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Transform Milwaukee Jobs Program to Help Train and Transition Workers

Local agencies to partner with employers and match them with participants

Madison – The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) announced today that two local agencies have agreed to oversee the “Transform Milwaukee Jobs Program” (TMJ) as part of Governor Walker’s Transform Milwaukee initiative. The program helps unemployed parents and low-income workers transition into the workforce and provides job training through subsidized employment.

“Finding creative ways to expand job opportunities and close the skills gap is important to growing Wisconsin’s economy,” said Governor Walker. “Partnerships like ‘Transform Milwaukee Jobs’ focus on expanding employment and restoring prosperity to the area. Efforts to build Milwaukee’s workforce reflect our commitment to moving Wisconsin forward.”

The TMJ Program will be managed by Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board, Inc. (MAWIB) and UMOS, to recruit potential employees, prescreen them to determine their skills, and if qualified, place them in appropriate jobs. If participants lack necessary basic skills, the agencies will prepare them for placement in subsidized jobs and provide support when needed. For subsidized workers, DCF will pay a wage subsidy equal to what an employer would pay. The subsidized job period for participants to work is up to a

maximum of 1,040 hours. In addition, many participants are eligible for a child care subsidy under the Wisconsin Shares program.

“We see this as a ‘win-win’ for employers and potential new workers,” said DCF Secretary Eloise Anderson. “The TMJ Program will help strengthen the community by providing incentive to both potential workers willing to train for long-term, sustainable employment and the businesses willing to provide ‘on-the-job’ training and hire them into their labor force.”

UMOS will work with targeted unemployed adults aged 18 or older; MAWIB will specialize in assisting young people from 18 to 21 coming out of the foster care system or other child welfare programs. Both contractors will coordinate with employers to participate in the program. Low-income adults can benefit from an immediate source of income while attaining job skills needed in the local market.

Under this subsidized employment program, a business agrees to hire participants and employ them for at least 20 hours per week at the minimum wage. In addition to the wage subsidy, DCF may reimburse an employer for certain taxes, unemployment contributions, and worker’s compensation insurance premiums attributable to the employee. This allows businesses to expand their workforce without incurring additional risk.

The TMJ Program follows a Transitional Jobs pilot program that ended last June, which showed that individuals with barriers to employment were able to use skills learned in a subsidized job to obtain long-term employment. Those individuals included low-income adults, non-custodial parents, those re-entering the workforce from a corrections setting, and teens aging out of the foster care or child welfare system.

Interested employers may contact [MAWIB](#) at (414) 270-1700 or [UMOS](#) at (414) 389-6600.