch with prepared workers who represent:

- Veterans
- Laid-Off Workers
- Ex-Offenders
- Youth
- Persons with Disabilities
- Incumbent Workers

VETERANS

American veterans are an excellent source of qualified talent. Many of them have been through rigorous military training — everything from computers and logistics to mechanics and cooking skills. You can find these skilled workers through your local Oklahoma Works American Job Centers. You can also access resources on the Hire a Veteran page at the U.S. Department of Labor. These resources include information and access to:

- An employer toolkit for hiring veterans.
- Key skills and attributes of transitioning military personnel.
- Comparability of military and civilian training.

These veterans have solid training through their military experience and are receiving the skills they need to transition into civilian careers.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Go to <https://www.dol.gov/veterans/hireaveteran/> for more information on how you can find veteran workers.
- Contact your local Oklahoma Works American Job Center about hiring veterans at <https://oklahomaworks.gov/about/oklahoma-works-centers/>.

LAI-D-OFF WORKERS

Laid-off workers, often called dislocated workers, are a pool of experienced workers, many of whom have the skills your business needs. Oklahoma Works American Job Centers serve workers who have been laid off, often due to business closures or a reduction in force, by assisting them to find new jobs or learn new skills through training to move into a different career. By connecting with your local Oklahoma Works American Job Center, you can tap into a qualified source of job applicants that are pre-screened and ready for you to interview. Many of these laid-off workers will have received:

- Skills assessments
- In-Demand Skills Training
- Resume and interview skills training
- Local labor market information

Through these services, Oklahoma Works American Job Center staff helps you reach these qualified and ready-to-work applicants for your business.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Contact your local Oklahoma Works American Job Center for additional information at <https://oklahomaworks.gov/about/oklahoma-works-centers/>.

EX-OFFENDERS

Many ex-offenders are released back into their communities every year and are seeking jobs, stability, and a chance to prove themselves. Many have received specialized work related training while they were incarcerated, but most struggle to find employment after their release. The biggest single factor leading to another incarceration is unemployment.

The Federal Bonding Program (FBP) has enabled ex-offenders and many other groups of people* to successfully transition back into the world of work. It provides an individual fidelity bond to employers for job applicants who have a barrier to employment. It protects the employer in case of any loss of money or property for which the employee is responsible. There are no out-of-pocket expenses to the employer or applicant because the bonds are obtained and provided by the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission and have no deductible.

**Other groups of people who may benefit from this program are: People with a history of substance abuse, TANF recipients or others who utilize public assistance, people with poor credit or work histories, those who have received a dishonorable discharge or anyone who cannot gain employment because of not being commercially bondable by the employer for theft, larceny, forgery or embezzlement.*

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Contact your local Oklahoma Works American Job Center about the Federal Bonding Program at <https://oklahomaworks.gov/about/oklahoma-works-centers/> or call 1-888-980-9675.
- Contact Oklahoma's Federal Bonding Unit at 405-557-7112.

YOUTH

Young people are eager to apply their skills in the workplace and enthusiastic about learning new workplace skills. Oklahoma Works American Job Centers can connect you to youth (ages 14-24) looking to learn new skills and enter the workforce. Employers can hire trained youth for part-time or summer jobs or provide work-based learning opportunities, like apprenticeships, internships and On-the-Job Training, which lead to stable job paths and careers.

Oklahoma Works has several initiatives that provide academic and occupational training for youth and connections to employers with unfilled labor needs. These initiatives include:

- Youth Programs (https://www.doleta.gov/youth_services/). Oklahoma Works American Job Centers provide youth ages 14-24 opportunities for work experience and training through youth programs that include a variety of options for improving their preparation for education, skills training, and employment opportunities.
- Job Corps (<https://www.jobcorps.gov/>). Job Corps is a voluntary program that prepares young people ages 16–24 with education and hands-on career training for entry-level positions that

lead to careers in today's job market. Students receive hands-on experience through work-based learning programs, internships, and job shadowing opportunities with employers like you. Job Corps graduates have experience working in teams and know what it takes to be successful on the job. Through the program, they develop a strong work ethic and are eager to succeed. Job Corps can help you save time, save money, and increase productivity.

- YouthBuild (https://www.doleta.gov/youth_services/youthbuild.cfm). The YouthBuild program prepares workers for good jobs and promotes the attainment of skills and knowledge necessary for success in a knowledge-based economy. YouthBuild specifically serves at-risk youth, ages 16-24, who are current or former high school dropouts with the greatest challenges to finding good jobs. Key features of the YouthBuild model include:
 - Education (high school diploma or state-recognized equivalent)
 - Occupational skills training (industry-recognized credentials in construction or other in-demand industries)
 - Leadership development
 - Innovative alternative education programs
 - Individualized and project-based instruction

Where to Go for Assistance —

- For more information about Oklahoma Job Corps programs, go to:
 - Guthrie Job Corps: <https://guthrie.jobcorps.gov/>.
 - Talking Leaves Job Corps (Tahlequah): <https://talkingleaves.jobcorps.gov/>.
 - Tulsa Job Corps: <https://tulsa.jobcorps.gov/>.
- For more information about Oklahoma YouthBuild, go to:
 - YouthBuild at CDSA in Enid, OK: <http://www.cdsoak.org/yb.html>.
- Contact your local Oklahoma Works American Job Center about Youth Programs in your community at <https://oklahomaworks.gov/about/oklahoma-works-centers/>.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Many Oklahoma employers are saving time and money by recruiting qualified employees with disabilities. Employers can reduce turnover by hiring qualified, job-ready applicants who receive pre-employment testing and job-related training to ensure skills are matched to your job requirements. On-the-job training can be customized to fit your needs and follow-up services are provided to ensure employees' success on the job.

An Oklahoma study shows more than 84 percent of individuals served through Oklahoma's Vocational Rehabilitation and Visual Services' programs are still working after two years. If you want to save time and money, hire and retain capable, well-prepared employees and build a diverse workforce, we can help you, free of charge.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Go to <http://www.okdrs.org/business-services> for more information on the benefits and assistance available when hiring a person with disabilities.
- Contact your local Oklahoma Works American Job Center about hiring persons with disabilities in your community at <https://oklahomaworks.gov/about/oklahoma-works-centers/>.

SKILLS-BASED HIRING PRACTICES

Employers often struggle to find the talent with the right skills to meet hiring needs and grow their organization. This means positions go unfilled for longer periods of time. We work with employers to make data-informed decisions about traditional recruiting, screening, and hiring methods that result in a limited hiring pool. Implementing skills-based practices focused on the skills needed to perform job duties expands the number of qualified applicants and results in less time to hire and increased retention.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- To learn about skills-based hiring practices, visit Skillful: <https://www.skillful.com/employers>.
- Create a skills-based job posting at: <https://generator.skillful.com/>.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR LOCAL LABOR MARKET

Current and accurate information is important to managing your business. Through Oklahoma Works you get the up-to-date labor market information you need to evaluate the talent pool from which you recruit and plan for your future workforce needs.

Oklahoma Works offers state and regional labor market information, population statistics and economic data that provide a profile of the labor markets and local economies in which you do business. You can review the current dynamics of your local labor market by visiting <https://oklahomaworks.gov/workforce-briefings/>.

ACCESSING ECONOMIC AND OCCUPATIONAL DATA

Understanding the overall economic and occupational climate will assist you in planning for your workforce needs. Information, such as industry trends, unemployment rates and the Occupational Outlook Handbook, provides guidance in preparing workforce recruiting plans and human resources programs that will create incentives for workers to stay and grow with your company.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is an independent national statistical agency that collects, processes, analyzes and disseminates essential statistical data. The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides you access to data and information such as:

- Employment and unemployment statistics
- Compensation and working conditions
- Prices and living conditions
- Productivity and employment projections

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Go to www.bls.gov to access up-to-date labor market information and the Occupational Outlook Handbook.
- Visit <https://okcommerce.gov/data/> to access data and research products.
- Contact your local Oklahoma Works American Job Center about labor market information at <https://oklahomaworks.gov/about/oklahoma-works-centers/>.

ACCESSING OTHER LABOR MARKET INFORMATION

O*NET Online (<https://onetonline.org>) is the nation's primary source of occupational information. O*NET is a comprehensive resource of information about jobs and occupations, containing hundreds of standardized and occupation-specific descriptors on almost 1,000 occupations covering the entire U.S. economy. The database, which is available to the public at no cost, is continually updated from input by a broad range of workers in each occupation. It integrates a database with a common language for describing jobs and skills descriptions to create a tool that is useful to businesses. You and your human resources staff will be able to use this information to:

- Develop concise job descriptions.
- Refine recruitment and training goals.
- Develop better job descriptions to target more qualified workers.
- Define success factors for promotion and advancement.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Go directly to <https://www.onetonline.org/> to access labor market information.

UNDERSTANDING OKLAHOMA'S CRITICAL OCCUPATIONS

Through a comprehensive quantitative analysis of 72 variables and over 48,000 data points, Oklahoma identified nine driver and complementary economic systems representing the most prominent industries in terms of wealth generation and growth potential. To further focus statewide workforce development efforts, a list of the top 100 Critical Occupations within those economic systems are produced every two years to compensate for economic changes. Oklahoma's Critical Occupations include jobs that are in-demand and make high wages. Many of these occupations have skills that translate to other similar jobs and industries.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Go to <https://oklahomaworks.gov/criticaloccupations> to learn more about Oklahoma's Critical Occupations and Economic Systems.

IMPROVING THE SKILLS OF YOUR WORKFORCE

Where is your industry moving? Do your employees or potential employees have the skills needed to help you grow? Oklahoma Works has resources available to train your current workforce, sometimes with funding provided to either you or your employees directly.

TRAINING YOUR CURRENT WORKFORCE

Small and large businesses express the same need to have the available skilled talent required for growth. Incumbent worker training (IWT) is a type of work-based training and upskilling designed to ensure employees of a company can acquire the skills necessary to retain employment and advance within the company, or to acquire the skills necessary to avert a layoff. From frontline workers to professional and management staff, the demand for training increases as industries and companies expand.

Incumbent Worker Training is an available resource to help employers train their current workforce to:

- Meet the needs of all sizes of companies.
- Help avert potential layoffs of employees.
- Increase the skill levels of employees so they can be promoted within the company and create backfill opportunities for the employers.
- Build a better system to support employer investments in training.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Go to www.oklahomaworks.gov for more information on how you may be able to access incumbent worker training.

TRAINING THROUGH APPRENTICESHIPS AND WORK-BASED LEARNING

Work-based learning, including apprenticeships and internships, offer Oklahomans the opportunity to earn a wage while learning in-demand, professional skills. Apprenticeships and internships also benefit employers by providing the opportunity to develop their ideal workforce and train for the specific skills they need.

Registered Apprenticeship is an effective way for businesses to develop a sustainable talent pipeline. Employers can fill positions with workers trained in the exact skills and competencies their businesses need. Registered Apprenticeship is a structured education and training program that combines on-the-job training with related technical instruction. Apprentices are full-time, paid employees that receive instruction and mentoring from skilled workers. Apprentices are trained to the employer's standards using the employer's equipment and protocols. Upon completion of the program, apprentices receive a nationally recognized credential.

Registered Apprenticeship is a proven solution for businesses to recruit, train, and retain highly skilled workers. Companies with apprenticeships quickly see a return on their investment through more qualified and loyal employees. For every \$1 spent on an apprenticeship, employers gain \$1.47 through increased productivity, reduced waste and greater front-line innovation.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Go to <https://oklahomaworks.gov/work-based-learning/> for more information about how you can set up an apprenticeship or internship in your company.
- Contact your local Oklahoma Works American Job Center about setting up an apprenticeship in your community at <https://oklahomaworks.gov/about/oklahoma-works-centers/>.

SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Employers frequently struggle to find the skilled workers needed to sustain and grow their businesses. These shortages are not typically isolated to one employer, but span an entire industry sector. Industry-led, community-supported partnerships that strengthen regional economies and connect people to jobs are one solution to such challenges.

Sector Partnerships bring together businesses from the same industry and in a shared labor market region. These employers work with education, workforce development, economic development and community organizations to address the workforce and other competitiveness needs of a targeted industry. Sector partnerships can help facilitate the advancement of workers at all skill levels, including the least skilled. Sector partnerships:

- Influence training programs and expand the pool of talent with needed skills.
- Create a pipeline of future workers.
- Align and maximize resources and services to increase efficiency sustainability of strategies to close workforce skill gaps.
- Make systems more responsive to the needs of business.
- Build lasting relationships between and provide an ongoing feedback loop with education, training and workforce programs.
- Help employers fill jobs more quickly.
- Increase retention, productivity, and placements for in-demand occupations.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Go to www.oklahomaworks.gov to contact Oklahoma Works staff to learn more about how you can start a sector partnership or participate in an existing partnership.

MANAGING MAJOR CHANGES IN YOUR WORKFORCE

Even in a robust economy, you may need to engage in layoffs, downsizings and restructuring in order to adjust to changing technology and industry fluctuations. Oklahoma Works provides assistance to both employers and workers to manage these changes and lessen the impact on your employees and community.

RAPID RESPONSE — FINDING HELP FOR YOU AND YOUR EMPLOYEES

If you are reducing the size of your workforce, changing its skill mix or anticipating a business closure, merger, or buyout, Rapid Response services can help you meet your business needs while recognizing the needs of your employees and community. Our team of seasoned Rapid Response professionals across the state are prepared to assist your employees during these transitions. The Rapid Response team is sensitive to your concerns such as confidentiality, maintaining productivity and transitioning your employees to new jobs or training.

The Rapid Response team will provide:

- An initial employer meeting to plan transition services for your employees.
- Possible options to reduce or avoid the layoff.
- Workshops focused on existing services made available to your employees before they leave your employment.
- Coordination with outplacement services you may have hired.
- Access to Oklahoma Works American Job Center services your employees need.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Go to <https://oklahomaworks.gov/find-a-job/rapid-response/> to learn more, access Oklahoma's Rapid Response Tools and Resources Handbook in English and Spanish, and view the Rapid Response Video Series.

UNDERSTANDING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A LARGE EMPLOYER DURING A LAYOFF

In general, if you are a business that employs at least 100 full-time workers you may be required by the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) to provide 60 days written notice in advance of plant closings and mass layoffs if you:

- Close a facility of 50 or more workers;
- Discontinue an operating unit of 50 or more workers;
- Lay off 50 to 499 workers, and these layoffs constitute 33% of the total work force at a single employment site; or
- Lay off 500 or more workers at a single employment site.

In such cases, you must notify each worker being laid off, the employee's union representative (if applicable), the state Dislocated Worker Unit (Oklahoma Works State Rapid Response Coordinator), and the chief elected official of the unit of local government where the closing is occurring. This notice is the action that often triggers Rapid Response services. Although your business may be exempt from WARN, we encourage you to give workers sufficient notice, to the extent possible.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Go to www.oklahomaworks.gov/find-a-job/rapid-response to learn more about Oklahoma's Rapid Response services.
- Check out https://www.doleta.gov/layoff/warn/eta_default.cfm for detailed information on WARN or go to www.usworkforce.org.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR YOUR EMPLOYEES

You can help your employees during a layoff to make the transition to new jobs or training by providing them information on income support assistance available to them.

- Unemployment Insurance (UI) at <https://www.ok.gov/oesc/Claimants/index.html>. The UI program pays benefits to eligible workers who are unemployed and meet state requirements. Also known as unemployment compensation, UI can help to preserve the economic health of communities by maintaining the purchasing power of these workers.
- Trade Readjustment Benefits at https://www.ok.gov/oesc/Job_Seekers/Trade_Adjustment_Assistance_-_TAA/. Employees who have experienced reduced hours and wages due to increased imports, or lost their job due to foreign competition or because the business moved overseas, may be eligible for benefits under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act.
- Health Benefit Options. Under what is often known as COBRA (the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act), your employees and their families may be able to purchase extended health coverage up to 18 months after a layoff.
- Pension Benefits Options. Employees who have been laid off and were active participants in your company's pension plan may be eligible to roll over vested pension benefits to an Individual Retirement Account (IRA).
- Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) at https://www.ok.gov/oesc/Claimants/Disaster_Unemployment_Assistance/index.html. Laid-off employees may be eligible for DUA if they lose their job or have a significant interruption of work during a disaster as declared by the President of the United States and are not entitled to unemployment insurance. The employees who are able to use this program must meet certain state criteria.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Contact your local Oklahoma Works American Job Center at <https://oklahomaworks.gov/about/oklahoma-works-centers/>.
- Contact the Oklahoma Works State Rapid Response Coordinator at www.oklahomaworks.gov/find-a-job/rapid-response.

TRAINING ASSISTANCE FOR YOUR EMPLOYEES

As many employers are demanding a more highly skilled workforce, many workers want to improve their skills to make them more marketable and valuable to employers. These workers want to make more money, have job security and feel valued as a knowledgeable employee. However, training and higher education costs money that not all companies offer.

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) can be thought of as a voucher to pay for training for a high-demand career, and are available to adult workers, including those who are unemployed or who are receiving a low wage. Through Oklahoma Works American Job Centers, they can choose from a list of high-performing eligible training providers and make informed career choices using ITAs to pay for their training.

Your business will benefit from ITAs because they help to build a larger pool of skilled workers to recruit to meet workforce demand.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Contact your local Oklahoma Works American Job Center about Individual Training Accounts and how they work at <https://oklahomaworks.gov/about/oklahoma-works-centers/>.

UNDERSTANDING TRADE LAWS

If you are laying off workers due to import competition or because of a shift in production overseas, individualized assistance is available at no cost to help your employees under the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program. You may even file a TAA petition on behalf of your employees to certify them for benefits beyond those normally available under regular Unemployment Insurance.

TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program is a federal program that provides aid to workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports or the shift of work overseas. In order for workers to be eligible for TAA benefits, a petition must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Certification of a petition by DOL entitles affected workers to a number of benefits, including occupational skills training while receiving income support, a wage subsidy for qualified workers age 50 and older who return to fulltime employment, assistance with job search and job relocation costs, and the Health Care Tax Credit (HCTC).

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Go to <https://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/> to file a petition.
- Go to https://www.ok.gov/oesc/Job_Seekers/Trade_Adjustment_Assistance_-_TAA/ to learn more about Trade Adjustment Assistance.
- Contact your local Oklahoma Works American Job Center at <https://oklahomaworks.gov/about/oklahoma-works-centers/>.

USING EMPLOYER TAX CREDITS

Tax credits are available if you hire certain kinds of workers such as veterans, vocational rehabilitation referrals and ex-offenders.

WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program is designed to assist individuals who are facing barriers into gainful employment. The tax credit for Oklahoma employers can be up to \$9,600 per qualifying new hire during their first year of employment. The WOTC tax credit is a one-time tax credit for each new hire and there is no limit to the number of new hires that can qualify. The tax credit is available to all for-profit employers for hiring individuals in all target groups listed below and to tax-exempt organizations that hire qualified veterans.

WOTC target groups who may qualify:

- Unemployed Veterans (including disabled veterans)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Recipients
- Food Stamp (SNAP) Recipients

- Designated Community Residents (living in Empowerment Zones or Rural Renewal Counties)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Referred Individuals
- Ex-Felons
- Supplemental Security Income Recipients
- Qualified Long-Term Unemployed
- Summer Youth Employees (living in Empowerment Zones)

Attention Employers

Employers can earn a tax credit of between \$1,200 and \$9,600 per employee, depending on the target group of the new employee and the number of hours worked in the first year.

The tax credit is calculated only on the qualified first-year wages incurred by the new hire. Wages start accumulating on the employment start date. Two factors affect the calculation of the tax credit: 1) the number of hours the new hire works determines the rate (percentage) that is applied to the qualified first-year wages; and 2) each target group has a first-year wage cap (maximum amount) to which the percentage is applied. Employees must work at least 120 hours in the first year of employment to receive the tax credit.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Access https://www.ok.gov/oesc/Job_Seekers/Workforce_Services/Work_Opportunity_Tax_Credit.html for more information on the WOTC.
- Contact your local Oklahoma Works American Job Center at <https://oklahomaworks.gov/about/oklahoma-works-centers/>.

TAX CREDITS FOR HIRING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Employers can save money by taking advantage of tax and reimbursement benefits for hiring workers with disabilities, such as:

- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) allows those who qualify to receive tax credits for part of wages paid to targeted workers with disabilities, including individuals referred by the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) divisions of Vocational Rehabilitation and Visual Services.
- Architectural/Transportation Barrier Removal Tax Deduction (IRS Code Section 190, Barrier Removal) enables businesses who qualify to take an annual deduction for expenses related to making buildings or vehicles used in your business more accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Disabled Access Tax Credit for Small Business (IRS Code Section 44, Disabled Access Credit) provides an annual tax credit to eligible small businesses for making their businesses accessible to people with disabilities.
- DRS reimburses businesses for on-the-job training they provide to referred workers.

Where to Go for Assistance —

- Access <http://www.okdrs.org/business-services> for more information on these tax credits.
- Contact your local Oklahoma Works American Job Center at <https://oklahomaworks.gov/about/oklahoma-works-centers/>.

YOUR WORKFORCE GLOSSARY

Adult Worker

An adult worker is age 18 and over and is eligible for employment and training services. Priority for certain services are given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. Employers with 15 or more employees and state and local government employment practices are covered. State and local governments are also prohibited from discriminating against individuals with disabilities when providing programs, activities or services. In addition, the ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in places privately operated and of public accommodation, including all hotels, restaurants, retail stores, places of recreation and in transportation services.

Apprenticeship Training

Apprenticeship is a combination of on-the-job training and related classroom instruction in which workers learn the practical and theoretical aspects of a highly skilled occupation. Apprenticeship programs are sponsored by individual employers, employer associations and joint labor and management partnerships.

Dislocated Worker

A dislocated worker is an adult who has been permanently laid off or has received a notice of termination or layoff from employment due to no fault of their own.

Federal Bonding Program

A Federal bond is an insurance policy that protects employers in case of loss of money or property due to employee dishonesty. Bond coverage is provided for any person whose background usually leads employers to question their honesty such as ex-offenders, ex-addicts, poor credit records, dishonorably discharged from military service or persons from low-income families lacking sufficient work history.

Job Corps

Job Corps is the nation's largest and most comprehensive residential education and job training program for at-risk youth, ages 16 through 24. Since 1964, the program has provided disadvantaged young people with the integrated academic, vocational, and social skills training they need to gain independence and get quality, long-term jobs or further their education.

Labor Market Information (LMI)

Labor market information provides statistics on occupational trends, unemployment rates and other economic statistics.

Older Worker

Older workers are people that are 55 years old or over. Those who have low-incomes may receive services such as government subsidized jobs and assistance in finding job opportunities in the private sector.

One-Stop Center

A One-Stop Center, also called an Oklahoma Works American Job Center, provides employers and workers with access and resources to obtain employment and training services at a single neighborhood location.

Rapid Response

Rapid Response is the program that provides early intervention services designed to respond to plant closures, layoffs caused by disasters, and layoffs of more than 50 employees before the layoff actually occurs. Rapid Response helps to transition workers into new jobs or training opportunities.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

TAA is a federal program that provides adversely affected workers with opportunities to obtain the skills, credentials, resources, and support necessary to (re)build skills for future jobs. Any member of a worker group certified by the U.S. Department of Labor may be eligible to receive training, employment and case management services, job search allowances, relocation allowances, and income support in the form of Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA).

Trade Readjustment Allowance

Trade Readjustment Allowance is an income support benefit available to those workers who were laid off or had hours reduced because their employer was adversely affected by increased imports from other countries.

Unemployment Insurance (UI)

A program providing cash benefits to eligible workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own (as determined under State law), and who meet other eligibility requirements of State law.

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

The U.S. Department of Labor is charged with preparing the American workforce for new and better jobs, and ensuring the adequacy of America's workplaces. It is responsible for a wide variety of workplace activities for nearly 10 million employers and well over 100 million workers.

Veteran

Veterans have solid training through their military experience. Veterans are often directed to services that transition and enhance the skills they acquired in the military.

Wagner-Peyser Act

The Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 established a nationwide system of public employment offices commonly known as the Employment Service. The Act was amended in 1998 to make the Employment Service part of the One-Stop service delivery system.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit provides federal income tax credits for new hires from among eight target groups. An employer's federal income tax liability can be reduced by as much as \$2400 per eligible hire.

Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN)

WARN offers protection to workers, their families and communities by requiring employers to provide written notice 60 days in advance of covered plant closings and covered mass layoffs. This notice must be provided to either affected workers or their representatives (e.g., a labor union), to the Dislocated Worker Unit and to the appropriate unit of local government.

Workforce Development Board (WDB)

In partnership with state and local elected officials, WDBs plan and oversee the state and local workforce development system. These boards must have at least 50 percent of its members as representatives of private industry and business.

Youth

Youth who qualify for services are those who range from age 14-24, possibly in low-income families and face a variety of challenges in becoming self-sufficient and stable in their careers.