



## **Northeastern Workforce Development Board Bidders' Conference Questions and Answers**

### **Bidder's Conference Attendees in Person**

Joanna Russell, Northeastern Workforce Development Board  
Rebecca Bryant, Northeastern Workforce Development Board  
Heather Stott, Goodwill Northern New England  
Kelly Osborn, Goodwill Northern New England  
Lee Umphrey, Eastern Maine Development Corporation  
Jon Farley, Eastern Maine Development Corporation  
Susan Cerini, Eastern Maine Development Corporation  
Erin Benson, Aroostook County Action Program  
Jamie Chandler, Aroostook County Action Program  
Sherry Locke, Aroostook County Action Program

### **Bidder's Conference Attendees via Zoom**

Timothy Foster, ResCare Workforce Services  
William Furness, The WorkPlace  
Michael McCarthy, The WorkPlace

All questions obtained from the bidders' conference are followed by NWDB's response and are noted below. No questions were submitted outside of the bidders' conference held on February 12, 2020.

### **QUESTIONS FOR ADULT & DISLOCATED WORKER SERVICES RFP AND YOUTH SERVICES RFP COMBINED:**

The NWDB received multiple questions related to “historical information” and “past performance”, etc. Bidders are encouraged to review annual reports and quarterly reports from both PY17 and PY18 to estimate past program performance in the northeastern region. PY18 will create a challenge for estimating program performance as it is not a true measure of what takes place in our region today.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** During PY18 the Governor of Maine withheld contract funds from all three local areas. This action resulted in service providers having to lay off WIOA staff which created a major decrease in enrollments and service delivery and in some cases a standstill in enrollments and service delivery critical to our participants' career goals. The workforce system in our local area and the State of Maine has returned to normal operations. The relevant issue will be that a review of PY18 will not produce the information requested. Bidders are encouraged to review quarterly reports available by clicking on: <https://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/> and view Maine's annual reports

at [https://www.maine.gov/swb/reports/annual\\_report/index.shtml](https://www.maine.gov/swb/reports/annual_report/index.shtml). For more detailed information, a review of board minutes will provide a full history of budgets, program reports, etc. Click on the following link to access board minutes: <https://www.northeasternwdb.org/resources/meeting-minutes/>.

For your information: the issue of WIOA funds being withheld is not likely to occur again as Coastal Counties in Southern Maine sued the Governor of Maine in federal court. (The court documents are posted on the NWDB's website for review.) Click on the following link: <https://www.northeasternwdb.org/news/>, scroll down to the bottom of the page to "Informational Links".

**QUESTION:** If we are bidding both programs as a consortium of two organizations are the required attachments including Cover Sheets, Assurances & Certifications, financial audit reports for the bidder's organization or company, copies of the bidder's Program Year 2018 WIOA review reports, Fiscal Questionnaires, Reference Letters, and Transition Schedule required of both partner organizations or just for the designated lead organization?

**ANSWER:** The NWDB requires the lead applicant to submit all required attachments for their organization only. The lead applicant will be responsible for vetting and monitoring any additional partners within the proposal. The lead applicant will confirm additional partner's ability to deliver WIOA services.

**QUESTION:** In one place in the RFP it is stated that the period of performance will include a base contract year that begins July 1, 2020 and ends on June 30, 2021. In another section of the RFP it states that the award duration for activities solicited in this RFP will be twenty-four (24) consecutive months from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2022. Should we base our cost proposals on a one-year period or 2-year period? If our proposals should be based on a 2-year basis do we need to complete 2 RIDER D forms for each proposal (one for PY 20 and one for PY 21)? On the Proposal Cover Sheets under "Total Funding Requested" should we include 2 years of the estimated PY 19 funds?

**ANSWER:** The base contract year will be used to determine the service provider's program performance. If the year results in unsatisfactory performance, the NWDB will use the "base year" to identify appropriate corrective actions. The contract for both programs will be for two years unless there is a serious problem with performance at which time the NWDB is able to terminate the contract with notice. All bidders must submit a separate budget and implementation plan for year 1 and year 2.

**QUESTION:** On the RIDER D form under Direct Participant Services Costs, line B. Career Services; what costs should be included? Does the "Career Services" line item apply to both RFPs?

**ANSWER:** All bidders must read and become familiar with Maine's State Workforce Board's, (SWB) developed policy, <file:///C:/Users/Jrussell/Downloads/State-Workforce-Board-Minimum-Training-Expenditure-Requirement.pdf>, requiring that the WIOA service provider allocate 70% of the Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to "Direct Participant Services Costs". The SWB included "career services" line B as direct training for the Adult and Dislocated Worker contract only.

**This means the bidder/WIOA service provider submitting a proposal must identify positions/WIOA staff who will provide “career services” to Adult and Dislocated Workers and include their calculated their wages, fringe benefits, travel, materials/supplies, and telephone to Direct Participant Services Costs, on line B.**

**Bidders must submit the following information (break down) in their budget summary for their Adult and Dislocated Worker budgets.**

**A break down and documentation for Direct Participant Services Cost line B under each Adult and Dislocated worker must include:**

- 1. Salary total including all career counselors/career advisors who provide “Career Services” to their Adult and Dislocated Worker participants.**
- 2. Fringe total including all career counselors/career advisors who provide “Career Services” to their Adult and Dislocated Worker participants.**
- 3. Travel cost total all career counselors/career advisors who provide “Career Services” to their Adult and Dislocated Worker participants.**
- 4. Material/Supply total all career counselors/career advisors who provide “Career Services” to their Adult and Dislocated Worker participants.**
- 5. Telephone costs all career counselors/career advisors who provide “Career Services” to their Adult and Dislocated Worker participants.**
- 6. Any other planned expenditures associated with providing “Career Services” to their Adult and Dislocated Worker participants.**

Bidders will add up all the cost for the above line items and post the total only under each program, (Adult OR Dislocated Worker). If a position will serve both programs split the total and post half under Adult Program and half under Dislocated Worker Program.

\*\*\*\*\*NOTE: If a career counselor/advisor’s time is broken down to include another job title (i.e. 50% time spent providing “Career Services” and 50% time spent in File Management), **50% time planned to provide “Career Services” should be included in Direct Participant Services Cost line B.** The remaining 50% of the employee’s time should be included in the appropriate operations budget lines for wages, salary, travel, etc.

**QUESTION:** On the RIDER D form should we be estimating PY 19 Carry-in funds (the form says PY 18 carry-in funds)?

**ANSWER:** The RFP’s had the wrong budget forms contained in the attachments. You will receive a revised copy. The NWDB staff will send a revised copy to everyone who attended the bidders’ conference and we will post the revised copy online at <https://www.northeasternwdb.org/news/>. You will not be required to calculate “carry-in” budgets costs for either PY20 or PY21.

**QUESTION:** Will you please post the sign in sheet for today’s meeting? It was hard to hear introductions.

**ANSWER:** You will find all who attended listed above.

**QUESTION:** Can you please provide historical performance for both A/DW and Youth? Contracted goals and actual measures attained?

**ANSWER:** [https://www.maine.gov/swb/reports/annual\\_report/index.shtml](https://www.maine.gov/swb/reports/annual_report/index.shtml) and <https://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/>.

**QUESTION:** Can you please provide numbers of persons served for both A/DW and Youth?

**ANSWER:** [https://www.maine.gov/swb/reports/annual\\_report/index.shtml](https://www.maine.gov/swb/reports/annual_report/index.shtml) and <https://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/>.

**QUESTION:** Can you please provide projected carryover numbers for both A/DW and Youth?

**ANSWER:** The NWDB does not have projected numbers for PY20 or PY21.

**QUESTION:** Can you please provide historical training expenditures for both A/DW and Youth?

**ANSWER:** Bidders are expected to access data online from existing reports, meeting minutes, and charts. See the links above.

**QUESTION:** Can you please provide the current staffing structure for both A/DW and Youth?

**ANSWER:** Each bidder including the existing service providers are expected to determine their own staffing patterns. It would not be appropriate for the NWDB to provide you with another bidder's staffing plan. The NWDB suggests each bidder call the CareerCenter Manager and affiliate sites to determine and estimate facility costs.

**QUESTION:** We see that profit and indirect are allowed, are there limits for each?

**ANSWER:** While the NWDB has not set a formal limit on indirect cost for its service providers, it has become critical for us to track and measure funding allocated to training and support services that benefit WIOA participants. As noted in the SWB's 70% training policy, the NWDB will track and monitor operations cost overall.

The NWDB encourages for profit companies to assess and propose the best budget formula to deliver quality services. Please explain in the budget summary.

**QUESTION:** Does the proposer need to budget for facilities (Comprehensive center and affiliates), or are these costs covered by the board?

**ANSWER:** The service provider/bidder is expected to cover all facility costs. (Comprehensive CareerCenter and all affiliate sites.)

**QUESTION:** Can you provide the current costs associated with support services, space, equipment, general operations, technology for both the youth and adult programs?

**ANSWER:** Bidders are expected to access data online from existing reports, meeting minutes, and charts. The NWDB is seeking innovative proposals with each service provider. Bidders are encouraged to use their experience and innovation to estimate costs.

**QUESTION:** Can you provide a list of current staffing levels by Center location?

**ANSWER:** Each bidder, including the existing service providers, are expected to determine their own staffing patterns. It would not be appropriate for the NWDB to provide you with another bidders staffing plan. The NWDB suggests each bidder call the CareerCenter Manager and affiliate sites to determine estimated facility costs.

**QUESTION:** Can you provide the most recent program year outcomes for Youth and Adult/DW?

**ANSWER:** [https://www.maine.gov/swb/reports/annual\\_report/index.shtml](https://www.maine.gov/swb/reports/annual_report/index.shtml) and <https://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/>.

**QUESTION:** What are the anticipated numbers to be served in the PY20?

**ANSWER:** The NWDB expects each bidder to provide their estimated numbers to be served based on their program plans and budgets. Historical data can be found at the following link: [https://www.maine.gov/swb/reports/annual\\_report/index.shtml](https://www.maine.gov/swb/reports/annual_report/index.shtml).

**QUESTION:** Are enrollment numbers expected to be equal to the county percentages of allocation? Example if Penobscot is 20% of allocation does that mean 20% of enrollments and services must be in Penobscot?

**ANSWER:** The NWDB strives to serve all residents in need of services. Each county must be provided with services and resources as needed and the needs certainly change over time. One county may need more services than another depending on the existing workforce issues. The service provider must be flexible in address the needs across the entire region. The NWDB has not found it necessary to measure the funding allocations against services rendered.

**QUESTION:** The Minimum Training Expenditure Requirement states it is for PY18 and PY19, with this RFP for PY20 what is the expectation for the training percentage for PY20? Career Services is included in Training Expenditures according to the state policy, is it expected that the staff costs for providing Career Services be entered in the line item Career Services or in the line items under Personnel?

**ANSWER:** A WIOA service provider submitting a proposal must identify positions/ WIOA staff who provide “career services” to Adult and Dislocated Workers and must calculate their wages, fringe benefits, travel, materials/supplies, and telephone to Direct Participant Services Costs, line B.

**Bidders must submit the following information (break down) for their Adult and Dislocated Worker budgets under DIRECT PARTICIPANT SERVICES COSTS LINE B:**

**Back up document for line B under each Adult and Dislocated worker must include:**

- 1. Salary total including all career counselors/career advisors who provide “Career Services” to their Adult and Dislocated Worker participants.**
- 2. Fringe total including all career counselors/career advisors who provide “Career Services” to their Adult and Dislocated Worker participants.**
- 3. Travel cost total all career counselors/career advisors who provide “Career Services” to their Adult and Dislocated Worker participants.**
- 4. Material/Supply total all career counselors/career advisors who provide “Career Services” to their Adult and Dislocated Worker participants.**
- 5. Telephone costs all career counselors/career advisors who provide “Career Services” to their Adult and Dislocated Worker participants.**
- 6. Any other planned expenditures associated with providing “Career Services” to their Adult and Dislocated Worker participants.**

Bidders/service providers must add up all the cost for the above line items and **post the total only under each program, (Adult OR Dislocated Worker)**. If a position/WIOA staff is estimated to serve both programs bidders/service providers are directed to split the total and include half cost under Adult Program and half cost under Dislocated Worker Program.

\*\*\*\*\*NOTE: If a career counselor/advisor’s time is broken down to include another job title (i.e. 50% time spent providing “Career Services” and 50% time spent in File Management), **50% time planned to provide “Career Services” should be included in Direct Participant Services Cost line B.** The remaining 50% of the employee’s time should be included in the appropriate operations budget lines for wages, salary, travel, etc.

**QUESTION:** Does the auditor’s opinion at the beginning of our annual audited financials sufficient to cover the finance reference requirement or do we need a separate letter?

**ANSWER:** The auditor’s opinion is sufficient to cover the reference requirement. Bidders do not need to obtain a separate letter.

### **QUESTIONS FOR YOUTH SERVICES RFP ONLY:**

**QUESTION:** On page 15: “it is expected that they complete an internship in their career interest area” is it a requirement that all work experience include internships, if the work experience transitions to unsubsidized employment without an internship how does this reflect in meeting program performance?

**ANSWER:** It is not a requirement to include internships if the work experience transitions into unsubsidized employment. The provider must incorporate the appropriate/needed skill development into the work experience and report on the outcome.

### **QUESTIONS FOR ADULT & DISLOCATED WORKER SERVICES RFP ONLY:**

**QUESTION:** The RFP specifies that the contractor will also perform the role of One Stop Operator. Are the costs associated with these functions included in the base contract amount or

will there be a separate agreement for those costs? If the RFP assumes that those costs are included in the base contract amount should we estimate what those costs may be and include them as a separate budget item in the budget narrative?

**ANSWER: The costs for the One Stop Operator are included in the base contract amount, there will not be a separate agreement for those costs. The bidder should describe the estimate in the budget narrative addressing the OSO work attached to the appropriate line items.**