



YEAR-ROUND LEARN & EARN

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

What is Year-Round Learn & Earn?

Year-Round Learn & Earn is an expansion of the traditional Summer Learn & Earn program. It provides paid work experiences, career readiness training, mentorship, and workforce development opportunities for youth and young adults throughout the school year.

The program is designed to help participants build workplace skills, explore careers, earn income, and connect to future education and employment opportunities.

Why is Learn & Earn expanding?

Research and local experience show that many young people need ongoing support beyond summer employment experiences.

Year-Round Learn & Earn helps participants:

- Build stronger workplace habits
- Gain more meaningful work experience
- Explore career pathways
- Connect to education and training opportunities
- Transition into unsubsidized employment

The program supports long-term economic mobility for youth from low-income households.

How is Year-Round Learn & Earn different from Summer Learn & Earn?

Summer Learn & Earn operates during the summer for approximately six weeks.

Year-Round Learn & Earn:

- Operates during the academic year
- Runs from September - March
- Provides longer-term work experiences
- Includes more intensive career readiness activities
- Creates stronger connections to credential training and employment
- Offers employer hiring pathways for eligible participants

Participants can participate in both Summer and Year-Round Learn & Earn.

Who can participate?

The program serves youth and young adults aged 16-23 living in the City of Pittsburgh who participated in at least 1 summer of Learn & Earn and are deemed eligible for Learn and Earn via the general application process.

Can a youth participate in Year-Round Learn & Earn if they did not participate in Summer Learn & Earn?

No, all youth participants in Year-Round Learn & Earn must have completed at least 1 summer of Learn & Earn and are deemed eligible via the general Learn and Earn Application process.

How do youth get involved in the program?

At the end of Summer Learn & Earn, eligible youth will receive a text message with a link to confirm their interest in participating in the Year-Round program.

Once interest is confirmed, participants will receive access to available worksite opportunities that align with their assigned Track. Youth will be able to review the opportunities and select their top five worksite choices.

After selections are submitted, participants will be matched with a worksite and assigned to the corresponding provider. The provider will then contact the participant with onboarding information, program expectations, and next steps.

Do participants have previous work experience?

Yes, previous participation in at least one summer Learn & Earn is required to qualify for Year-Round Learn & Earn.

What are the program dates?

Year-round Learn & Earn program will run from September 14, 2026 – March 31, 2027. Youth can begin their experience any time after September 14, 2026, and must complete it by March 31, 2027.

This structure is designed to complement students' academic schedules while providing meaningful work-based learning opportunities throughout the year.

What are the deadlines for applying and onboarding?

Employers will receive a timeline outlining key deadlines for expressing interest, finalizing worksite details, completing onboarding requirements, and preparing participant placement.

Why is Year-round Learn & Earn only available to City of Pittsburgh residents?

Year-Round Learn & Earn is funded through a grant specifically designed to support youth living within the City of Pittsburgh. As a result, eligibility is limited to City residents to ensure the program aligns with the funder's goals and available resources. Summer Learn & Earn will continue to serve eligible youth throughout Allegheny County, while the Year-Round program will operate as a more targeted pilot focused on Pittsburgh residents.

When should work experience start?

Work experiences are expected to begin shortly after participant matching and employer onboarding are complete. Placements will align with the academic-year program calendar, and Partner4Work will share key launch dates, onboarding timelines, and placement windows with participating employers in advance.

BRANDING AND MARKETING

What is the official name of the program?

The program should always be referenced as “Year-Round Learn & Earn”. The dash (-) and ampersand (&) should always be included. The official Acronym is “YRLE”

Is there a Year-Round Learn & Earn logo?

Yes. The logo looks very similar to the Summer Learn & Earn logo but the banner reads “Pittsburgh Employment Program”

PROVIDER INVOLVEMENT

What is a provider?

A provider is a community-based organization or program partner that supports participants throughout Learn & Earn. Providers may help recruit and prepare youth, manage case support, communicate with employers, monitor attendance and progress, and help resolve challenges during the placement.

What role do community-based organizations play?

Providers help with:

- Outreach and recruitment of employers
- Participant case management
- Retention support
- Career readiness activities
- Communication with employers and families

How will providers be selected?

Partner4Work will prioritize providers with demonstrated success in:

- Youth employment programs
- Work-based learning
- Workforce development
- Participant retention
- Community engagement

Existing Learn & Earn provider performance and capacity will be important considerations.

How is Year-Round Learn & Earn different from my TANF or WIOA Youth program?

Year-Round Learn & Earn is designed to complement, not replace, TANF and WIOA Youth services. While TANF and WIOA provide ongoing case management, supportive services, and long-term workforce development, Year-Round Learn & Earn offers a structured 16-week paid work experience. Participants can be co-enrolled, allowing providers to use Learn & Earn as an additional work-based learning opportunity within a broader service strategy.

Can providers serve youth in both Track One and Track Two?

Yes, if your organization has partnerships with employers who have opportunities for participants in both tracks, you can serve both tracks.

Will providers have the same responsibilities in Year-Round Learn & Earn as they do in Summer Learn & Earn?

Yes. Providers will continue to play a critical role in supporting participants and ensuring successful program implementation. Core responsibilities include:

- Distributing transportation assistance (bus passes) to participants
- Reviewing and approving participant timesheets in a timely manner
- Developing and maintaining employer and worksite partnerships
- Monitoring participant attendance, performance, and progress throughout the work experience
- Providing ongoing support and communication to help participants remain engaged and successful

While some program activities may be adapted to fit the school-year schedule, providers should expect a level of involvement similar to Summer Learn & Earn.

How much will providers be paid?

Providers will receive \$600 per participant to support recruitment, enrollment, placement coordination, participant support, and other program-related activities. In addition, providers will receive a separate allocation for transportation assistance to ensure participants can reliably travel to and from their worksites. This funding is intended to help offset the costs of delivering high-quality year-round programming and participant support.

Program Outcomes

What results is the program hoping to achieve?

Year-Round Learn & Earn aims to:

- Serve 350 youth annually
- Achieve an 80% completion rate
- Deliver more than 86,000 hours of paid work experience
- Increase career readiness skills
- Connect participants to education and training pathways
- Increase employment opportunities
- Improve long-term economic mobility

How will success be measured?

The program uses:

- Attendance and payroll data
- Pre- and post-assessments
- Employer evaluations
- Participant surveys
- Employment tracking
- Wage record matching
- Credential attainment data

These measures help ensure continuous improvement and accountability.

PARTICIPANT TRACKS, HOURS & SCHEDULES

What is the difference between the 16–17 and 18–23 age groups?

Year-Round Learn & Earn uses a two-track model to support participants based on their age, experience, and career readiness.

How is a participant assigned to their Track?

Track assignments are made based on the youth's age as of September 10, 2026.

What is Track One?

Track One serves youth ages 16-17.

The focus is on:

- Career exploration
- Workplace readiness
- Professional skills development
- Exposure to different industries

Participants work:

- Up to 192 total program hours, not to exceed 12 hours per week.
- At \$12 per hour

What is Track Two?

Track Two serves young adults ages 18-23 who already possess an industry-recognized credential or occupational training.

The focus is on:

- Applying existing skills
- Industry-specific work experiences
- Career advancement
- Employment placement

Participants work:

- Up to 320 total program hours, not to exceed 20 hours per week.
- At \$15 per hour

Employers are encouraged to hire successful participants after the subsidized work experience ends.

How many hours per week are we expected to host youth?

Year-Round Learn & Earn includes two participation tracks:

- **Track One (ages 16–17): up to 12 hours per week**

- **Track Two (ages 18–23): up to 20 hours per week**

The final schedule is determined collaboratively between the employer, participant, provider, based on school schedules, worksite needs, and program guidelines.

What happens if a participant wants to stop after the Fall session?

Participants are able to not continue with participation after the Fall session if they feel the program is not a good fit, if they have scheduling conflicts, if they find alternative employment, or for any other reason.

What days and times are youth available, given school schedules?

Participant availability will vary depending on school, training, and transportation schedules. In general, Year-Round Learn & Earn placements are designed to occur during traditional work hours, after-school, evening, and weekend hours where appropriate. Employers will receive availability information for matched participants before placement begins.

How flexible are work schedules during the school year?

Work schedules will be determined between the Provider and the Employer. Work hours will not interfere with school schedules or other academic commitments. Weekend work may be possible, and exact schedules should be worked out with the provider and employer.

What happens if a participant wants to stop after the Fall session?

Participants are able to not continue with participation after the Fall session if they feel the program is not a good fit, if they have scheduling conflicts, if they find alternative employment, or for any other reason.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Can participants work at the same worksite as they did during the Summer Learn & Earn?

Possibly. If the employer is continuing into the Year-Round Learn & Earn program, there may be the opportunity for youth to continue employment with them after the summer.

Can Providers host youth in-house for their work experience?

Provider-housed work-based learning experiences may be considered eligible under the Year Round Learn & Earn (YRLE) program only when the experience constitutes a legitimate employment position within the provider organization. The position must represent a real staffing need that the provider could otherwise recruit, hire, supervise, and compensate as part of its normal operations.

Experiences that are primarily exploratory in nature, such as career awareness activities, job shadowing, or observing the day-to-day functions of a profession, do not meet the intent of YRLE and are not eligible.

Examples of eligible provider-housed positions may include tutors, after-school program staff, administrative support roles, peer mentors, or other positions that provide participants with authentic work responsibilities, workplace expectations, and transferable skills while filling a

legitimate organizational need. The determining factor is that the participant is performing meaningful work in a real employment role, rather than participating in a simulated or exploratory learning experience.

MATCHING & PLACEMENT

How many participants can an employer host?

How many participants an employer hosts is up to the employer and the opportunities they have. These opportunities should be robust and valuable for the youth.

How are participants selected and matched to employers?

Participants will rank their preferred job opportunities. Matches will be made based on participant preferences, available positions, skills and interests, and geographic location to ensure the best fit for both participants and employers.

How does the matching process work?

Once an employer is approved and a placement opportunity is defined, Partner4Work and providers review participant information and identify youth who are a good fit based on scheduling, interests, readiness, and placement requirements. Employers may receive participant information in advance depending on the placement model.

Can employers request participants with specific interests or career goals?

Yes. Employers are encouraged to share the types of roles, career interests, or skills that would be most relevant to their worksite. While exact matches cannot always be guaranteed, Partner4Work will use that information to support stronger placement alignment.

What skills, training, or certifications do participants receive before placement?

Participants will have completed at least one prior Learn & Earn experience, and many will have already received foundational work-readiness support. Additional preparation may vary by provider and placement type and can include workplace expectations, communication, professionalism, and other job-readiness support. If a placement requires specific training, Partner4Work can discuss whether that can be supported in advance.

What level of workplace readiness can I expect?

All participants will have successfully completed at least one summer of Learn & Earn, where they received a minimum of 12 hours of foundational work readiness training. Topics include professionalism, communication, teamwork, time management, problem-solving, workplace expectations, and other essential employability skills. While participants will have varying levels of experience, they will enter the program with a shared foundation in workplace readiness.

Can a participant be replaced if they leave the program?

Yes. If a participant leaves the program before completing their work experience, the provider and Partner4Work will evaluate whether a replacement can be made. Replacement participants are subject to availability and must be an appropriate match for the position based on skills, interests, location, and the amount of time remaining in the program.

PAYROLL, WAGES & COSTS

Are participants paid?

Yes, participants earn wages throughout the program.

Track One:

- \$12/hour
- Approximately \$2,304 over the course of the program

Track Two:

- \$15/hour
- Approximately \$4,800 over the course of the program

Is there a limit on the wage rate that can be paid? What if I want to pay the young person more or less than Learn & Earn does?

Partner4Work will reimburse wages up to the established hourly wage and maximum hours for each program track.

- Track 1: Up to 192 hours over the program at \$12.00 per hour
- Track 2: Up to 320 hours over the program at \$15.00 per hour

Employers who choose to pay participants a higher wage or allow them to work additional hours are welcome to do so; however, any wages or hours above the program limits are the responsibility of the employer and will not be reimbursed by Partner4Work. Employers may not pay participants less than the established program wage.

How are participants paid?

Participant wages are processed through Partner4Work's centralized payroll system. Participants will have the option to receive their pay through direct deposit or an ADP Wisley Card.

Participants must accurately submit timesheets and follow payroll procedures.

Are participant wages subsidized?

Yes, during the program period, participant wages are supported through program funding.

For participants hired after the program, employers assume responsibility for wages and employment costs.

Are participants employees of the host employer or the program?

Partner4Work serves as the employer of record for all Year-Round Learn & Earn participants. Partner4Work is responsible for payroll, tax reporting, workers' compensation coverage, and other

employer-of-record responsibilities. Host employers provide the day-to-day work experience, supervision, and mentorship but are not considered the participant's employer.

What costs, if any, are the employer responsible for during the program?

There is no direct cost to host a Year-Round Learn & Earn participant. Partner4Work serves as the employer of record and is responsible for participant wages and payroll-related costs. Providers are responsible for transportation assistance and for coordinating any required uniforms or materials needed for participants to successfully perform their job duties.

Are employers responsible for uniforms, equipment, or training costs?

Employers are not expected to bear these costs alone. Providers have program funds available to help cover the cost of required uniforms, equipment, and other materials needed for participants to successfully perform their job duties. Employers should communicate any anticipated needs to their provider before the start of the program so appropriate arrangements can be made.

Employers are also expected to provide the standard job-specific orientation and on-the-job training they would provide any new employee or intern.

OUTCOMES

What metrics does the program use to measure success?

Success may be measured through a combination of placement completion, attendance, participant skill growth, employer satisfaction, retention, and transitions to

SUPERVISION, COACHING & PROGRAM SUPPORT

Who supervises participants?

Participants are supervised by:

- Employer worksite staff
- Community-based provider staff

Regular communication occurs to ensure participants are supported throughout the program.

How much of my staff time will be required to support a participant?

Participants should be treated like any other employee or intern and should have a designated supervisor available throughout their work experience. Participants should not be left unsupervised, and supervisors should provide regular guidance, feedback, and support. Providers will also conduct periodic check-ins with both the participant and the employer, verify participant hours, and serve as a resource if any questions or concerns arise

Who is our primary point of contact?

During the onboarding and placement process, your primary point of contact will be Partner4Work. Once participants are placed, your provider will serve as your primary contact for day-to-day participant support, attendance, performance, timesheets, and other program-related questions.

Partner4Work will remain available for program oversight, employer support, and any issues that require additional assistance.

HR, SAFETY & COMPLIANCE

Are there restrictions on the types of work participants can perform?

Yes. Participants may not perform duties that are considered hazardous or prohibited under program policy. This includes, but is not limited to, working around bodies of water, operating heavy machinery or power tools, or performing other high-risk tasks. A complete list of prohibited activities will be provided to participating employers prior to the start of the program

What happens if we have an HR issue?

Employers should notify their designated provider contact and/or Partner4Work as soon as an issue arises. The program team will help assess the situation, determine the appropriate response, and support communication with the participant. Serious concerns should be escalated immediately so they can be addressed in alignment with program expectations and workplace policies.

How are employer concerns escalated and resolved?

Employers should raise concerns first with their designated program contact. Depending on the issue, concerns may be addressed by the provider, Partner4Work, or both. The goal is to resolve concerns quickly, provide coaching where appropriate, and determine whether the placement can continue successfully.

PROGRAM END

What happens after the program ends?

Program outcomes vary by participant, but possible next steps include:

- Employment with a host employer
- Enrollment in occupational training
- Industry credential programs
- Postsecondary education
- Apprenticeships
- Additional Partner4Work workforce services
- Enrollment in Summer Learn & Earn

Will employers hire participants after the program?

For Track Two, employers are encouraged to provide hiring opportunities based on:

- Participant performance
- Business needs
- Available openings

The goal is to create direct pathways to unsubsidized employment whenever possible.

Can employers hire participants after the program?

We encourage employers to hire participants who demonstrate strong performance and are a good fit for their organization. If you decide to offer a participant employment, notify the provider so they can coordinate with Partner4Work to transition the participant off the program payroll. The employer can then complete their normal hiring and onboarding process.

ONBOARDING AND NEXT STEPS

Who should I contact for more information?

For program updates, enrollment information, provider opportunities, and employer partnerships, contact Partner4Work at summer@partner4work.org