



**REQUEST FOR  
APPLICATIONS  
FOR  
PROGRAMS  
LEADING TO  
SUCCESSFUL  
CHOICES**

**WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS SOUTH PLAINS**  
Released JULY 20, 2010 by:  
**South Plains Regional Workforce Development Board**  
**dba WorkForce Solutions South Plains Board**  
1301 Broadway, Ste. 201  
Lubbock, Texas 79401  
(806) 744-1987

**DUE DATE: OPEN AND CONTINUOUS**

## I. Introduction

The South Plains Regional Workforce Development Board, d.b.a. WorkForce Solutions South Plains, (referred to hereafter as “WorkForce Solutions” or “the Board”) is requesting applications for the management and operation of Employment and Training Projects to serve Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients who are participating in the Choices Program. Through this Request for Applications (RFA), the Board is seeking successful programs designed to prepare Choices Program participants to obtain and retain unsubsidized employment. Applications from qualified organizations that meet the criteria described in the RFA will be placed on a list of approved service offerings to be made available to eligible Choices participants. By offering an enhanced array of services to this population, the Board seeks to be more responsive to the needs of participants, especially participants residing in rural areas. This Request for Applications provides information necessary to prepare a successful application.

### The Board

Workforce Solutions is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. It is governed by a Board of Directors who are appointed by the local Chief Elected Officials (CEO's), the county judges, in the 15 counties that comprise the South Plains Region, in accordance with the provisions of Texas Senate Bill 642, Texas House Bill 1863 and the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998.

The Board is a volunteer board composed of community leaders representing business, organized labor, education, rehabilitation services, economic development and local and state agencies. As the lead workforce development entity on the South Plains, the Board represents a public/private partnership that serves as a catalyst for building a workforce development system that meets the needs of local employers and job seekers. As fiscal agent for workforce development services, the Board is responsible for the planning, oversight and evaluation of the workforce development system. The Board administers the procurement of the operation of the WorkForce Solutions Career Centers, the YouthZone Program, and the Child Care Services for the South Plains Workforce Development Area.

The South Plains Workforce Development Area consists of a 15-county region with a total population of approximately 397,590 persons. Included are Bailey, Cochran, Crosby, Dickens, Floyd, Garza, Hale, Hockley, King, Lamb, Lubbock, Lynn, Motley, Terry and Yoakum Counties. The region includes the Lubbock Metropolitan Statistical Area comprised of Lubbock and Crosby Counties. Labor market information for the South Plains Region is available from the Texas Workforce Commission's Lubbock MSA Economic Profile ([http://www.tracer2.com/admin/uploadedpublications/1724\\_lubbockmsa.pdf](http://www.tracer2.com/admin/uploadedpublications/1724_lubbockmsa.pdf)) and the South Plains Region Economic Profile ([http://www.tracer2.com/admin/uploadedpublications/1758\\_southplainswda.pdf](http://www.tracer2.com/admin/uploadedpublications/1758_southplainswda.pdf)).

The focal point of the local workforce delivery system is a network of one-stop career centers, known as WorkForce Solutions Career Centers. These Centers provide customers, employers and job seekers, with convenient access to a broad array of information and services.

## Guiding Principles for the Workforce System

The South Plains Workforce Development system is built upon four guiding principles for the one-stop delivery system envisioned by the U. S. Department of Labor. These principles are:

- ✓ **Universality:** Services must be available for everyone – all workers and employers. The system should offer something for everyone from highly skilled individuals to new workforce entrants, from major corporations to small businesses.
- ✓ **Customer Choice:** All customers must be informed and aware of the choices and opportunities that exist for employment, education and training, both those services provided directly through the workforce center system and those available through community partners.
- ✓ **Integration:** Customers should be able to enter the system through multiple access points, yet it should feel like a single system. There should be no separate identification of programs or agencies.
- ✓ **Performance-driven and Outcome-based:** The system must be accountable for achieving the outcome of a skilled workforce. Customer feedback, quantitative and qualitative data should be used to measure success and should serve as the foundation for continuous improvement activities.

## Procurement Standards

The procurement of goods and services under Federal assistance programs shall be in compliance with OMB Circular A-102 and/or A-110, as applicable, and the provisions of applicable Federal law or Executive Orders, as well as applicable state laws, rules, regulations and policies governing procurement. Solicitation under this RFA is intended to ensure that services are obtained efficiently, economically, and provide for complete, free and open competition in the selection of service providers.

Under Texas Government Code sec. 552.003, the Board is subject to the Texas Public Information Act and the information provided in response to this RFA will be made accessible to the public. If a proposer believes that any information contained in its proposal qualifies for an exception to the Public Information Act, the proposer must indicate in the proposal which information should be excepted from the Act and the grounds for the exception. If there is a request for this information under the Public Information Act, the Board will make a good faith effort to inform the proposer of the request for access to the information.

## What is the Choices Program?

Workforce Solutions provides extensive welfare-to-work services under the "Choices" program designed to help TANF applicants, recipients and former recipients find and maintain employment in order to assist an individual's progression toward self-sufficiency. The specific services provided may include referrals to domestic violence shelters, job leads, Work In Texas, computer access for preparing resumes, job fairs, referral to clothes closets, providing information about local employment opportunities, educational assistance, adult education, referral to other community and faith-based resources, assistance with work-related expenses, transportation assistance, and other support services. Through the Child Care Services Program, Workforce Solutions also provides child-care assistance to Choices participants and those leaving welfare for work.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Texas Workforce Commission rules, specifically Chapter 811, which sets forth rules for the operation of the Choices Program. Section 811.2, Definitions, will be referenced throughout this RFA to define program terms. Choices Rules are available online at <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/twcinfo/rules/twcrules.html>.

### **Coordination with the Workforce Centers and Community Organizations**

Service providers will be expected to coordinate with the Choices Program staff of the Workforce Solutions Career Centers regarding activities and outcomes resulting from projects funded through this RFA and agree to comply with reporting requirements. Examples of coordination may be in the form of advertisement of the project originating under this RFA in the Centers and referral of participants to these projects from the Centers.

Providers are encouraged to develop partnerships with community organizations that can provide a support network for participants during and after completion of their participation in the program.

### **Purpose of this RFA**

As a result of this RFA, the Board will compile and maintain a list of approved service providers, along with their eligible service offerings for use by Workforce Solutions Career Counselors and Choices case managers. Choices case managers will refer participants who need to upgrade their skills and/or need assistance in order to secure or retain employment to approved vendors for appropriate services. Based on current level of activity, we estimate that between 5 and 10 Choices participants on average will be referred to attend one of the approved programs each month. Choices case managers will follow the participant's progress throughout the activity.

Projects are to be independently operated, year-round programs that provide services to economically disadvantaged adults, ages 16 years and above, to support their efforts to obtain and retain full-time, permanent unsubsidized employment.

Applicants may propose to offer one or more service offerings and must complete the requested application form (Attachment 1) for each. A description of the allowable training services is provided in this RFA.

### **Eligible Providers**

Eligible providers are public or private not-for-profit or private for-profit, faith-based, and community-based organizations, school districts, colleges, and universities, as well as other organizations. Entities that are subject to the Texas Proprietary School Laws or other State regulatory requirements must be in compliance with applicable laws to be eligible. Minority-owned, disadvantaged and woman-owned businesses are encouraged to respond.

Service providers must have at least one year of demonstrated performance in the provision of the types of services.

### **Type of Agreement:**

An agreement will be established with each approved vendor based on reimbursable fixed unit cost amounts stated in the response to this RFA. Total reimbursement amounts will be based on actual Workforce Solutions Career Center referrals and funding availability. Workforce Solutions does not guarantee the referral of any participant to any selected provider. Participants will be given a choice of service providers based on need, availability and proximity to their community. For the purpose of completing an application, a total of approximately \$100,000 is available for the provision of the services procured through this RFA. This is a planning estimate and is subject to revision at the time of contract implementation.

The payment of performance bonuses is allowable and is considered to be an incentive to be paid for exceptional program outcomes. This incentive is limited to placements made in jobs within "for profit" entities. The incentive amount is limited to \$500 per placement and is earned upon a participant's being placed in full time, permanent employment.

Prior to the provision of services, contracts will be executed between the service provider and Workforce Solutions based on the cost per participant. These contracts will incorporate this RFA and its provisions by reference and will incorporate the information on service offerings as described in the Attachment 1, "Provider Application", submitted by respondents to this RFA. Contracts will include provisions regarding reporting requirements, payment and performance necessary to ensure the welfare of participants and meet program requirements.

Once approved, agreements will be effective for a period of one year and may be renewed annually based upon successful attainment of performance standards and availability of funds. Workforce Solutions reserves the right to cease referrals of participants if the vendor does not demonstrate that participants are mastering the intended skills.

Providers may submit invoices upon completion of services as called for in each individual contract. Payments will be made to the service provider by Workforce Solutions within 30 days of invoice date.

### **Service Offerings:**

**(See Choices Rules, Section 811.2 – Definitions for Glossary of Terms)**

Individuals receiving TANF who are not exempt from the requirement to obtain and secure employment are referred to the Workforce Solutions Career Center for enrollment in the Choices Program. Each participant is assigned a case manager who will assist them in finding employment and/or enrolling in training services. The Choices case manager completes an assessment that includes an evaluation of a participant's vocational and educational skills, experience and needs. The Texas Assessment of Basic Education (TABE) is used to evaluate literacy levels. The Choices case manager and the participant develop a Family Employment Plan (FEP). This plan is required for all Choices participants and is based on the results of assessments. It outlines the steps and services that the client will need to achieve the goal of self-sufficiency. Participations are informed regarding participation requirements and sign a form indicating their agreement and willingness to comply with program requirements. The Choices case manager tracks the participant's performance as he or she works toward fulfillment of the FEP and ensures compliance with program requirements.

Service providers entering into a contract agreement with the Board to provide services to Choices participants will be provided a copy of the FEP for each participant enrolled in the provider's program. This information will serve as a guide for providing training or mentoring services and identifying appropriate job placements.

The services being requested through this RFA include Supervised Job Search and Work Readiness Training. These services normally provide participants with training or activities that promote the development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct in order to prepare individuals for full-time, permanent employment. In addition, providers may provide Job Development and Job Placement Services. The following activities are allowable:

1. Mentoring, Coaching;
2. Supervised Job Search;
3. Placement in Community Service or Work Experience;
4. Work Readiness or Job Skills Training in conjunction with Community Service or Work Experience;
5. Job Development; and,
6. Placement in Unsubsidized Employment.

Training services may include, but are not limited to:

- basic computer literacy/skills, courses on computer software applications such as Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, and similar software products (not tied to a specific occupation)
- workplace literacy
- entry level skills development
- English as a second language
- academic remediation,
- GED preparation,
- basic education,
- literacy services

Job development services include:

- contacting local employers or industry associations to request that job openings be listed with Texas Workforce Centers, and other entities in the One-Stop Service Delivery Network selected by the Board;
- identifying the hiring needs of employers;
- assisting an employer in creating new positions for Choices participants based on the job developer's and employer's analysis of the employer's business needs; or
- finding opportunities with an employer for a specific Choices participant or a group of Choices participants.

Job placement services include:

- identifying employers' workforce needs;

- identifying Choices participants who have sufficient skills and abilities to be successfully linked with employment; and
- matching the skills of the Choices participant pool to the hiring needs of local employers;

Workforce Solutions is seeking services in these categories that expand or enhance existing services and/or address any gaps in service to the target group, especially to individuals in rural communities. Programs must not duplicate services which already exist within the service area free of charge to the general public. All programs and services must be available to the general public at the same or higher cost as charged to Workforce Solutions participants. Special discounts and matching of funds for Workforce Solutions referrals are encouraged.

**Program Guidelines:**

**(See Choices Rules, Section 811.45-46 for additional information)**

**Work Experience.**

- The Choices case manager will determine on a case-by-case basis whether to authorize, arrange, or refer Choices participants for unsalaried, work-based training positions to improve the employability of Choices participants who have been unable to find unsubsidized employment.
- Choices participants who are unemployed after completing job search services are evaluated on an individual basis to determine if enrollment in work experience will be required, based on available resources and the local labor market.
- Each work experience placement is required to be:
  - is time-limited;
  - is designed to move Choices participants quickly into regular employment; and
  - to have designated hours, tasks, skills attainment objectives, and daily supervision.

**Community Service.**

- The Choices case manager will determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether to authorize, arrange, or refer Choices participants to a community service program that provides employment or training activities to Choices participants through unsalaried, work-based positions in the public or private nonprofit sectors. Choices participants may not arrange their own community service placements. Community service programs must contain structured, supervised activities that are a direct benefit to the community and are designed to improve the employability of Choices participants who have been unable to find employment.
- Community service positions may include, but are not limited to, work performed in:
  - a school or Head Start program;
  - a church;
  - a government or nonprofit agency; or
  - Americorps, VISTA, or other volunteer organizations.
- Community service placements are limited to positions that serve a useful community purpose in fields such as health, social service, environmental protection, education, urban and rural redevelopment, welfare, recreation, public facilities, public safety, and child care.

### **Job Search and Job Readiness Assistance.**

Job search and job readiness should incorporate the following:

- individual and group activities;
- assisted services in which staff provide direction and guidance to participants, including appropriate referrals based on their skills and abilities to pre-scheduled job interviews; and preparatory activities that are essential to obtaining and retaining employment; and
- customer-directed activities that do not require direct staff involvement, and include activities in which participants independently identify employment opportunities based upon their employment strengths, and perform preparatory activities that are essential to obtaining and retaining employment.
- are limited to activities necessary for participants to secure immediate employment.
- provide individual assistance or coordinated, planned, and supervised activities that prepare participants for seeking employment.

Job search activities are defined as acts of seeking and obtaining employment, including:

- job referrals;
- information on available jobs;
- occupational exploration, including information on local emerging and demand occupations;
- job fairs;
- applying or interviewing for job vacancies; and
- making contacts with potential employers.

Job readiness activities are designed to assist participants with addressing issues that will aid them in seeking, obtaining, and retaining employment, including:

- life skills;
- guidance and motivation for development of positive work behaviors necessary for the labor market;
- job skills assessment;
- substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, and rehabilitation activities, if the need for treatment and therapy activities is documented by a qualified medical, substance abuse, or mental health professional;
- job counseling;
- interviewing skills and practice interviews; and
- assistance with applications and resumes.

### **Special Provisions Regarding Job Search and Job Readiness.**

Job search and job readiness activities are time limited as follows:

- Choices participants may not be enrolled for more than four weeks of consecutive activity;
- Choices participants may not be enrolled for more than:
  - 120 hours per 12-month period for single parents with a child under age six; and
  - 180 hours per 12-month period for all other Choices eligibles; and
- After four consecutive weeks of participation in job search and job readiness activities, Choices participants are not eligible for additional participation in job search and job

readiness activities until they have complied with §811.26(a), which requires that Choices participants be engaged in an employment activity or in community service.

### **Unsubsidized Employment.**

Unsubsidized employment includes the following:

- full-time or part-time employment, in which wages are paid in full by the employer;
- unsubsidized internship with wages paid by the internship employer; and
- self-employment.

Providers offering programs that involve work experience or community service must supervise participants on a daily basis and track actual hours of participation. Providers also are responsible for determining and arranging for any intervention needed to assist the Choices participant in complying with work requirements and ensuring that the Choices participant is progressing toward achieving the program's goals and objectives.

### **Participation Requirements**

Participation in Choices activities is subject to the following requirements. Compliance with these requirements is the responsibility of the Choices participants.

1. Number of hours allowed in Community Service/Work Experience is calculated by adding the TANF cash benefit and the food stamp allotment and dividing by 7.25 per hour. Information regarding the number of hours a participant is allowed to work in these activities will be made available to service provider's upon the participant's enrollment in the program.
2. Minimum number of hours of documented participation required per week per participant:
  - ❖ Single Parent Family = 30 hours per week
    - 20 Core
    - 10 \*Non-core
  - ❖ Single Parent Family with child under the age of 6 years
    - 20 hours Core
  - ❖ Two Parent Family without childcare = 35 hours
    - 30 Core
    - 5 \*Non-core
  - ❖ Two Parent Family with child care = 55 hours
    - 50 Hours Core
    - 5 \*Hours Non-core

\*Job skills training is considered a non-core activity.

### **Program Evaluation:**

Workforce Solutions monitors the delivery of Workforce development services on an ongoing basis in order to ensure the achievement of program goals. The core indicators of performance for employment and training activities authorized under the Choices Program include:

- ❖ Entry into unsubsidized employment;
- ❖ Attainment of a recognized credential relating to achievement of educational skills, which may include attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or occupational skills, by participants who enter unsubsidized employment, or by participants who are eligible youth age 19 through 21 who enter postsecondary education, advanced training, or unsubsidized employment.

Program services will be evaluated on an ongoing basis to determine the contribution made to the overall goals of the Workforce Solutions program. In addition, customer satisfaction with particular service offerings may be measured through surveys conducted after the conclusion of participation in the program, course or activity.

Providers will be responsible for:

- tracking and reporting actual hours of participation, at least monthly, unless otherwise specified in the provider contract;
- determining and arranging for any intervention needed to assist the Choices participant in complying with work requirements;
- ensuring that the Choices participant is progressing toward achieving the goals and objectives in the family employment plan; and
- immediately notifying Choices Program case manager of participant's non-compliance.

Agreements entered into with service providers will incorporate measurable standards and objective assessment methods by which performance outcomes will be evaluated. Applicants are asked to include this information as part of the Provider Application submitted in response to this RFA.

Results of an individual participant's performance evaluations are to be provided to Workforce Solutions at completion of training or upon request. Specific reporting requirements will be included as part of any contract executed as a result of this RFA.

### **Contract Reporting Requirements:**

The service provider must agree to:

- 1) complete and submit such forms and reports as Workforce Solutions requires on individuals referred to and participating in its program and to do so according to the instructions and definitions prescribed by the Workforce Solutions;
- 2) be held liable for completeness, accuracy, and consistency of participant data;
- 3) provide participant performance reports no later than 10 business days of any request;
- 4) submit such other reports, data, and information on the operation and performance of this contract as may be required of the Board;
- 5) maintain program records and financial management records which support and document the expenditures of funds made under this contract;
- 6) retain all fiscal records and supporting documents for a minimum of three (3) years after final contract closeout unless there is an unresolved audit discrepancy at the end of such retention period, in which case the records will be retained until the discrepancy is resolved.

## Budget and Administrative Requirements

- ❖ Proposers who are partnering with other companies or agencies must list the names of all service providers or joint providers and the amount to be spent by each partner. All contracted costs must be itemized in the budget so it is clear how the funds will be allocated and spent by each partner. Contracts may be written independently with each of the organizations. Proposals must indicate that they are joint submissions. If proposers seek to form a legal joint venture using a corporate identity for the partnership, the Board will require the individual corporate partners to accept liability for the funds.
- ❖ Equipment purchases (over \$5,000) are not authorized under this contract. Consumable Supplies must be procured in accordance with TWC procurement policies. Technical assistance is available. Leasing arrangements for property or staff must be competitively procured and approved during negotiation of the contract.
- ❖ Proposers will be required to list the Board as an additional insured on their general liability, umbrella and fidelity bond insurance policies. If there is a fee for adding the Board, include the cost in the proposed budget. Proposers will be required to maintain appropriate insurance including workers compensation and auto insurance.
- ❖ This request for proposals does not commit or obligate the Workforce Board to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation of a response or in advance of the execution of a subcontract. The contract and accompanying budget must be fully executed prior to the program start date. No costs incurred prior to contract execution will be reimbursed.
- ❖ All applications will be subject to negotiation following selection by the Board. Negotiation addresses both programmatic and budgetary issues.
- ❖ The contract with the proposer selected will include general provisions set forth in the contract between the Board and the Texas Workforce Commission and other applicable requirements. A copy of the general provisions is available upon request.
- ❖ TANF funds provided through this Request for Applications may not be used to supplant other available federal, state, local, or private funds. This will be verified through contract negotiations and language to this effect will be included in all contracts.

## Service Expectations

- ❖ The Board reserves the right to review and monitor any or all services and financial transactions.
- ❖ The provider shall be responsible for meeting proposed performance benchmarks.

- ❖ Proposer must comply with all Federal and State mandates.
- ❖ Proposer will be required to maintain a case file for each participant. The files will be considered Board property and must be turned over to the Board upon request or at the end of the contract.
- ❖ Proposer must include a plan for internal controls for implementation of the contract and good management requirements including participant time and attendance as applicable to various funding streams.

### **Proposal Application Instructions**

1. TWO COPIES of each application should be submitted using the form provided as Attachment 1. Budgetary information must be provided using the form included as Attachment 4 of this RFA. The detail sheets for both personnel and non-personnel costs must be completed and should include a rationale for all charges.

2. Proposals packets should include the following completed documents to be considered responsive:

Cover Sheet with e-mail address (Must be signed by individual with authority to enter into a contract)

Application Form and Narrative Proposal (Attachment 1)

Budget Form (Attachment 4)

Staff Job Descriptions with Required Qualifications

Staff Resumes (Key Managerial Staff)

Appendices (Only one copy of the appendices need be submitted).

a. Copy of Your company/organization's most Recent Audit or Financial Report.

b. A signed Debarment and Suspension, Lobbying and Drug Free Work Place Certification Form (Attachment 3).

### **Submission of Applications**

This RFA is open and continuous and applications may be submitted beginning July 20, 2010.

Workforce Solutions will issue written notification of selection for inclusion on the Approved Vendor list, or of non-selection, within 30 days of the date of receipt of the application by Workforce Solutions. Successful respondents will be placed on the Workforce Solutions Choices Approved Vendor list for the applicable Program Year - effective as of the date of approval - for a period not to exceed twelve months from the date of placement on the list.

Questions about the RFA may be sent via fax to: Rosa Hernandez at (806) 744-1987 or email to: [rosa.hernandez@spworkforce.org](mailto:rosa.hernandez@spworkforce.org). Two copies with original signatures of each application must be submitted to Workforce Solutions at the address below. In addition to the two hard copies, submission of the application electronically (via email) can expedite the review process and is encouraged.

**Applications can be submitted** by mail or hand delivery to:  
Workforce Solutions South Plains  
Attention: Rosa Hernandez  
1301 Broadway, Ste. 201  
Lubbock, Texas 79401

## Selection of Service Providers

### 1. Application Selection Process

- a. Only applications that are responsive to the RFA instructions (i.e. include all required components) will be considered.
- b. A committee comprised of Workforce Solutions Board Administration staff will review and score applications based on application evaluation criteria outlined below.
- c. In accordance with the 73rd Texas Legislature, Workforce Solutions will make a good faith effort to award contracts to Historically Underutilized Business (HUB's). It is the policy of this organization to pursue HUB business. However the final decision as to the award of this contract will be contingent upon weighted evaluation criteria.

### 2. Application Evaluation Criteria

Applicants will be scored by a review committee comprised of Board Administration program and contracting staff using the RFP RATING FORM provided as Attachment 2.

#### ❖ Demonstrated Performance – 30 Points

- This criterion examines the past experience and demonstrated effectiveness (competence and qualifications) in providing the proposed educational or training service in a timely manner. Professional recommendations from reliable sources and/or an onsite review may be required.

#### ❖ Program Design – 30 Points

- This criterion examines the quality and innovativeness of the program activity and the outcomes desired, as well as whether program activities are consistent with the eligible activities as described in the section, "Program Requirements", and the section, "Service Offerings". Quality programs will provide services and/or activities that assist Workforce Solutions in attaining mandated performance measures on the core indicators of performance as described in the section entitled, "Evaluation".
- If applicable, applications will be evaluated on the innovative method the organization will employ to coordinate proposed services with other providers in the community based on existing service gaps or overlaps to ensure that there is no duplication of services. For those providers that propose to offer services already available in the community, the provider must demonstrate that the service or activity is either directed at a special population, or provided in an area that does not currently offer these services.

❖ **Reasonableness of Cost – 20 Points**

- This criterion examines the cost of services being purchased. The costs for services must be reasonable and necessary to the success of the program participants.

❖ **Financial Stability – 20 Points**

- This criterion examines whether the selected provider has adequate financial resources to achieve contract performance requirements. The application will be reviewed carefully for evidence of the bidder's ability to account for funds in accordance with TWC fiscal requirements. Training providers whose programs are regulated by the Texas Higher Education Board or the Texas Workforce Commission Career Schools and Colleges Division are not required to submit financial information.

Applications will be reviewed by a committee of Workforce Solutions staff who will utilize the RFP RATING SHEET provided as Attachment 2.

### **3. Scoring Threshold**

Any application with a total score of less than 70 points will be considered as non-responsive and will be disqualified from further consideration.

### **4. Debriefing**

Workforce Solutions will provide a debriefing for applicants scoring below a score of 70 upon request. The purpose of the debriefing is to promote the exchange of information, explain the evaluation system, and help unsuccessful bidders understand why they were not selected. Debriefings serve an important educational function for new providers of Workforce services. A fundamental objective is to aid these new providers in improving the quality of any future applications. In the debriefing, Workforce Solutions will provide information on the procurement process and how the application was scored.

Applicants who desire a debriefing must submit their request in writing, within fourteen (14) calendar days of the mailing date of determination/notification of non-selection, and include the party's proper mailing address. Workforce Solutions will acknowledge receipt of the request for debriefing in writing within 5 business days of receipt and provide notification of the date and time of the scheduled debriefing which shall be scheduled as soon as possible, but will no later than 10 business days of receipt of the request.

V. CONDITIONS AND LIMITATIONS

- A. The only purpose of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to ensure uniform information in the solicitation of proposals and procurement of services. This RFA is not to be construed as a purchase agreement or contract or as a commitment of any kind; nor does it commit the Board to pay for costs incurred prior to the execution of a formal contract unless such costs are specifically authorized in writing by Board.
- B. The Board reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received, to cancel or reissue this RFA in part or its entirety.
- C. The Board reserves the right to negotiate the final terms of any and all contracts or agreements with applicants selected.
- D. Misrepresentation of the applicant's ability to perform as stated in the proposal may result in cancellation of any contract or agreement awarded.
- E. Applicants shall not, under penalty of law, offer or provide any gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value to any officer, member, employee, or agent of the Board for the purpose of having an influencing effect toward their own application or any other application submitted hereunder.
- F. No employee, officer, member or agent of the Board shall participate in the selection, award or administration of a contract if a conflict of interest, or potential conflict, would be involved.
- G. Applicants shall not engage in any activity that will restrict or eliminate competition. Violation of this provision may cause an applicant's application to be rejected. This does not preclude joint ventures or subcontracts.
- H. Any applicant may withdraw his application either in person or by written request by a duly authorized representative at any time prior to the scheduled closing time for receipt of applications.
- I. No contract may be awarded until the applicant has complied with Executive Order 12549, 29CFR, Part 98 by submitting to the Board a signed Certification of Debarment, which states that neither the applicant, nor any of its principals, are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in a procurement by any Federal department or agency.
- J. The Board's Director of Operations is the responsible authority for handling complaints or protests regarding the procurement and proposal selection process. No protest shall be accepted by the State until all administrative remedies at the Board level have been exhausted.
- K. Applicants not selected by this process may appeal the Board decision by submitting in writing a formal letter of appeal addressed EO Officer, Workforce Solutions South Plains, 1301 Broadway, Ste 201, Lubbock, Texas, 79401. This appeal must be sent by registered mail and identified on the envelope as an appeal with the grounds of the appeal clearly stated in the letter, within fourteen calendar days of decision notification (the date on the notification letter). The EO Officer shall review the appeal and review applicable laws, and request determination if appeal is valid and shall make decisions. If persons are not satisfied with the decision they may pursue all other avenues of appeal provided by law.
- L. Applications must be manually signed by a person having the authority to bind the organization in a contract.
- M. The Board considers the application submitted in response to this RFA to be the property of the Board. Applicants should not include proprietary information or trade secrets. Information submitted may be subject to disclosure under the Texas Open Records Act. If necessary, it will be the responsibility of the proposer to seek an exemption from disclosure and file any necessary documents with the Attorney General.
- N. Funding for goods or services requested in this RFA is contingent upon the Board's actual receipt and availability of funds from the Texas Workforce Commission.
- O. WorkForce Solutions South Plains is an equal opportunity employer and complies fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws: Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIA Title I- financially assisted program or activity; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color and national origin; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs.
- P. The recipient also assures that it will comply with 29 CFR part 37 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above.
- Q. It is the goal of the Board to cooperate with the provisions of Texas Government Code Chapter 2161 and will make a reasonable effort to meet the state goal on subcontracts and supplier contracts for the performance of the activities to historically underutilized businesses (HUBs) certified by the State of Texas, as defined in Texas

## Workforce Solutions South Plains Request for Applications RFA-2010-50-021-TANF

- Government Code §2161.001, including any certified women or minority owned business or enterprise.
- R. Workforce Solutions contractors must abide by all conflict of interest policies issued by the Board, Texas Workforce Commission, State of Texas and the U. S. Department of Labor.
  - S. Contracts will contain a section prohibiting sectarian involvement, and the Board will ensure that no funds under the contract are used, either directly or indirectly, in the support of any religious or anti-religious activity, worship or instruction.
  - T. Contracts will contain a provision that no participant is directly or indirectly charged a fee as a condition for participation in any TWC funded program.
  - U. Contracts will include a Certification of Debarment and Drug Free Workplace Certification.
  - V. Confidentiality: The Service Provider agrees to maintain the confidentiality of any information, regarding program participants and the immediate family of any applicant or participant, that identifies or may be used to identify them and which may be obtained through application forms, interviews, tests, reports from public agencies or counselors or any other source. The Service Provider agrees not to divulge such information without the written permission of the participant, except that such information which is necessary as determined by the Board for purposes related to the performance or evaluation of the contract may be divulged to the Board or such other parties as they may designate having responsibilities under the contract for monitoring or evaluating the services and having responsibilities under the contract, or to governmental authorities to the extent necessary for the proper administration of the law. All unauthorized release of information shall be construed as a breach of this section.

ATTACHMENT 1

**For Workforce Solutions Board Use Only**

Received By:	Date:	Time:
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**Service Provider Application  
Short-term Prevocational Services**

**Vendor's Information**

Full Legal Name of Vendor:	
Mailing Address:	
Street Address (if different):	
City/State/Zip:	

**Vendor's Authorized Representative**

Name:	
Title:	
Telephone Number:	
Fax Number:	
E-mail Address:	

**Vendor's Contact Person:**

Name:	
Title:	
Telephone Number:	
Fax Number:	
E-mail Address:	

Vendor's Federal Employer Identification Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this a Historically Underutilized Business (HUB)?  YES  NO

**Vendor Type – please check all that apply**

<b>Nature of Organization</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Charitable/Faith Based Org.	<input type="checkbox"/> Proprietary School	<input type="checkbox"/> Community College	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Based Org.	<input type="checkbox"/> University Public _____ Private _____	<input type="checkbox"/> For Profit	<input type="checkbox"/> Partnership
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporation	<input type="checkbox"/> Sole Proprietorship	<input type="checkbox"/> Woman-Owned or Minority-Owned Business	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

**Program Information: A separate application must be submitted for each program or service offering.**

Provider Name:
Program Name:
Program Address/Location:
Program Business Hours:
Program Web Address:
Does your facility meet the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Are the facilities easily accessible by bus? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Do you maintain liability insurance? _____ Amount of Insurance: _____ <b>If not will you provide?</b> _____

**Provider Background / Experience**

Has your organization been providing the stated educational/training services for at least one year?  YES  NO

**Proposed Program**

Applicants must submit a narrative description of the proposed program. The narrative must state whether the program offers open entry and exit or is restricted to specific enrollment dates and participation periods. The narrative must also include a description of the measurable standards and objective assessment methods by which performance outcomes will be evaluated. Attach job descriptions describing staff qualifications for all positions to be funded in whole or in part with TANF funds. In addition, provide resumes for managerial staff whether or not positions are to be funded with TANF funds. Narrative descriptions are limited to ten one-sided pages of text using 12 point font.

Check All Services Offered	
<input type="checkbox"/> Job Skills Training	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Assistance
<input type="checkbox"/> Job Readiness	<input type="checkbox"/> Coaching or Mentoring
<input type="checkbox"/> Assisted Job Search	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Job Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Job Placement	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

**Cost Information**

Applicants must complete the Microsoft Excel budget spreadsheet provided as Attachment 3. In addition, include a budget narrative describing the cost items requested.

**Certification of Applicant**

Some organizations may need to have an on-site quality assurance review prior to approval. Workforce Solutions staff may need to conduct quality assurance reviews after a provider is approved to insure compliance with applicable State and Federal grant requirements.

Applicants may need to have a financial and/or administrative system review prior to approval. Workforce Solutions staff may need to conduct these reviews after a provider is approved to insure compliance with applicable State and Federal grant requirements.

By signing this application, the signatory authorizes Workforce Solutions to conduct an on-site quality assurance review, financial or administrative system review.

The Applicant/Service Provider hereby submits an application to Workforce Solutions of the South Plains. This is an offer to provide the stated training and employment services for eligible participants funded under the TANF Program administered by Workforce Solutions.

**Authorized Signatory Name and Title:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**FINANCIAL DOCUMENTATION**

Applicants that are not regulated by a State Regulatory Agency such as the Texas Workforce Career Schools and Colleges or the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board are required to provide evidence of financial stability prepared by a certified public accountant. Is documentation of financial stability attached?

Yes  No

*A separate application must be submitted for each program, service or activity proposed.*

ATTACHMENT 2  
RFP RATING FORM  
Successful Choices Projects

Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_

SECTION 1 – DEMONSTRATED EFFECTIVENESS

- (1) Organizational Experience
- (2) Past Performance (including previous years and current performance)
- (3) Service Provider Staffing

**Maximum 30 points** **Total** \_\_\_\_\_

SECTION 2 – QUALITY OF PROGRAM DESIGN

- (1) Explanation of Allowable Services to be Offered/Number To be Served in Each Activity
- (2) Explanation of Recruitment Strategy
- (3) Strategy to Meet Performance Standards

**Maximum 30 points** **Total** \_\_\_\_\_

SECTION 3 – COORDINATION & COMMITMENT

- (1) Demonstration of Cooperation
- (2) Service Provider Community/ Social Service

**Maximum 20 points** **Total** \_\_\_\_\_

SECTION 4 – FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

- (1) Organizational Capacity
- (2) Service Provider Budget
- (3) Cost per Participant Served/Cost per Positive Outcome

**Maximum 20 points** **Total** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**GRAND TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Reviewer

Date

**Attachment 3  
REQUIRED CERTIFICATIONS**

**SECTION 1 - Lobbying**

This certification is required by the Federal Regulations, implementing Section 1352 of the Program Fraud and Civil Remedies Act, Title 31 U.S. Code, for the Department of Agriculture (7 CFR Part 3018), Department of Labor (29 CFR Part 93), Department of Education (34 CFR Part 82), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 93).

The undersigned certifies that:

- 1.1 No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal grant award, grant, contract, loan or cooperative agreement.
- 1.2 If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any Agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal grant award, grant, contract, loan or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form -LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying", in accordance with its instructions.
- 1.3 The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the contract documents for all contracts at all tiers (including contract awards, contract, and grant awards under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

**SECTION 2 - Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters**

This certification is required by the Federal Regulations, implementing Executive Order 12549, Government-wide Debarment, and Suspension, for the Department of Agriculture (7 CFR Part 3017), Department of Labor (29 CFR Part 98), Department of Education (34 CFR Part 85), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 76).

The undersigned certifies that neither it nor its principals:

- 2.1 Are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or TWC.
- 2.2 Have within a three-year period preceding this contract been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction, violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
- 2.3 Are presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in Paragraph (2.2) of this certification; and
- 2.4 Have within a three-year period preceding this contract had one or more public transactions terminated for cause or default.

### **SECTION 3 - Drug-Free Workplace:**

This certification is required by the Federal Regulations, implementing Sections 5151-5160 of the Drug-Free Workplace Act, 41 U.S.C. 701; for the Department of Agriculture (7 CFR Part 3017), Department of Labor (29 CFR Part 98), Department of Education (34 CFR Part 85), and Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 76).

The undersigned certifies that it shall provide a drug-free workplace by:

- 3.1 Publishing a policy statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace and specifying the consequences of any such action by an employee;
- 3.2 Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees of the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace, THE BOARD'S policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace, the availability of counseling, rehabilitation and employee assistance programs, and the penalties that may be imposed on employees for drug abuse violations in the workplace;
- 3.3 Providing each employee with a copy of the policy statement;
- 3.4 Notifying the employees in the policy statement that, as a condition of employment under this contract, employees shall: (a) abide by the terms of the policy statement; and (b) notify the employer in writing within five (5) days after any conviction for a violation by the employee of a criminal drug statute in the workplace;

- 3.5 Notifying THE BOARD within ten (10) days of receipt of a notice of a conviction of an employee; and
- 3.6 Taking appropriate personnel action against an employee convicted of violating a criminal drug statute or requiring such employee to participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

**SECTION 4 - Certification**

These certifications are a material representation of fact upon which reliance is placed when entering into this transaction. Signatures by an authorized representative of the Contractor and return of this document to THE BOARD are prerequisites for finalizing the contract.

Where the undersigned Contractor is unable to certify to any of the statements above, an explanation shall be attached.

The undersigned certifies that the indicated statements are true and correct and understands that making a false statement is a material breach of the contract and is grounds for contract cancellation.

The person signing this grant proposal on behalf of the Proposer hereby warrants that he/she has been fully authorized to execute this contract on behalf of the Proposer and to legally bind the Proposer to all the terms, performances, and provisions herein set forth.

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Typed Name and Title of Authorized Representative