

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



Workforce Ready Grant Non-Credit Bearing Implementation and Procedures Manual

Table of Contents

[I. Rationale, Authority, and Program Guidelines](#)

[II. Program Overview and Requirements](#)

[III. Grant Payment Process](#)

[IV. Outcomes, Monitoring Strategies, and Sanctions](#)

[V. Program Documents](#)

[VI. Attestation](#)

I. Rationale, Authority and Program Guidelines

Next Level Jobs (NLJ)—part of Governor Holcomb’s Next Level Indiana agenda—aims to equip working-age Hoosiers and Indiana employers with the training and skills they need to succeed in the 21st Century economy. Through the Workforce Ready Grant non-credit bearing (WRG NCB) program, and in partnership with Indiana Department of Workforce Development (IDWD), working-age Hoosiers can enroll in no- to low-cost training programs in any one of Indiana’s 5 high-demand sectors to earn high-value certificates in these areas through approved training providers located throughout the state.

Indiana Code 21-12-8-12 establishes the Workforce Ready Grant non-credit bearing program to provide grants to eligible individuals for occupational training leading to a high demand occupation.

Eligible training must be in one (1) of the following industry sectors:

| | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Advanced Manufacturing | Transportation & Logistics | Building & Construction |
| IT & Business Services | Health & Life Sciences | |

WRG NCB authorized training programs are intentionally short-term to allow participants to complete training quickly—assisting in securing gainful employment as soon as possible.

II. Program Overview and Requirements

Individuals may qualify for a grant of up to \$5,000 to participate in a WRG NCB authorized occupational training. Individuals are eligible to utilize WRG funding once in their lifetime and are not entitled to the full \$5,000. Authorized WRG NCB training providers and programs must train to an industry-recognized certification within a high-priority job sector and that leads to a statewide 5 flame occupation based on DWD’s current methodology.

Training Provider Requirements

A Training Provider must meet and maintain the following requirements to be eligible as an authorized WRG NCB training provider.

- A. First, a training provider and program must be approved and fundable on the State’s WIOA Eligible Training Provider list (ETPL). ETPL requirements can be found in [DWD Policy 2017-01](#).
- B. Additionally, an eligible training program must be approved for Workforce Ready Grant, which includes meeting the following requirements:
 - i. The eligible training program **must result in an approved Workforce Ready Grant credential**:
 - a. Credentials **must fall within one of Indiana’s high-priority job sectors and lead to a statewide 5 flame occupation** as rated on the *Indiana Career Ready* INDemand list. The *Indiana Career Ready* INDemand website can be found at www.indianacareerready.com.
 - ii. An Eligible Training Provider (ETP) must include the costs of tuition, materials,

- supplies, and certification fees in the training program cost:
- a. An eligible training program's costs and instructional length must be **reasonable and commensurate to like programs**; and
 - b. An eligible training program **must follow specific program requirements for occupations that require a license** or certification to practice.
- iii. An Eligible Training Provider and program **must remain in compliance** with state, regional, and/or national accrediting bodies, boards, and commissions including remaining approved and fundable on the State's WIOA Eligible Training Provider list (ETPL).
 - iv. An Eligible Training Provider **must agree to the 70/30 payment schedule** as described in this document under section [III. Grant Payment Process](#).
 - v. An Eligible Training Provider **must review, acknowledge, and accept the Workforce Ready Grant Non-Credit Bearing Implementation and Procedures Manual and any temporary addenda** by annually signing and dating a paper or digital copy.

An authorized WRG NCB training provider must adhere to the following provider responsibilities:

An authorized WRG NCB training provider...

- A. must review the NLJ Portal manual training. The training can be found on the NLJ Portal.
- B. must inform participants of any related program costs in excess of the WRG NCB \$5,000 tuition cap.
- C. must ensure that each participant receives one WRG NCB paid attempt of the associated credential assessment. (This fee must be included in the program costs).
- D. must ensure training is conducted in an appropriate learning environment for course content and provide participants adequate access to all tools, equipment, materials, and technology necessary to successfully complete the training.
- E. is expected to contact new NLJ Portal individuals (student leads) within 3 business days.
- F. is required to verify participant eligibility and maintain a paper or digital record as described in this document under section [IV. Outcomes, Monitoring Strategies, and Sanctions](#). For a full list of participant eligibility requirements please refer to the **Participant Requirements** subsection below.
 - i. Training providers are the first and only contact individuals have. **It is the training provider's responsibility to ensure an individual meets all eligibility requirements, to collect and retain sufficient documentation to verify this information, and to mark eligibility in the student record in the NextLevel Jobs Portal.**
 - ii. Examples of sufficient documentation for the various eligibility requirements include but are not limited to: social security card, birth certificate, unexpired driver's license, unexpired state issued id, recent W-2 form, recent pay stub, unexpired passport, recent bank statement, permanent resident card, I-94 record, copy of HSD/HSE transcript, and recent utility bill.
- G. must enroll a participant in the portal (enrolled status) pending IDWD approval of funding. When adding a participant for enrollment, the State Date and End Date of the program, Date

of Birth, and Last 4 of SSN is required to complete the process. The participant will remain in a status of enrolled until approved by IDWD to start. IDWD will not approve students to start more than 60 days prior to the program start date. A training provider must **not** start a student in a course with the intention of receiving WRG reimbursement without the student in **approved** status. All approvals are subject to availability of funding. Once a student has been approved by IDWD to start, a provider may begin the process of submitting an enrollment invoice once the student has started their course.

- H. must ensure that a participant has received, reviewed, signed, and dated a *Participant Rights and Responsibilities* form- Attachment A
- I. must maintain up-to-date individual data and statuses on the NextLevel Jobs Portal.
- J. must keep accurate attendance records. All attendance records must be signed by both the instructor and participant and maintained on a weekly basis- Attachment B.
- K. must enforce the following attendance expectations:
 - i. Participants must attend 90% of the training program and within the timeframe (student/program start and end dates) approved by IDWD.
 - ii. Provider must seek IDWD approval for program extension only for emergency exceptions.
- L. must maintain the following WRG NCB annual performance standards:
 - i. 80% Training Completion Rate; and
 - ii. 70% Certification Attainment Rate.
- M. must notify the WRG NCB program administrator of any programmatic changes. **Changes made within INTraining do not automatically transfer to the WRG NCB program.** Changes to training program costs require IDWD approval and may not be approved.
- N. must submit digital invoices to IDWD as described in this document under section [III. Grant Payment Process](#).
- O. must respond to all IDWD communications as described in this document under section [IV. Outcomes, Monitoring Strategies, and Sanctions](#).
- P. must adhere to a cohort pre-approval process should IDWD deem such a process necessary to sustain funding.¹

Participant Requirements

An individual must meet the following requirements to be eligible for the WRG NCB grant.

A WRG NCB program participant...

- A. must have a high school diploma or equivalent, but less than a college degree (from any accredited institution).
- B. must be a U.S. citizen (or eligible resident).
- C. must be an Indiana resident.
- D. must enroll in a WRG NCB authorized training program.
- E. must have a lead (person) record in the NLJ dashboard.
- F. must have completed a *Participant Rights and Responsibilities* form- Attachment A.
- G. must not have previously utilized WRG (credit bearing or non-credit bearing, self-serve or WorkOne-assisted) funding—an individual may only enroll into a WRG program once in

¹ The cohort pre-approval process will be implemented if program funds drop below \$1,000,000. If the cohort pre-approval process is implemented, additional instructions will be available to training providers at that time.

the individual's lifetime².

H. must meet any additional requirements set by the WRG NCB authorized training provider.

III. Grant Payment Process

The grant invoice and payment process are completely digitalized to lessen the burden on all parties and to make the process as efficient as possible. Grant payments are made directly to the training provider on behalf of the participant.

Funds to an authorized WRG NCB training provider—

- A. A training provider must submit digital invoices through the NLJ Portal.
- B. Digital invoices must be submitted on the 15th and/or 30th of the month (i.e. January starters or completers may be submitted on an invoice by the 15th of February).
- C. A training provider shall be reimbursed for the training in two phases:
 - i. 70% of the cost of the program if the participant is present for the first week of the course; and
 - ii. The remaining 30% after the participant completes the requisite coursework.
 - iii. If the participant fails to complete the requisite coursework, the remaining 30% of program costs will not be paid.
- D. Payments may be made up to a \$5,000 cap for program costs and shall not exceed the approved training costs for the Workforce Ready Grant program at the time of participant enrollment.
- E. Funding will only pay for approved Workforce Ready Grant training programs appearing on the ETPL with the Workforce Ready Grant designation (NLJ icon) at the time of participant enrollment.
- F. Workforce Ready Grant voucher(s) shall pay for only one Workforce Ready Grant training program per participant over the participant's lifetime.
- G. If an accounting error is identified, IDWD will immediately notify the training provider to investigate and resolve the error. A training provider may be required to submit a refund.

IV. Outcomes, Monitoring Strategies, and Sanctions

The NLJ team utilizes the following strategies to foster continuous improvement and conduct grant oversight.

Participant Record Retention

A training provider is required to accurately maintain the individual records within the NLJ Portal. These records are automatically populated by individual application submittal. A training provider will be granted access to the Portal upon WRG NCB authorization.

NLJ Portal individual record—

- A. A training provider must maintain all individual records within the NLJ Portal, including contacting new leads and updating existing records.
- B. Prior to his or her enrollment into an authorized program, a participant must have an

² Exceptions can be made for participants on a case-by-case basis for emergencies.

individual record in the NextLevel Jobs Portal.

In addition, IDWD requires an authorized training provider to verify participant eligibility as described in this document under section [II. Program Overview and Requirements](#) and to maintain a paper or digital record of such documentation for all participants.

Participant paper or digital record—

- A. Must contain copies of all documentation that pertains to the participant’s eligibility, the signed *Participant Rights and Responsibilities* form, all attendance records, and any earned credential documentation.
- B. Must be kept in a secured area with limited access, as these files contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII).
- C. Must be kept for a **minimum of 3 years**.

Program Monitoring

Daily, weekly, and monthly monitoring activities will include Portal and invoice review. Other monitoring activities will include site-visits and review of participant records at the training provider location. IDWD reserves the right to visit any WRG NCB authorized training provider at any time on-site and unscheduled or to request review of participant records for the purpose of program monitoring.

Monitoring activities may include, but are not limited to:

- A. Site visits (scheduled or unscheduled).
- B. Staff or student interviews (scheduled visits only).
- C. Classroom observation.
- D. Review of full participant records (NLJ Portal and digital or paper record);
- E. Review of resources, tools, and curriculum.
- F. Review of any requirements related to a WRG NCB authorized training provider’s responsibilities.
- G. Review of any requirements related to ETP list policy.

IDWD reserves the right to place a WRG NCB authorized training provider or program on probation or to suspend a training provider or program’s WRG NCB authorization.

Reasons may include, but are not limited to:

- A. Poor performance; or
- B. Misusage of funding; or
- C. Loss of ETPL fundable status; or
- D. Falsification of documentation; or
- E. Observations or findings from monitoring activities, etc.

A WRG NCB authorized training provider must respond within 5 business days to all communications from the IDWD including phone calls, emails, online surveys, or requests for other documentation to assist the Department with ongoing program quality assurance measures.

Grievance Information

An applicant for or participant in any IDWD program or service, including the NextLevel Jobs Workforce Ready Grant program, has the right to file a grievance if the applicant or participant believes there has been:

- A. a violation of the implementation of program; or
- B. discrimination against the applicant or participant based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief; or
- C. fraud, criminal abuse, or other criminal activity.

Any participant wishing to discuss a grievance can contact the IDWD via email at: policy@dwd.in.gov.

V. Program Documents

- [Becoming a NextLevel Jobs Training Provider \(NCB application\)](#)
- Participant Rights and Responsibilities- Attachment A
- Attendance record template- Attachment B

VI. Attestation

Please email workforcereadygrant@dwd.in.gov with any questions regarding the content of the *Workforce Ready Grant Non-Credit Bearing Implementation and Procedures Manual*.

I have reviewed and understand the information presented in the *Workforce Ready Grant Non-Credit Bearing Implementation and Procedures Manual* and any temporary addenda issued by IDWD and accept the requirements contained within.

| | |
|----------------|-------|
| Name (printed) | Title |
|----------------|-------|

| | |
|-----------|------|
| Signature | Date |
|-----------|------|

Attachment A



Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant (non-credit bearing) Participant Rights and Responsibilities

Next Level Jobs—part of Governor Holcomb’s Next Level Indiana agenda—aims to equip working-age Hoosiers and Indiana employers with the training and skills they need to succeed in the 21st Century economy. Through the Workforce Ready Grant, working-age Hoosiers can enroll in no- to low-cost training programs in any one of Indiana’s 5 high-demand sectors: Advanced Manufacturing, Building & Construction, Health & Life Sciences, IT & Business Services, and Transportation & Logistics. Hoosiers can earn high-value certificates in these areas through approved training providers located throughout the state.

Thank you for showing interest in becoming a Workforce Ready Grant participant. As part of the enrollment process, all participants are to be made aware of and agree to their rights and responsibilities as a Workforce Ready Grant participant.

Participant Rights:

A WRG NCB participant...

1. may receive a **one-time award** of up to \$5,000 for training program costs under the traditional Workforce Ready Grant (WRG) program **or** a **one-time award** of up to \$10,000 under the 2020-2021 Workforce Ready Grant-Rapid Recovery (WRG-RR) Expansion. A participant may only apply for and receive one grant through the self-serve NextLevelJobs.org website or through the WorkOne-assisted option. Covered training costs include tuition, ancillary expenses, and associated certification assessment fees. A participant may select any eligible WRG-approved training provider and program based on career interests. *The grant award to cover training costs is paid directly to the selected training provider on behalf of an eligible participant in two reimbursements—one at the time of enrollment and one for participant completion.* **A participant is not entitled to the full award amount if the participant selects a training program at a cost below the maximum award level.**
2. has the right to be informed of any training programs with program costs in excess of the WRG NCB \$5,000 or WRG-RR \$10,000 tuition cap.
3. has the right to **one attempt** of a certification assessment or exam associated with the selected occupational training to be paid for by the grant.

4. has the right to receive training in an appropriate learning environment including access to all tools, equipment, materials, and technology necessary to successfully complete the training.
5. has the right to file a grievance. An applicant for or participant in any Indiana Department of Workforce Development (IDWD) program or service, including the NextLevel Jobs Workforce Ready Grant program, has the right to file a grievance if the applicant or participant believes there has been:
 - a. a violation of the implementation of program.
 - b. discrimination against the applicant or participant based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief; or
 - c. fraud, criminal abuse, or other criminal activity.

Any participant wishing to discuss a grievance can contact the IDWD via email at: policy@dwd.in.gov.

Participant Responsibilities:

Every WRG NCB participant...

1. must meet WRG NCB eligibility requirements:
 - a. must have a **high school diploma or equivalent**, but less than a college degree (from any accredited institution)³
 - b. must be a **U.S. citizen** (or eligible resident).
 - c. must be an **Indiana resident**.
 - d. must enroll in a WRG NCB authorized training program.
 - e. must **complete a Next Level Jobs-WRG Application** at <https://nextleveljobs.org/> (to obtain a self-serve grant)
 - f. must review and understand the information presented in this **Participant Rights and Responsibilities** document and agree to the requirements.
 - g. must not have previously utilized WRG (credit bearing or non-credit bearing, accessed through the self-serve website or WorkOne). An individual may only enroll into a WRG program **one time** in his or her lifetime.
 - h. must **meet any additional requirements set by the WRG NCB authorized training provider**.
2. must **provide true and accurate documentation requested by the training provider** to assist with verification of eligibility.
3. is required to pay any costs not covered by or in excess of the WRG NCB per-participant tuition award cap.

³ Prior WRG-RR expansion extended eligibility to individuals with an associate or 4-year degree. This expanded eligibility is no longer in effect.

4. must attend a minimum of 90% of all training sessions or communicate in a timely manner to the training provider any anticipated absences (exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis for emergency situations).
5. is **required to complete the training program within the program start and end dates agreed to at the time of enrollment** with the training provider (exceptions may be made on a case by-case basis for emergency situations at the discretion of the training provider with approval by IDWD) ⁴
6. must, in partnership with the training instructor, accurately maintain the weekly attendance record throughout the training program.
7. must complete a **certification assessment** at the conclusion of the training period and **provide the results to the training provider**.
8. must respond to all communications from the IDWD, including phone calls, emails, online surveys, or requests for other documentation, to assist the Department with ongoing program quality assurance measures.

ATTESTATION:

Please email workforcereadygrant@dwd.in.gov with any questions regarding the content of the **Participant Rights and Responsibilities** document.

I have reviewed and understand the information presented in the **Participant Rights and Responsibilities** document and agree to the requirements contained herein should I be determined eligible and selected to participate in the training program.

Name (print)

Title

Signature

Date

⁴Program start and end dates are approved at the time of enrollment and participants are expected to complete within those timeframes. Adjustments to start and end dates must be approved by DWD, are not guaranteed, and are subject to available funding at the time of re-enrollment with other course dates.

Attachment B

| | | | |
|--|--|---|------------------------|
|  | <p>WORKFORCE READY GRANT (WRG) WEEKLY ATTENDANCE TRACKING State Form 56302 (2-20) DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT</p> |  | |
| <p>STUDENT: By signing this form, you are confirming you attended the training sessions on the dates specified. INSTRUCTOR: By signing this form, you are confirming the student attended the training sessions on the dates listed.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Signature date fields cannot be typed.</i></p> | | | |
| Student Name: _____ | | | |
| Student Identification Number: _____ | | | |
| Course Title: _____ | | | |
| Instructor Name: _____ | | E-mail: _____ | |
| <i>Date (mm/dd/yy)</i> | <i>Hours Attended</i> | <i>Student Signature</i> | <i>Date (mm/dd/yy)</i> |
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| <i>Date (mm/dd/yy)</i> | <i>Hours Attended</i> | <i>Student Signature</i> | <i>Date (mm/dd/yy)</i> |
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| <i>Date (mm/dd/yy)</i> | <i>Hours Attended</i> | <i>Student Signature</i> | <i>Date (mm/dd/yy)</i> |
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| Instructor Signature: _____ | | Date (mm/dd/yy): _____ | |