

Connecting Foster Youth to Summer Employment Questions and Answers

Below are a list of the questions and answers from the conference call on Connecting Foster Youth to Summer Employment hosted by New Ways to Work and the California Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership on April 1, 2009. To access the recording of this call and the power point presentation, go to: <http://www.newwaystowork.org/whatsnew.html#callsummeremploy>

- **Do you have any advice for folks who work with several WIBS? Is there a contact list of staff working at different WIBs?**

There is a list of county contacts on California Workforce Association and California Workforce Investment Board websites. There are no specific list of contacts for the summer program as of yet as local areas are still identifying who the point person will be in each area for summer jobs. On the California Workforce Association's website there is a link to a public space where people are sharing tools and forms.

California Workforce Association www.calworkforce.org

California Workforce Investment Board www.calwia.org

- **The summer program time frame is May 1st through September 30th. Can youth work part of this period or do they have to work all of that period?**

This will be determined by local areas. Most areas are gearing up for 6 to 8 week programs. In some areas this may be flexible.

- **Can jobs be in public, private or non-profit sectors?**

Federal guidance does allow for private sector placement with conditions. When placing youth in the private sector you must be able to demonstrate that you have been equitable in your choice of the private sector employers that receive a youth worker. The employer can receive NO profitable benefit from the youth worker being at the worksite and the youth worker cannot replace a regular employee who has been laid off.

In Sonoma County, the Youth Council has made a determination that they will not be placing youth in the private sector. In LA they will do some private sector placements where there is a tie to a high growth industry. They are very clear up front and have added a line to their worksite agreements stating that youth cannot replace employees who have been laid off. Again, the workforce system is a locally driven system. Local areas will be controlling this pretty tightly. Humboldt County has a detailed worksite agreement that provides assurances from private sector employers.

- **Is this program for participants up to 24 years old?**

Yes, the ARRA extended the age up to 24 just for the summer program. Also the performance measure for the summer program will be based on work readiness only. The age will revert to 21 as part of the regular normal WIA program at the end of summer.

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- **For those over 21 who are no longer eligible for ILS, how do we get them enrolled?**
In Humboldt, they enroll a lot of people not connected to any other program. They do a lot of general outreach. Folks who have aged out of foster care may still be connected and can contact program providers directly. In Sonoma, a lot of their aged out foster care will be working with the VOICES one stop as well as through social workers and ILP staff who continue connections with foster youth once they have aged out. If the youth enrollment process has not started yet in your county, it will most likely be starting soon. There should be a link on the local Workforce Investment Board websites about how to get connected in your community.
- **Are undocumented youth eligible to work?**
No you must be able to prove the right to work to be eligible for this program.
- **What will be the wage for summer jobs?**
Local areas are determining wage. Most areas will be going with minimum wage.
- **What options are there to addressing transportation challenge for young people?**
Under WIA guidelines, you are allowed to provide supportive services so it is possible to provide such things as bus passes. This can be built into provider's budgets. In Sonoma County some partners will be providing transportation for work crews. In Humboldt which is rural, transportation is always a challenge. They try to centralize worksites.
- **Concerns about work permit issuance for youth under 18.**
For 14-17year olds, work permits are required. Many local school districts have instituted a GPA requirement for eligibility of work permit issuance. It seems like this is a requirement that should be able to be waived for the summer. At this point, this will be a district by district decision, possibly at the board level. Work permit issuance is the responsibility of the superintendent of the district in which the young person resides.
- **In federal guidelines it says that young people cannot be placed in casinos, golf courses, zoos, aquariums, or swimming pools. Why is this?**
National DOL staff says this has to do primarily with safety issues.
- **Can youth receive a stipend for something like a career orientation class?**
Each local area will define their local program design and will define allowable educational components for the summer. It will differ from local area to local area. In Sonoma, they will bring the education to the youth rather than having a separate classroom educational component. Educational components will in most cases be tied directly to a work opportunity.

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How do I find out about an RFP in my community and worksites that will be hiring youth for summer jobs in my community?

Distribution and design of the local system is determined based on where you are located and where the young people live that you are serving. Go to the www.calworkforce.org or www.calwia.org to get information about the local WIB in your area. New Ways will be providing a helpline if you need help figuring out who to connect to in your local community. Call Lisa Elliott at 707 824-4000 ext 27. We will do our best to help you get connected.

- **What are some things that folks should do to get foster youth engaged today?**
 - Connect with the youth representative from your local WIB
 - Set up a meeting between your local workforce development system and child welfare folks. Start today.
 - Be aware of the All County Information Notice that provides information on connecting to youth programs throughout the state.
http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/entres/getinfo/acin09/I-16_09.pdf>

- **Where will information be posted from this session?**

Information from this call will be posted on the New Ways to Work website, www.newwaystowork.org and the public wiki of the California Workforce Association, www.calworkforce.org .

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