



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



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Mayor

What is TIF?

TIF stands for tax increment financing. A TIF district is a geographic location where tax increment financing can be used. A tax increment is the difference between the amount of property tax revenue generated before the creation of a TIF district and the amount of property tax revenue generated afterwards. For more information, visit www.cityofchicago.org/tif.

What is TIFWorks?

TIFWorks is an innovative program that utilizes TIF dollars to finance job training programs for small and mid-sized Chicago companies that commit to training new and/or incumbent workers. The program is available in TIF districts across the city, however, funding may be limited

Who is eligible for TIFWorks?

- A company or business that is located within, expanding into or relocating to an eligible TIF district with available funding
- A group of employers with common training needs that will train and place trainees into a business or businesses located within an eligible TIF district
- A non-profit organization, such as an industrial council, community development corporation, business/trade association, labor organization or training provider that will train and place trainees into a business or businesses located within an eligible TIF district

The primary consideration for funding will be given to businesses that demonstrate training will make them more competitive and directly benefits Chicago residents.

What type of applicant is suited for TIFWorks?

Manufacturing firms are the most common, but truly any business that can demonstrate that workforce training will make them more competitive is eligible to apply. Nonprofit organizations can also apply on behalf of multiple organizations, and can even facilitate the training themselves.

What training activities are eligible under TIFWorks?

The proposed training activities must fulfill a specific job or skill related workforce need and benefit full-time and part-time, permanent employees (temporary employees are not included).

The skills acquired through the proposed training program are directly related to job or business performance and occupations.

Training can be aimed at any job classification or standardized industrial classification (SIC) code offering enhanced or new skills to incumbent or new workers, particularly in support of:

- New or additional product lines
- New machinery or equipment
- New or changing technology being introduced into the workplace
- Businesses expanding into new markets
- Occupationally- or industry-mandated training related to regulatory compliance
- Curriculum customized for a particular employer or group of employers
- Work-based basic and/or remedial training designed to improve specific job performance
- Work-based English-as-a Second Language (ESL) instruction to improve communication and performance of employees, and
- Workplace skills gap assessments and related activities (e.g., Work Keys), only when included with or followed by training resulting directly from those assessments or activities

Training types may include classroom training, on-the-job training, seminars, workshops, pre-packaged training courses, etc.

What training activities are not eligible under TIFWorks?

- Human Resource administration practices, including but not limited to compensation systems, administration, and benefits, employee discipline procedures, interviewing or diversity training
- Educational degree programs, including General Equivalency Degree (GED) programs
- Consulting services not related to workforce training under this Program

- Stand-alone basic and/or remedial skills training (i.e., without a vocational training/occupational focus)
- Reviews of internal company systems such as total quality management or continuous improvement activities (unless resulting from a workplace skills gap assessment to identify training needs) and
- Non-job related training

What are allowable costs under TIFWorks?

Allowable costs must be directly related to the implementation of the program and must be identified by the applicant and approved by the City. The City reserves the right to accept all or a portion of the funding application. The following costs are eligible for reimbursement through the TIFWorks Program:

- Administrative costs: tracking, reporting, documenting, processing and auditing funds or project costs related to the implementation of the TIFWorks Program
- Counselor and instructor costs (wages, hourly rate)
- Tuition and fees
- Training supplies and materials (manuals, workbooks, videotapes and other materials which are used for training purposes only)
- Training equipment rental (subject to approval)
- Costs of developing curriculum. The City will only pay for the costs of curriculum development when such curricula are judged by the City to be necessary for the proposed training program. If approved for funding, such curricula are considered to be in the public domain. If the City approves funding for curriculum development, the Department is free to distribute this material to any training provider it deems appropriate but will remove on a reasonable basis any information proprietary to the company
- Off-the-shelf curriculum

Administrative costs may not exceed 15 percent of total project costs.

How can a business or organization apply for TIFWorks?

Contact the Workforce Solutions Unit of the Department of Planning and development at 312-744-0042 to determine TIFWorks eligibility and receive technical support.