



ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

EMPLOYER HANDBOOK

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Introduction

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for partnering with TechBoost as a host worksite in our On-the-Job Training (OJT) program. TechBoost is a national program that provides comprehensive workforce strategies to prepare the workforce for middle to high-skilled occupations within the information technology industry. By forging public-private partnerships, we bring together industry and employers, education and training providers, the workforce system, and other entities that will work collaboratively to align resources in response to employer demand.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information on the policies and procedures of the OJT program, plus the responsibilities and duties of you as an employer partner. In the following pages you will read about the OJT program. You will learn about the expectations of the program, the payroll process, training opportunities, and much more. If you have any questions regarding the material in this handbook, please feel free to contact your TechBoost staff representative.

What is On-the-Job Training (OJT)?

The OJT program is designed to allow employers to hire, train, and retain qualified, program-eligible individuals in permanent positions with your company. The focus of OJT is to raise the technical skill levels of workers so they can obtain or upgrade employment in high-growth industries and occupations. Participating employers are reimbursed a percentage of the wages to offset the cost of training the new hire. Employers are expected to retain all trainees at the conclusion of the training.

It is important to note, that OJT supports **new** employees/hires in receiving targeted training that meets your business' needs for growth and development. Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) supports **current** (existing) employees obtain industry-based credentials that lead to advancement and income mobility. If you are interested in developing your existing workforce, please let us know and we'll be happy to assist!

Essentially, in our OJT program you:

- Set the qualifications, interview, and select the individual
- Customize training your way, at your workplace
- Invest in the future that allows people to earn a paycheck while learning new skills and allows your business to grow while securing skilled staff at a reduced rate
- Receive *up to 90%* wage reimbursement of a new employee's wages while they are training on the job

Getting Started

This is a great opportunity to bring on employees, or **TRAINEES**, that are eager to learn new skills and up-skill your workforce. You will receive wage reimbursement for the costs associated with training this new trainee, for the agreed-upon training period. TechBoost program staff will assist you through all phases of the OJT.

To get started, you must first complete the following steps to apply, be accepted into, and join the TechBoost OJT program, as follows:

1. Register your company in the Work Based Learning (WBL) portal,
2. Upload a completed OJT Employer Application on the WBL portal, and
3. Once approved, enter into an OJT Contract, and begin hiring!

If you have not yet completed the above steps or need assistance doing so, please contact us to help get you started. The remainder of this handbook describes the next steps to hiring an OJT eligible trainee, and how to subsequently get reimbursed once training begins.

Process Overview

- The employer provides TechBoost program staff with job descriptions for open, approved job openings in their company (this may have been previously completed during the Employer Application process).
- TechBoost provides an applicant pool, if available, to the employer based on the requisite qualifications and the job description provided by the employer. The employer may also recruit their own talent pool or in tandem with TechBoost program staff.
- The employer interviews and selects a trainee to fill the position.
- An Individual Training Plan (ITP) is developed in conjunction with the trainee and the employer. The ITP is tailored to the position being offered by the employer and the trainee's educational and training needs. Please note: a trainee may NOT begin their OJT at the worksite until TechBoost approves the new hire for eligibility into TechBoost and approves the start date of the new hire. Trainees who begin employment prior to this approval process may disqualify the trainee's eligibility for the OJT opportunity and you will not be reimbursed for the hours the individual worked and were paid.

Employers

All employers are private for-profit or private non-profit organizations. Public agencies (e.g., federal, state, city, local governments) and temporary employment placement agencies are not eligible for this program.

Trainees

Trainee Minimum Requirements:

- U.S. Citizen or authorized to work in the United States
- 17 or older, and not enrolled in secondary school (i.e., high school)
- Unemployed or underemployed (incumbent (current) workers of the business are not eligible)

Ideal program participants (trainees) for this initiative will have experience and education to support a rapid transition to the selected occupation. The program is designed to provide short-term specialized skills training in the information technology industry to build a knowledge and competency base that will compliment OJT opportunities and employment retention following the OJT experience.

The hourly wage will only be reimbursed for the time trainees are documented to be at work and in training. Positions funded under this program must be full-time. Those hired must not already be employed by the employer when entering the program.

Employers can hire trainees who are pre-qualified by TechBoost using specific eligibility criteria or employers can refer individuals to TechBoost for eligibility screening. As the employer, your company will determine the selection criteria for OJT trainees and will decide the final selection of eligible trainees.

Individual Training Plan (ITP)

Once a trainee is matched with an employer, an **INDIVIDUAL TRAINING PLAN (ITP)** is developed. The ITP is a reflection of the results of an individual skills assessment and an analysis of the job requirements. The ITP will identify the type and duration of training and benchmarks for the attainment of specific measurable occupational skills. The ITP will also include any ancillary or related training that may be needed to fully prepare the trainee for the specific occupation. As necessary, the ITP will provide a schedule for concurrent OJT training and classroom or other types of vocational skills training.

The ITP form may be downloaded from the Work Based Learning (WBL) portal, completed, signed, and uploaded

back to the WBL for TechBoost review and approval. You will be notified, through the portal, when the ITP is approved (or of any edits or additional information needed).

Maximum OJT Length

The OJT period should be limited to the period of time that is required for the trainee to become proficient in the occupation for which the training is being provided. The length of the OJT will vary based on the skill requirements of the position, the academic and occupational skill level of the trainee, and the prior work experience of the trainee. Employers may be reimbursed based on the size of the business, as follows:

- up to 90 percent of the participant’s wage rate for employers with 50 or fewer employees;
- up to 75 percent of the participant’s wage rate for employers with 51-250 employees; and
- up to 50 percent for employers with more than 250 employees.

It should be noted, however, that these are the maximum reimbursement rates permitted. Variable or reduced rates may be negotiated based on other factors including any funding constraints or reduced budgeting, the number of employees to be trained, wage rates, and length of training Your OJT Contract will specify the reimbursement percentages permitted and/or any other restrictions including any caps on the number of OJT hours permitted.

Employer Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the employer to document the skills gained by the trainee during the OJT period. As an employer in the program, it is important that you communicate any ITP changes, any employer supervisor changes, or any contact information changes. It is also essential that you follow the goals detailed within the ITP to fully optimize the potential of each trainee’s training.

Required documentation

The employer shall be required to submit the following documentation:

At the start of the program:

- Submit a completed W-9

No later than the 5th day of each month, submitted monthly to the WBL portal:

- Invoice (invoice template provided)
- Payroll ledgers/reports verifying hours worked and hourly wage/compensation.

At the conclusion of the OJT period:

- Copies of achieved certifications (if applicable) and/or completion of training documentation

Trainee Progress

The supervisor will be asked to formally evaluate the performance of trainees on a monthly basis by completing the appropriate columns submitted on the monthly invoice (rating progress against ITP and providing comments in the respective field). Staff will review this information and likewise connect with the trainee to ensure the successful progression of the training experience by all parties. Staff may contact the worksite supervisor if there are any concerns or questions that may arise as a result of this review.

The employer will be required to maintain ongoing contact with TechBoost in order to ensure that the training progress is being maintained. If the trainee needs any support services, please contact us directly to discuss as we may be able to assist the trainee in overcoming any barriers to employment.

Supervisor Roles & Responsibilities

The employer supervisor is the day-to-day point person for the trainee. As the trainee's supervisor, your primary role will be to directly supervise the trainee while on the job and ensure that the ITP is followed.

Reporting Injuries

The employer is responsible for ensuring a safe working environment, and for providing any and all safety practices, procedures, and training to the trainee. Should a trainee be injured while on the job, the employer must report this injury to TechBoost on the same business day of the incident or as soon as possible. The employer supervisor shall follow all company protocols, policies, and procedures for handling and reporting of worker injuries.

Restrictions

Employers are subject to the following restrictions:

- Employers cannot use OJT-funded trainees as a means to terminate and then rehire current employees as OJT-funded trainees.
- Employers cannot use OJT-funded trainees to replace employees laid off within six months prior to the date of your application.
- Employers cannot use OJT-funded trainees to displace current employed workers.
- Employers must agree to hire any satisfactorily performing OJT trainees as regular, full-time employees.
- The rate of pay and benefits (including workers' compensation, health insurance, unemployment insurance, retirement benefits, etc.) must be commensurate with what the employer pays others non-OJT employees doing similar work.

Background Screening & Bonding

If the employer requires trainees to have a background screening performed or to be bonded, it will be the responsibility of the employer to pay for the screening and to provide bonding insurance for trainees.

Payroll

For each trainee, the employer will be reimbursed at the agreed-upon Reimbursement Rate of the wage rate, as set forth in the contract between the employer and TechBoost, **excluding overtime and holiday pay**. The following are important procedures that should be followed in submitting invoices to TechBoost for reimbursement.

Invoicing and Reimbursement

Reimbursement to the employer will occur monthly. The following documentation must be submitted to the Work Based Learning (WBL) portal no later than the 5th of each month for the prior month:

- Invoice (download template provided on the WBL portal)
- Trainee timesheets
- Payroll ledgers/reports

Each month the employer will invoice TechBoost for its allowable and reimbursable costs and expenses. Each invoice will include sufficient documentation to justify these costs and expenses and include documentation of the skills gained by each trainee during the period specified in each invoice. Upon approval of each employer invoice, TechBoost shall reimburse the employer on a monthly basis for an amount not to exceed the Reimbursement Rate and Maximum Reimbursement specified in the OJT contract, the individual's training plan (ITP), or via other related and agreed upon documentation.

The employer agrees to maintain and retain complete and accurate time and attendance, payroll, benefits, personnel, and other records to support amounts for which reimbursement is requested.

Training Hours and Overtime

The employer agrees that wage and labor standards will be adhered to and each trainee will be paid at the same rates, including increases, and benefits as non-OJT employees who are performing similar jobs. Such rates shall be in accordance with applicable law.

Employer Closings & Holidays

The employer's policy regarding holidays, inclement weather, and other closings will also govern the trainee. However, TechBoost will not reimburse for holiday or sick pay, only training received through OJT.

Disciplinary Actions

The employer's policies regarding discipline shall also govern the trainee. If a disciplinary problem arises or a trainee is separated from employment with the employer, the employer supervisor will immediately notify their TechBoost representative in writing. The employer will be asked to provide documentation regarding the reason for the disciplinary action or separation.

Media and Press

Clark University and its partners provide services under federal legislation in workforce and talent development. From time to time, we may receive requests from media to provide comments, input, or verify facts for public stories. We also seek to engage the media and the public to support our mission of making sure everyone who wants to work can.

To achieve this, TechBoost employs communications staff. The role of the communications team is to facilitate and distribute accurate and factual information to media when requested, as well as draft and publish promotional content and messaging.

Our communications department is here to assist you with anything media or press related. TechBoost's mission when interacting with the media and public is to provide accurate, factual, and grant-compliant information about your company (with your permission), its relationship to TechBoost's programs, and the trainee(s) at your worksite. Should the press approach you or your trainee(s), we ask that you contact us before formally answering the press inquiry or directly refer the press to our team. This step will help ensure that we provide supportive data and increase positive media outcomes for both your firm and the programs we support.

Questions, Concerns, and Additional Information

All information contained in this handbook is subject to change without notice, as a result of legislation, or changes from the U.S. Department of Labor, or from program policies. TechBoost staff will make every attempt to keep trainees and employers informed of policy changes in a timely manner. If you have any questions, issues and/or concerns please contact our office.

This Handbook does not supersede, void, cancel or replace any applicable information contained in the OJT contract between TechBoost and the employer.