

9-5-14

To: Employment First stakeholders

From: Statewide Employment First Coordinator Mike Maley

Re: Employment First: RFP for Providers

(Please forward to your local partners & stakeholders)

This week I have some exciting news to share in our continued efforts to expand job opportunities for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD).

The Department of Human Services (DHS) has announced a Request for Proposals (RFP) for providers to improve employment services and outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities. The total investment for both service providers and subject matter experts to engage those providers in training is up to \$6.75 million.

Providers and technical assistance agencies who may want to apply for this Request for Proposal can apply at: <http://orpin.oregon.gov/open.dll/welcome>

DHS is seeking up to 30 service provider agencies looking to transform their current organizational and program models from the delivery of facility-based employment services (sometimes known as sheltered workshops) for individuals with I/DD to community-based, integrated employment services. Interested providers will be selected via an application process that closes Sept. 26, 2014.

The selected providers will receive a minimum award of \$25,000 and up to \$150,000 to participate in strategic planning and technical assistance activities in order to initiate and sustain their transformation from facility-based to community-based employment services. A total of up to \$3 million of the \$6.75 million is available for this effort.

Up to \$750,000 is also available as performance-based payments for providers that achieve specific employment outcomes for individuals with I/DD into community-based, individual integrated employment.

In addition, DHS will also invest up to \$3 million through a competitive solicitation for subject matter experts to provide guidance, consultation, training, and technical assistance to help the selected service provider organizations transform their business and program model. The Request for Proposals for the subject matter experts closes Sept. 29, 2014.

DHS is committed to continually improving the system for delivering employment services to individuals with I/DD. These improvement efforts are based on the principles of informed choice, community integration and competitive employment. The specific investments in supporting service provider transformation are part of the DHS strategy to make continual improvements by:

- Increasing the specific capacity, in terms of provider numbers and skill levels, to deliver employment services in integrated employment settings; and
- Increasing the opportunities for individuals with I/DD to join the general workforce by being competitively employed in workplace settings typically found in our communities. This includes opportunities for self-employment, business ownership, or other entrepreneurial endeavors; and
- Reducing the use of facility-based or small group employment services.

You can view the full press release sent out to Oregon media here:

<http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/dhsnews/News%20Releases/Employment%20First.pdf>

Thank you all for your continued involvement, support, and advocacy for services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Oregon. If you have comments or other questions, please email them to employment.first@state.or.us.

~ Mike