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**CITY COUNCIL PASSES ORDINANCE TO MERGE
CITY, COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

New, Streamlined Non-Profit Will Allow Chicago to Invest \$1.1M More in Job Training

CHICAGO – The Chicago City Council today approved an ordinance introduced by Mayor Rahm Emanuel that creates the Chicago-Cook Workforce Partnership, a collaboration between the City of Chicago and Cook County that will allow residents to train and apply for jobs without regard to geographic boundaries while streamlining operations and protecting financing for services provided by delegate agencies in light of Federal funding reductions.

“A world-class workforce development system is essential for our region’s economic future,” said Mayor Emanuel. “The Chicago-Cook Workforce Partnership will allow Chicago to continue to help close the gap between people who can’t find jobs and employers who have available positions but can’t find skilled workers.”

The proposed partnership will merge the City’s and County’s Workforce Investment Act (WIA) areas under one centralized, non-profit workforce agency and allow the City and the County to reduce administrative costs, streamline service delivery and improve programs regionally.

The partnership will reduce the City’s operation cost by \$1.1 million to \$3.4 million and allow the savings to protect job-assistance and workforce training to approximately 400 Chicago residents.

The merger is another example of the collaborative effort undertaken by the City and County. The new system will operate seamlessly between Chicago and Cook County, maximizing the available positions for job-seekers and offering companies a much larger applicant pool.

“The Workforce Partnership between Cook County and the City of Chicago will vastly enhance how employment services are delivered and connect residents throughout the region with good-paying

jobs,” said Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle. “This is yet another example of the City and the County working together on behalf of taxpayers, and I look forward to continue to advance this important collaboration.”

In 2011, the City spent \$4.5 million on operations for WIA services through the Department of Family and Support Services and Chicago Workforce Investment Council and sends the remaining \$22.1 million to delegate agencies and training providers. During this time more than 9,000 residents received job placement services that paid an average for \$15.34 an hour for adults and \$8.92 for youths. Jobs range from:

- Manufacturing (machine operators and assemblers)
- Logistics (truck drivers and forklift drivers)
- Healthcare: (registered nurses and EKG technicians)
- Information technology (IT consultant and network administrators)

The Chicago-Cook Workforce Partnership will have a budget of \$40.4 million to centralize the roles of separate WIA areas in Chicago, Northern Cook and Southern Cook, as well as the planning and research of the Chicago Workforce Investment Council. Not only does this eliminate duplicative job functions, but it increases the ability to apply for major grants and revitalizes workforce development and job creation efforts throughout Chicago and the surrounding suburbs.

Once approved by City Council and Cook County Board of Commissioners, the Chicago-Cook Workforce Partnership will offer a centralized, transparent and efficient partner for businesses in the area, focused on training Chicagoland residents for job skills needed by employers and placement into those jobs. Further, by expanding the use of technology, on-the-job training stipends, and focused, demand-driven training programs, employers will be able to hire Chicagoland workers to fit specific, real-time needs and increase competitiveness in the global marketplace.

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