

RFP Questions & Answers

One-Stop Operator Services – 2025

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Similar questions may be grouped to reduce answer duplication.

Q1. Facility Costs: Is the OSO responsible for the facility costs at both the PA CareerLink® Downtown Pittsburgh and PA CareerLink® Allegheny East locations? If so, could you please provide the annual amount for each site?

Do bidders need to put money in the budget for the location costs of the building?

A1. For details related to facilities expenses, please reference guidance regarding the Operating Budgets and Resource Sharing Agreements within in the RFP. Also, please review the Program Costs/Budget guidance in the How to Apply section of the RFP. Cost guidance provided within the RFP should serve as the basis for your planning and proposal development.

Q2. Monthly Foot Traffic: What is the average monthly foot traffic for each of the two PA CareerLink® locations listed above?

A2. On average, our Downtown (DT) location sees upwards of 500 individuals per month, with approximately 200 of those visits specifically for Unemployment Compensation (UC)-related services. At our East location, we typically welcome around 400 individuals monthly, with approximately 150 seeking UC services.

Q3. Is there a preferred staffing ratio or minimum number of personnel required at each PA CareerLink® site?

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The RFP states: “Except for the One-Stop Operator and Site Administrator, staff can fill more than one role.” Can Partner4Work confirm that the One-Stop Operator and Site Administrator roles must be dedicated and cannot be combined with other functions?

Regarding the Site Administrator, does “only one of these roles” refer per PA CareerLink® location, or one per contract?

Are proposers allowed to modify role titles as long as the functions align with RFP expectations and WIOA guidelines?

A3. Please review the RFP Staffing Requirements and the additional guidance below for important information about proposed staffing.

Bidders are welcome to propose a staffing structure that consolidates or modifies roles or positions in a way that best supports the proposed operational model, including revising titles, as long as the criteria of the RFP and this Q&A document are met.

Regarding the Operator and Site Administrator – These positions must remain distinct and cannot be consolidated, noting the responsibilities of these positions should be split between both centers. Partner4Work prefers that titles related to these positions align with and explicitly identify the Operator and Site Administrator.

Partner4Work also requires that proposals include a dedicated Reception Attendant for each PA CareerLink® center to ensure a consistent and professional standard of service. Please reference the final page of this Q&A document for important customer service standards that must be followed by staff working in the reception area.

Bidders must clearly justify their proposed staffing model, demonstrating how it will maximize efficiency, maintain compliance, and ensure high-quality service delivery at both one-stop locations.

Q4. Public Relations Specialist: Is it acceptable to utilize an outside firm to fulfill the responsibilities of the Public Relations Specialist, or must this be handled by an individual staff member?

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A4. Staffing for this role is at the discretion of the bidder. Partner4Work encourages bidders to propose a staffing approach that best supports their operational model and ensures the delivery of high-quality services. Bidders should clearly justify their staffing decisions, demonstrating how the proposed approach will promote efficiency, align with system needs, and contribute to effective service delivery. Staffing models should also be scalable to adapt to changing system demands over time, and roles may overlap where appropriate and allowable, provided that all core responsibilities are effectively fulfilled.

Q5. Wellness Coordinator: Regarding the Wellness Coordinator duties, how frequently are physical, mental, and emotional well-being events or activities expected to be held (e.g., weekly, monthly, quarterly)?

Can the wellness coordinator conduct virtual training, or will they need to be in person?

A5. This is a new position created in response to the evolving and varied needs of clients visiting our centers. Partner4Work is not prescribing a single model for how this role must operate. As we continue to assess how best to support our customers, this role is intended to provide more targeted assistance based on the day-to-day demands we're seeing on the ground. It is important to note that this is one full-time equivalent (FTE) position shared between both centers. We are looking to the employer of record to determine the appropriate supplemental activities that align with their staffing structure and support our collective goals. Also, we are seeking creative solutions and innovative approaches from potential bidders and encourage you to propose strategies — whether virtual or in-person — that best align with your expertise and the needs of the system, ensuring quality support across both centers.

Q6. At the bottom of RFP page 24, you reference a linked contract template. The contract template indicates a (good faith) requirement for Minority, Women and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (“MWDBE”), specifically, at least twenty percent (20%) of all non-personnel funds awarded. Will this still be the requirement for a new contract? What percent of the current contract goes toward MWDBE? What services do the MWDBE subcontractors currently provide? What documentation is required to demonstrate compliance with the MWDBE target?

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At the bottom of RFP page 24, you reference a linked contract template. The contract template indicates a cap of 10% on indirect, but the RFP indicates a 15% cap (de minimis). If our federally approved NICRA falls between these percentages, can we apply it in full if we attribute it to the appropriate line item and explain the associated costs? The template also says “in no instance shall direct or indirect administrative costs exceed 10% of overall programmatic expenditures.” Can you please define programmatic expenditures?

A6. An updated Subrecipient Agreement Template has been uploaded to the Partner4Work Contract Templates webpage (see PY25 - Subrecipient Agreement Template). Please reference the updated template to understand the likely terms and conditions that will govern any agreement resulting from this RFP.

Regarding indirect costs, Partner4Work and its subrecipients must follow the requirements of 2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards). When establishing your proposed budget, please utilize the standards found in the Uniform Guidance.

Q7. On RFP page 8, Attachments, it says “Reference letters. See Organization Description and Experience.” However, the Organization Description and Experience section only says to provide contact information. Do you require letters from our references or just contact information?

It seems that Reference Letters are optional but also listed as part of the attachment section. Can you confirm they are not required as the section on Organizational Description does not mandate them.

What are the requirements for the Reference Letters?

A7. We apologize for any confusing guidance in the RFP. Reference letters are optional; however, reference contact information is required and must be provided, as described in the Organization Description section of How to Apply.

Q8. Regarding transition planning, if the incumbent does not win the contract, what is the expected duration and cost coverage for a transition period? Can Partner4Work provide the inventory of non-shared equipment that may be available to the successor organization?

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Will equipment (e.g., computers, phones, printers) from the current provider be transferred to the new provider?

Can Partner4Work confirm whether any startup costs (e.g., equipment, software) will be reimbursed or must be covered by the provider upfront?

A8. Should a provider transition occur, Partner4Work will evaluate transition timelines and associated needs during the contract negotiation and award process, in partnership with the incumbent and incoming providers, to ensure alignment with operational realities and partner capacity. Partner4Work's goal during provider transitions is to encourage continuity of services and a seamless handoff of responsibilities.

The supplies and equipment in use by the current provider of Operator Services may be available to an incoming provider in the event of a transition. If a transition occurs, the condition and ownership of all incumbent supplies and equipment would need to be assessed to determine appropriateness for use by the incoming provider. As such, non-incumbent applicants should include and clearly identify the upfront or "start-up" costs of supplies and equipment necessary to implement the activities of their proposed budgets, excluding the costs of One-Stop resources provided to and shared by partners of PA CareerLink®. These upfront costs should be well-described in the budget narrative so Partner4Work can identify and classify one-time start-up costs, allowing proposal reviewers to differentiate them from the ongoing, longer-term costs of the proposed operation. If a provider transition occurs, one-time start-up costs will be determined and negotiated during or after the contract award.

Q9. Can you provide a sample invoice packet or checklist of documentation required per cost category?

A9. A sample invoice template has been added to the RFP webpage for informational purposes only, titled "Invoice Template (25-26)." It can be found at the bottom of the page, under the section called "Additional files."

Q10. Is there any risk that services could be delivered without reimbursement due to funding shortfalls?

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A10. Contracts resulting from this RFP will be subject to availability of funding. Please reference the PY25 Subrecipient Agreement Template posted to Partner4Work's website for further information regarding expected contract terms and conditions related to funding and payments.

Q11. Can Partner4Work clarify the specific performance benchmarks that will be used to evaluate the One-Stop Operator beyond those listed in the RFP?

A11. Partner4Work invites bidders to propose creative solutions and measurable outputs that strengthen service delivery and support an effective operational model. All proposed outputs should be clearly aligned with the KPIs and performance metrics outlined in the RFP to ensure consistency, accountability, and system-wide impact. Bidders are also encouraged to include methods for tracking, measuring, and reporting progress toward these KPIs to demonstrate effectiveness and continuous improvement.

Q12. Will Partner4Work provide historical performance data or baseline metrics to help bidders set realistic targets for WIOA common measures?

A12. Please reference RFP sections regarding performance metrics, indicators, and related standards to better understand performance measurement expectations.

Q13. Can you please provide information on who will be reviewing the proposal?

A13. Proposal reviewers are selected by Partner4Work based on knowledge, expertise, and experience. Reviewers are oriented to the RFP, scoring criteria, and other relevant factors and guidelines. Reviewers must follow confidentiality and conflict of interest standards.

Q14. Can you please confirm the date of submission. Pg. 20 states 9/5, however 9/19 is mentioned in two other locations.

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Page 22 of the RFP states that the proposal must be submitted by September 5, 2025. Please confirm that this is a typographical error and the proposal due date is September 19, 2025, as stated on pages 1 and 23 of the RFP.

A14. We apologize for any confusing guidance in the RFP. All proposals are due no later than **September 19th at 5:00 PM Eastern Time.**

Q15. Is Partner4Work open to the proposer offering products or systems that will overall enhance the OSO system? If yes, can those be noted as “other” in the budget template or on the “Other Program Costs” worksheet?

A15. Partner4Work is seeking creative solutions and innovative approaches from potential bidders and encourages the inclusion of strategies and options that strengthen service delivery. Any proposed technologies must fit within the established budget guidelines and should be clearly identified as “Other Program Costs” in the submitted budget.

Q16. Does Partner4Work presently have a partner referral platform or technology in place, or any other system in place designated for OSO use?

A16. The Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) is the current referral platform in use and is required as the official system of record. While the use of CWDS is mandatory, Partner4Work welcomes proposals that suggest complementary tools or processes to enhance efficiency and service delivery, provided that CWDS remains the primary system of record, and that all rules regarding data and use of technology are followed.

Q17. What is the current structure and frequency of partner meetings?

A17. At present, the only standing partner meeting facilitated by the Operator is the monthly Core Partner Meeting. In addition, there are other committee meetings — including those focused on Outreach, Business Services, Veterans, and Referrals — which include representation from partner staff. The frequency of these committee meetings varies. Partner4Work also welcomes alternatives and new ideas from bidders on how meetings may be structured or facilitated to strengthen collaboration and system effectiveness.

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Q18. Is there an existing PA CareerLink® branding guide or communication toolkit that the One-Stop Operator must/can follow?

A18. Yes, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania created PA CareerLink® branding guidelines and a toolkit to emphasize the consistent use of the “PA CareerLink®” name and logo, as well as its proper relationship with the “American Job Center (AJC)” brand. The Commonwealth’s policy on these matters is known as the “Common Identifier” policy and can be found on the Commonwealth’s Workforce Policies & Forms webpage.

Q19. Will Partner4Work support the One-Stop Operator in media outreach or public relations efforts? What is the Board’s preference for this effort?

A19. Partner4Work encourages collaboration with the Partner4Work Communications Team to ensure alignment and consistency. In addition, Partner4Work is always seeking opportunities to strengthen partnership and collaboration with providers to ensure that messaging and outreach efforts are unified, clear, and impactful.

Q20. When is the next One-Stop Certification due?

A20. Partner4Work oversees the PA CareerLink® Certification process for Pittsburgh and Allegheny County in accordance with all federal and state rules and regulations. Partner4Work anticipates the next certification process to occur in 2026.

Q21. Will the operator be responsible for maintaining MOUs for co-located services? What is the duration of those current MOUs?

A21. As required by WIOA, Partner4Work oversees the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) related to the one-stop delivery system in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. Partner4Work follows all federal and state rules and regulations related to the MOU. The most current version of the MOU for Pittsburgh and Allegheny County can be found on Partner4Work’s website, in the Public Documents section. Please reference the MOU, WIOA,

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and related regulations for more guidance regarding the Operator's role in supporting the MOU.

Q22. Will bidders need to submit a uniform guidance audit?

A22. Please refer to 2 CFR Part 200 for guidance regarding audit requirements (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards).

Q23. Who holds the contract to operate the centers currently?

A23. Equus Workforce Solutions is the current provider of One-Stop Operator services.

Q24. For the initial period are we providing a six-month budget?

Please confirm the time period for which the budget should be prepared. Should it be for the initial 6-month period of January 1, 2026 - June 30, 2026 or would you like the budget for a full 12-month period?

On page 7 of the RFP, it states that the maximum annual contract value shall not exceed \$500,000. Please confirm that the \$500,000 is for a 12-month period.

A24. We apologize for any confusing guidance in the RFP. The initial period of performance for a contract resulting from this RFP is expected to be: 1/1/26 to 6/30/26. Proposed budgets must be for a 6-month period, in alignment with the initial period of performance.

The \$500,000 figure included in the RFP represents the maximum annual contract value anticipated by Partner4Work for Operator Services, subject to availability of funding and other factors. This annual estimation was provided for informational purposes. In developing a 6-month budget for the initial period of performance, bidders should anticipate funding availability of approximately half the annual amount.

Award amounts and final contract values will be based on a number of factors, as described in the RFP.

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Q25. Can Partner4Work provide a breakdown of current staffing by location?

A25. The current Operator staffing structure is as follows:

- **Downtown Center:** 1 Site Administrator and 2 Talent Engagement Specialists.
- **Allegheny East Center:** 1 Talent Engagement Specialist (TES) and 1 staff member who splits responsibilities as 0.5 Site Administrator / 0.5 TES.
- **Shared/Split Positions:** The Operator and a Communications Specialist.

The current staffing structure is provided here for informational purposes. Bidders are encouraged to propose a staffing structure that aligns with their proposal and the requirements of the RFP and this Q&A document.

Q26. Are wage ranges or salary bands for key roles available for reference?

A26. Partner4Work does not define wage ranges or salary bands for staff of contracted providers. Bidder's must ensure that all staff members employed through any agreements resulting from this RFP receive compensation that at least meets the minimum standards set by Partner4Work's Self-Sufficiency Policy, effective at the time of this RFP, which can be found on Partner4Work's website, in the Public Documents section.

Q27. Will staff have board emails and access M365?

A27. All center staff are connected to the CareerLink IT network, including WiFi and internet access, and provided with CareerLink Pittsburgh email addresses (via a licensed Microsoft 365 account) for official communications - @careerlinkpittsburgh.org.

Staff of contracted providers working within the local PA CareerLink® system have access to a Microsoft 365 account associated with a "Business Standard" license, which includes SharePoint, One Drive, Teams, and other standard business applications. However, contracted providers may discuss different arrangements with Partner4Work to accommodate the provider's requirements or existing technology practices and applications, as long as all information and security requirements are met.

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Beyond the resources described above and within the RFP, contracted providers must provide their own staff with the hardware and software needed to carry out the proposed program, which may include but is not limited to computers, applications, data storage (outside of the CareerLink IT network and SharePoint infrastructure), and related support.

Q28. On page 22 of the RFP in the 7. Attachments section (ii. Program organizational chart), there is a reference to “See Program Narrative, Staffing Plan”. There is not a Program Narrative or Staffing Plan section in the RFP. What are the requirements for the Organizational Chart?

A28. Bidders should include an organizational chart that clearly illustrates the proposed staffing structure, reporting relationships, and role responsibilities. The chart should demonstrate how the proposed structure aligns with the operational model, supports effective service delivery, and ensures compliance with the requirements outlined in the RFP and this Q&A document.

Q29. On page 22 of the RFP in the 7. Attachments section (iii. Key staff resumes or minimum qualifications), there is a reference to “See Program Narrative, Staffing Plan”. There is not a Program Narrative or Staffing Plan section in the RFP. What are the requirements for the Key Staff Resumes or Minimum Qualifications?

A29. Bidders are required to submit resumes for all proposed Key Staff as part of the proposal. Resumes should clearly demonstrate that each individual meets the minimum qualifications necessary to fulfill their designated role. At a minimum, resumes must highlight relevant education, professional experience, and specialized skills that align with the responsibilities outlined in the RFP. Bidders should ensure that the proposed Key Staff possess the qualifications and capacity to support high-quality service delivery and effective program management.

Bidders may submit minimum qualifications in lieu of resumes for any key positions included in the proposal that do not have specific individuals assigned.

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Q30. On page 22 of the RFP in the 7. Attachments section (iv. Service flow chart), there is a reference to “See Program Narrative, PA CareerLink Service Model”. There is not a Program Narrative or PA CareerLink Service Model section in the RFP. What are the requirements for the Service Flow Chart?

A30. Bidders should include a service flow chart that clearly outlines the proposed customer journey through the PA CareerLink® system. The chart should illustrate key steps, decision points, and handoffs across partner programs, demonstrating how services would be coordinated and integrated to provide a seamless experience for job seekers and employers. The service flow chart should align with the proposed operational model and reflect compliance with the requirements outlined in the RFP and this Q&A document.

Q31. Page 21 of RFP indicates the budget template is available on the Partner4Work webpage, as of 8/21 we are not seeing it on the solicitation page or in any Public Documents. If possible, please provide in an Excel format.

Please confirm bidders may add lines to the budget forms as needed. For example, if we are proposing more staff than the lines provided.

A31. An updated version of the budget template has been added to the RFP webpage and titled “Budget Template (25-26).” It can be found at the bottom of the page, under the section called “Additional files.” Please download the spreadsheet and use it to submit your proposed budget.

The tabs of the budget template that require entry of cost data by bidders contain many rows. We do not expect bidders to need additional rows; however, should you need additional rows, please contact us directly at RFP@partner4work.org.

Q32. On page 19, the RFP requires the proposal to be written in 11-point Calibri font and double-spaced. May tables, charts/graphs, and graphics be single-spaced and in a smaller font as long as legible?

A32. Yes, as long as they are legible. You may also consider including optional attachments (see related requirements in RFP); however, any optional attachments must clearly relate to

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your proposal. Optional attachments containing general information not directly relevant to the proposed program will not be considered.

Q33. To best ensure compliance with the identified page limits, please confirm questions/prompts are not subject to the formatting requirements.

To best ensure compliance with the identified page limits, please confirm that question prompts may be truncated or removed.

A33. Proposals do not need to repeat the criteria from the “How to Apply” section of the RFP word-for-word. However, proposals should be clearly structured/organized according to those criteria, making it clear to reviewers which RFP criteria are being addressed, while demonstrating a full understanding of the requirements described throughout the RFP.

Q34. What is the file size limit of your email inbox? If our proposal response exceeds that limit, may we send multiple emails labeled file 1 of X, file 2 of X, etc.?

A34. The size limit for emails sent to RFP@partner4work.org is 50MB. If your proposal exceeds 50MB, assuming it meets all requirements of the RFP, you may send multiple emails to accommodate the size limitation.

Q35. Is the de minimus rate 10 or 15%? If the proposers are using the standard de minimus rate under 2CFR 200.414(f) what further justification is needed?

A35. Regarding indirect costs, Partner4Work and its subrecipients must follow the requirements of 2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards). When establishing your proposed budget, please utilize the standards found in the Uniform Guidance.

Regarding instructions for use and application of indirect costs, please see Appendix C – Budget Narrative Instructions, included within the RFP, and the first tab of the Budget Template provided on the RFP webpage.

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Q36. How is the wellness program funded? Is the contractor required to fund the activities supported by the wellness program?

A36. The activities and services provided by the Wellness Coordinator, as described in the Statement of Work, will be the responsibility of the selected bidder. The cost and payment arrangements for the Wellness Coordinator, and all other components of the selected program, will be based on a cost reimbursement model, as described in the RFP.

Q37. How is withheld profit calculated?

A37. Please see the following section of the RFP for further information: Profit Distribution for For-Profit Respondents, including related criteria and a basic example.

Q38. What is the required insurance coverage and levels?

A38. Please see the PY25 Subrecipient Agreement Template for contractual terms and conditions that will likely govern any agreement resulting from this RFP, including insurance-related requirements. The template can be found on Partner4Work's website, in the Public Documents – Contract Templates section.

Q39. Is equipment purchased for the contract the property of the contractor or the workforce board?

A39. Regarding equipment, Partner4Work and its subrecipients must follow the requirements of 2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards) and the Financial Management Workforce System Policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, which can be found on the Department's webpage for Workforce Policies & Forms.

Q40. The Questions/Answers document states a dedicated Reception Attendant proposed for each CareerLink center. Are these positions in addition to the positions stated in the RFP or are operational staff assigned to reception attendant duties so reception staff are always present?

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How many operations staff will the OSO be responsible for functional supervision of?

A40. Please refer to sections of the RFP related to staffing and this Q&A document for guidelines and clarification regarding staffing requirements, including which positions are required and which positions must be dedicated to certain roles and responsibilities. Outside of these requirements, bidders are welcome to propose a staffing structure that consolidates or modifies roles or positions in a way that best supports the proposed operational model, including revising titles, as long as the criteria of the RFP and this Q&A document are met.

The selected bidder will be required to provide functional supervision of the PA CareerLink® centers, as described in the RFP, and as defined by WIOA and its implementing regulations.

Q41. Will the OSO be responsible for providing professional development to operations staff? If so, how many staff would be eligible for professional development? Is the cost for professional development covered by the WFB or the OSO operator?

A41. The OSO is responsible for training all center staff on customer service, triage, and reception standards across the centers. Additional areas of training may also be established, either through bidder proposals or through the evolving needs of the one-stop partner agencies. Center staff currently include approximately 30 individuals at the Allegheny East Center and 40 individuals at the Downtown Center. Professional development and training costs for center staff are normally included within the Operating Budget and shared by the one-stop partner agencies.

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Reception Excellence Standards – PA CareerLink® Job Centers. The reception area is the first point of contact for job seekers, employers, and community partners. Reception staff set the tone for the entire customer experience. To deliver a consistent, professional, and welcoming experience, all staff assigned to the reception area must meet the following standards:

- **Creating a Welcoming Environment.** Greet every visitor warmly and respectfully. Use consistent language and branding in all communication. Ensure the environment reflects dignity, equity, and respect at all times.
- **Workforce Triage & Navigation.** Quickly assess each visitor’s needs. Provide direct referrals or warm hand-offs to the appropriate staff or service. Recognize and prioritize populations such as veterans, returning citizens, and youth. Support customers with basic digital literacy tasks (e.g., email setup, resume upload, CWDS registration).
- **Delivering High-Quality Customer Service.** Provide “concierge-level” service modeled after hospitality best practices. Demonstrate empathy, professionalism, and problem-solving in every interaction. Respond quickly to customer concerns and apply service recovery protocols when needed.