

Power Up Indiana Manual 2025 Reimbursement Grant

RATIONALE, AUTHORITY, AND PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Power Up Indiana is a statewide program from the Office of Commerce that celebrates employers for upskilling, promoting, and retaining their existing workforce. It catalyzes a culture of lifelong learning by funding quality training that leads to measurable wage gains.

Local workforce development boards receive Power Up reimbursement grant dollars from the Indiana Office of Commerce. Eligible employers then receive funds from local workforce development boards (also referred to within this manual as local WDBs or local areas) using the processes outlined in this manual. Local areas may utilize up to 15% of the funding allocation for program implementation and administration expenses, which must be supported with appropriate record keeping and documentation.

Power Up Indiana is open to businesses of all sizes, from manufacturers and healthcare providers to logistics firms and Main Street employers.

Eligible training must be technical training resulting in industry-recognized credentials, cross-training or reskilling, leadership development, and registered apprenticeships.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND REQUIREMENTS

Employers qualify for reimbursement of \$5,000 per employee trained and up to \$50,000 per employer (per year). The company must be in Indiana and is allowed a maximum of 2 FEINs per local area Region. Employees that have been trained since 1/1/2025 are eligible, and there is no retention requirement. Other requirements include:

- The region will need to follow the enclosed table to meet the starting wage requirement.
- Employees must see at least a 25% wage gain upon training completion; and
- Wages must exceed the median wage for the region upon training completion
- Employees participating in a US DOL Registered Apprenticeship Program must have a signed ETA form 671 (Program Registration and Apprenticeship Agreement) showing a wage increase of at least 25% at the completion of the program; and
- Apprentices must be at least halfway through their program

Average F/T Individual Earnings by Region				
Region	Average Salary	Hourly Rate	Starting Salary	Hourly Rate
1	\$58,931	\$28.33	\$47,145	\$22.67
2	\$54,664	\$26.28	\$43,731	\$21.02
3	\$52,917	\$25.44	\$42,334	\$20.35
4	\$53,330	\$25.64	\$42,664	\$20.51
5	\$61,095	\$29.37	\$48,876	\$23.50
6	\$51,125	\$24.58	\$40,900	\$19.66
7	\$50,940	\$24.49	\$40,752	\$19.59
8	\$55,549	\$26.71	\$44,439	\$21.37
9	\$54,089	\$26.00	\$43,271	\$20.80
10	\$51,888	\$24.95	\$41,510	\$19.96
11	\$51,877	\$24.94	\$41,502	\$19.95
12	\$61,095	\$29.37	\$48,876	\$23.50
Source: Top Jobs Indiana				

EMPLOYER REQUIREMENTS

Employers shall meet the following requirements to be eligible for training reimbursement:

1. Submit online interest form via the [DWD website](#) and satisfy the following eligibility requirements:
 - a. Must have a current account for State Unemployment Tax Act (SUTA) in Indiana.
 - i. If an account is found and UI taxes are owed, the employer must pay before moving forward.
 - b. Must be registered with the Indiana Secretary of State (SOS).
 - i. If an employer is not in the SOS database or listed as a “Foreign Nonprofit,” then they are not eligible.
 - c. Must have physical location in Indiana other than a Commercial Mail Receiving Agency (CMRA).
 - i. If there is no physical address, then the employer is not eligible.
2. Develop and submit eligible training plan including but not limited to the following:
 - a. State Earn and Learn (SEAL) programs that are certified by Indiana’s Office of Work-based Learning and Apprenticeship.
 - b. USDOL Registered Apprenticeship with current, approved standards.
 - c. Specialized Company Training.
3. Provide a detailed job description and salary range for the position targeted for training.
4. Upon training plan approval, sign and return the formal grant agreement obligating reimbursement funding.
5. Provide the needed information to develop and sign a Training Agreement. See **Attachment A** for an example of the CRM-generated agreement.
6. Maintain and enter the following information into the CRM for all trainees:
 - a. A copy of the training curriculum
 - b. Payroll records that verify the starting wage/wage gain of 25%.
 - c. Documentation of training completion; and
 - d. A copy of the certification or documentation for “Specialized Company Training.”
7. Invoices must contain the following information for each trainee:
 - a. Employee Name.
 - b. SSN (last four).
 - c. Employee DOB.
 - d. Employee Occupation.
 - e. Name of Training Provided.
 - f. Employee Hire Date.
 - g. Training Period Begin Date.
 - h. Wage Pre/Post Training.
 - i. Employee Training Cost.

REIMBURSEMENT SELECTION PROCESS AND GRANT MANAGEMENT

Local areas determine whether employers qualify for reimbursement and meet the requirements. While Office of Commerce staff will be involved in providing oversight and monitoring of the Power Up program, local areas are responsible for management and implementation of the Power Up program, including effective internal control procedures and local review/monitoring of grant activities.

Local Area Selection Responsibilities

After the local area has reviewed the employer's interest form, the employer is then contacted to confirm and/or submit their training plan, job description, and salary range of the position targeted for training. Once the local area has received all required documents, submissions are evaluated for eligibility and processed in the CRM by both the local areas and the employer accordingly. Office of Commerce may be called upon should there be questions of eligibility or if employers or local areas need assistance with CRM processing. Power Up Indiana is not an entitlement program and serves local areas in cultivating a skilled workforce based on the vision of workforce development in their community. All applicable documentation shall be present in the CRM prior to moving forward with any agreement and shall be present at the time of the invoice submittal.

Local areas determine and verify the eligibility of employers who submit an interest form for the Power Up Indiana funds and a training plan. This includes ensuring that the employer meets all the requirements included in the "Employer Requirements" section of this manual. The verification process includes but is not limited to the following steps:

- Using the IN Secretary of State website to ensure that the employer is listed as a "Business Entity."
 - Businesses not found or listed as "Foreign Nonprofit" are not Power Up Indiana eligible.
- Working with Office of Commerce to cross check the employer's SUTA number.
 - If there is no SUTA number, then the employer is not Power Up Indiana eligible.
- Reviewing the address of the employer via web search to ensure the business has a physical location in Indiana other than a CMRA.
 - If there is no physical address, then the employer is not Power Up Indiana eligible.
- Reviewing the digital footprint of each business, which is the information about a particular business that exists on the internet due to their online activity.

Local areas must also verify the training plans submitted by employers. Power Up Indiana training is employer driven, and training on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), Registered Apprenticeships, and State Earn and Learns (SEALs) are pre-approved. If the employer plans to provide "Specialized Company Training," the content will be evaluated by the local area and compared to other, similar industry training and the ETPL. If local areas have content questions, Office of Commerce can support and help inform a local area in their justification for approval. The local area must document all information in the CRM before moving forward.

Once training plans are determined eligible for funding, the local area team utilizes the following criteria to determine which requests are funded:

- State Power Up Indiana funding must be available.
- The Power Up Indiana training is pre-approved (SEALs, Registered Apprenticeships, ETPL training, and company specialized training).
- Interested employers' training plan(s) are approved in accordance with their WDB's local plan; and
- Proposed training will be completed within the grant timeframe (see **Attachment A**).

If the training plan is approved for funding, the employer is notified by the local area via the Business Services Training Agreement. Once the agreement is reviewed, signed, and returned by the employer, the local area must upload the form in the CRM to complete the funding obligation. If the plan is not funded, the local area must notify the employer and advise them on changes for resubmittal for when funding is available. This must also be documented in the CRM.

Local Area Grant Management Responsibilities

Local areas are also responsible for the following grant management tasks:

- Having a strategy in place for timely expenditure of funds.
- Developing and implementing local policy and procedures to ensure collection and maintenance of required documentation, including sufficient supporting documentation from the employer.
- Using the CRM system for program maintenance and reporting.
 - **NOTE:** Sufficient documentation to validate training costs must be uploaded to the CRM at or before invoice submission. Compliance with documentation requirements will be part of routine OFFICE OF COMMERCE monitoring, which will require thorough analysis of sampled employer CRM Account files. Lack of supporting documentation could result in compliance findings (questioned or potentially disallowed costs) impacting the local area and affected employers.
- Ensuring adequate programmatic oversight and fiscal management, including the review and approval of employer reimbursements.

Office of Commerce Operational Management Responsibilities

Office of Commerce will engage in the following operational management activities:

- Maintenance of a CRM System.
- Review of documentation, including supporting documentation, maintained in the CRM to ensure all required program documents have been completed, signed, and uploaded.
- Review and final approval of invoices for reimbursement.
- Ongoing monitoring of local areas to ensure compliance with Office of Commerce policies.
- Provision of technical support and other guidance as requested by local areas or as determined by Office of Commerce.
- Investigation of incidents of negligence and fraud.
- Application of performance accountability measures, including the withdrawal of funds.

REIMBURSEMENT INVOICING

The following sub-sections outline the reimbursement invoicing process.

Employers/Local Areas

1. Employers utilize the Office of Commerce website to submit the invoice for reimbursement. **NOTE:** Invoices must not include trainees that did not complete training, as they are not eligible for reimbursement.
2. The local area is notified of the submission via the CRM Dashboard.

3. The local area will review and approve invoices. Local areas are to reach out to employers to address any identified invoice issues or deficiencies.

Office of Commerce/Local Areas

1. Once Office of Commerce has received the invoice from the local area, Office of Commerce will conduct a review of the invoice and CRM documentation prior to approval. If Office of Commerce identifies any issues, Office of Commerce will reach out to local areas to work through resolution.
2. The local area will then process reimbursements directly to participating employers via electronic payment, such as Automated Clearing House (ACH) or other electronic transfer of funds. Paper checks are not acceptable.
3. The local area must include a screenshot of the electronic payment to the employer in the Notes & Activities section of the invoice.
4. The status of the invoice is changed to "Paid."

OUTCOMES, MONITORING STRATEGIES, AND SANCTIONS

The local areas and Office of Commerce utilize the following strategies to foster continuous improvement and conduct grant oversight.

Local Area Accountability Practices

Performance Expectations. Local areas are expected to meet the following performance criteria.

- Exhaust funding within the local area;¹ and
- Ensure grant activities support the WIOA local plan. Activities may include strategies to:
 - Increase the utilization of work-based learning.
 - Increase credential attainment.
 - Increase the number of new employers engaged.

Monitoring. Local areas must implement effective internal control procedures and ensure that grant activities are adequately reviewed and monitored for ongoing compliance with grant requirements. Local areas must also ensure participating employers are adhering to training agreement provisions and following all requirements of this manual, other Office of Commerce guidance.

Visits. Local areas will complete on-site, virtual, or hybrid visits. Visits are conducted by the local area for at least 10% of all active reimbursements per grant period. The topics of discussion should relate to the survey questions as well as local area plan elements. These visits serve as another opportunity to better understand Hoosier businesses.

Investigating Invoicing Discrepancies, Negligence, and Potential Fraud. Local areas shall conduct prompt and thorough investigations of any incidences of invoicing discrepancies and suspected negligence and/or fraud. Local areas are to work directly with the employer to resolve issues. All communications with the employer shall be documented in CRM database.

¹ If funding is not expended timely, Office of Commerce may withdraw funding and reallocate to other local areas where program utilization is higher.

Local areas shall work collaboratively with Office of Commerce on all unresolved issues to determine next steps including the application of sanctions.

Local areas have the right to exclude prospective applicants if they have been found in violation of the Business Services Training Agreement or have been reasonably suspected of having engaged in fraudulent invoicing in any grant programs administered by Office of Commerce. Prospective applicants may request a review by Office of Commerce in these circumstances.

Grievance Process. As mentioned in the *Local Area Grant Management Responsibilities* section of this manual, local areas are responsible for providing a grievance process for any complaints relating to the Power Up Indiana program. Applicants for/or participants in Office of Commerce programs have the right to file a grievance under the following circumstances:

- A violation of the implementation of program.
- Discrimination 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;² or
- Fraud, criminal abuse, or other criminal activity.

Formal Grant Monitoring

Power Up Indiana grants are subject to routine (annual, at minimum) program and fiscal monitoring by Office of Commerce. Local areas may be subject to accountability measures as outlined in this manual and in DWD Policy 2022-06 *Non-formula Grant Performance Management*, as applicable. As part of routine monitoring, Office of Commerce may:

- Conduct verification of employee employment status and wage increase requirements using UI wage
- Review invoicing, expenditures, and financial management processes and procedures to evaluate grant compliance. This may include but is not limited to reviewing:
 - Submission of the Interest Form.
 - Final training plan(s) submission.
 - Agreement/funding obligation.
 - Invoice submission; and
 - Post-invoice, Office of Commerce will review complete records for no less than 10% of “Active/Invoiced” Power Up Indiana business accounts in each region.

Suspected Negligence, Fraud, and Sanctions

Local areas are responsible for effective management of Power Up Indiana funding and must establish and maintain adequate internal controls and grant oversight procedures in accordance with the terms and conditions of their grant agreements and this manual.

² Grantees should refer to their Power Up Indiana contracts for further information on nondiscrimination requirements.

Local areas must implement sanctions against employers when negligence or fraud has been identified. Local areas may be at risk for questioned or potentially disallowed costs for failure to adequately manage and oversee Power Up Indiana funding.

If discrepancies are determined to be due to error/negligence by the employer, the local area (in collaboration with Office of Commerce as applicable) will determine if the following sanctions may be applied, depending on the severity of the issue:

- The employer may be ineligible to access the grant for the next two (2) consecutive grant periods.
- The employer must receive written clearance from the local area, after consultation with Office of Commerce, to resume participating in the reimbursement program.
 - If approved to resume participating in the reimbursement program, the employer reimbursement amount will be reduced by the discrepancy amount for their next eligible period.

If fraud, including but not limited to ghost employment,³ is discovered, the local area must attempt to recoup Power Up Indiana funds from the employer, and the employer will be barred from future participation in the program. The affected employer may appeal this determination for reconsideration. If the local area is unable to recoup funds from the employer, appropriate action may be initiated against the employer.

GRANT DOCUMENTS

[Application Link](#)

- Business Services Training Agreement (Attachment A)

³ A ghost employee is a person who is on an employer's payroll who does not actually work for the company.



Josh Richardson, Commissioner Mike Braun, Governor

BUSINESS SERVICES TRAINING AGREEMENT

Agreement Number:

Agreement Effective Dates: 7/6/2023 – 4/6/2024

This agreement is being issued to the below company, in the listed priority sector, for reimbursement for the amount stated below, for the listed occupational skills training that is tied to the listed occupation:

- 1) Company Information:
Indiana Employer

123 Main Street
Hoosier City, Indiana 12345
- 2) Priority Sector: Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
- 3) Occupation being trained to:
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers, Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers, All Other
- 4) Name of Occupational Skills Training: Demo Plan
- 5) Length of Occupational Skills Training: 2 weeks
- 6) Name of industry recognized certification tied to training (if applicable):
- 7) Number of employees being trained: 10
- 8) Approved Training Amount per employee: 5,000
- 9) Total Training Amount approved: 50,000

One (1) invoice per agreement is to be submitted.

I certify that all expenditures reported or payment requested are for appropriate purposes and in accordance with the provisions of the employer training guidelines, associated policies, and voucher. I hereby certify that the forgoing information is accurate, that the activities were performed in accordance with the appropriate program, as well that program's applicable guidelines and policies, that the amount claimed is legally due and owing, after allowing for all just credits, and that no part of the same amount due has previously been paid.

Employer Signature_____
Date