



## **FY 2023-2024 Company Guidelines**

The Workforce and Economic Development Network of Pennsylvania (WEDnetPA) brings training funds to qualified companies across the Commonwealth through a network of community colleges, state system universities and other educational institutions.

The goal of WEDnetPA is to strengthen the business environment of the Commonwealth by helping companies improve the skills and productivity of Pennsylvania workers.

Funding for this program is provided by a state appropriation through the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED).

This document is subject to change without notice.

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# Key Information

## Online Application Process:

- To apply and for more information, visit [www.wednetpa.com](http://www.wednetpa.com).
- Choose any WEDnetPA partner as your point of contact.

## Required Documentation:

- Application and invoices must be submitted by an employee of the company.
- Authorized employee must sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).
- Only employees of the company can be granted password-protected access to ISAAC.
- A detailed training plan must be completed.
- Invoicing documentation to support training activity and cost must be provided.
- Employee social security numbers are required for training reimbursement (see Page 6 for more details).

## Training Grant Amounts:

- Maximum is \$2,000 per employee, up to \$100,000 per company.

## Company Eligibility:

- Funding is limited to two years in a row or three out of the past five years.
- Company must be located in Pennsylvania.
- Company must be in an eligible industry, industrial and/or business-to-business in nature and not be explicitly ineligible as defined by the complete guidelines.
- Each company location must submit its own application (exceptions may apply).
- All locations under the same FEIN are considered a single company subject to the company cap.
- A company location may not use multiple FEINs that result in receiving funding more than two years in a row or three years out of five.

## Employee Eligibility:

 To be eligible for reimbursement, at the time of training an employee must:

- Be a resident of and employed in Pennsylvania.
- Earn at least \$12.00 per hour (subject to change at any time), excluding benefits.
- Be permanently employed full-time and eligible for full-time benefits.
- Be an employee of the specific company location for which a contract is awarded.

## Training Eligibility:

- Must be skill building training for current job, advancement or promotion.
- Must start on or after July 1, 2023, and be completed on or before June 30, 2024. Partial training cannot be reimbursed.
- Training costs must be “reasonable” as defined by market rates and other criteria.
- A company may not use its own employee or an employee’s company as a third-party training provider.
- Each training session must be a minimum of 30 minutes in length.

## Additional Eligibility Criteria

### Company:

- Eligible companies are those that fall within an eligible industry, are industrial and/or business-to-business in nature, are not limited or defined elsewhere in these guidelines, and are not explicitly defined as ineligible (some exceptions may apply).
- Company caps and funding history will be determined by the company's FEIN, not by location or operating functions. If the company has more than one location using the same FEIN, it is the company's responsibility to coordinate applications among the various locations.
- For companies with multiple locations that share the same FEIN and company name, each location must apply separately. However, when any of the following criteria is met, the company has the option to submit a single application for those locations:
  - Within the same city/town.
  - Within the same county.
  - Within 10 miles of one another.
- Only those employees from the specific company location receiving a training grant can be considered for reimbursement, unless the criteria are met for submitting a single application for multiple locations.
- Based on all full-time employees working in PA, companies with an annual employee turnover rate of 25% or greater are not eligible. This policy may be waived with justification and at the discretion of the state director. For consideration, a written request from the company must be provided, including how the proposed training will reduce employee turnover.

**Eligible and Ineligible Companies:**

<b>Eligible</b>	<b>Not Eligible</b>
<p>Industries (restrictions apply):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agriculture and Food Production</li> <li>Bio-Medical</li> <li>Building and Construction</li> <li>Business Services</li> <li>Energy</li> <li>Healthcare<sup>1</sup></li> <li>Logistics and Transportation</li> <li>Manufacturing</li> <li>Real Estate, Finance<sup>2</sup> and Insurance</li> <li>Wood, Wood Products and Publishing</li> </ul>	<p>Industries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education</li> <li>Hospitality, Leisure and Entertainment</li> </ul>
<p><sup>1</sup>Healthcare facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assisted living and personal care facilities</li> <li>Home healthcare services</li> <li>Hospice services</li> <li>Mental health hospitals (inpatient only)</li> <li>Nursing homes (long-term care only)</li> <li>Primary-care hospitals (inpatient only)</li> <li>Rehabilitation hospitals (inpatient only)</li> </ul>	<p>Healthcare facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent living and retirement communities</li> <li>Clinics</li> <li>Doctor’s offices</li> <li>Pharmacies</li> <li>Specialty centers</li> <li>All outpatient facilities not included as eligible</li> </ul>
<p><sup>2</sup>Bank headquarters</p>	<p>Branch locations and their employees</p>
<p>Some unions and labor organizations may qualify. Please contact a WEDnetPA partner for more information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brick-and-mortar retail businesses</li> <li>Educational institutions</li> <li>Employment agencies</li> <li>Gaming establishments</li> <li>Government agencies and facilities</li> <li>Non-profits (except certain healthcare and banking)</li> <li>Training providers</li> </ul>
	<p>Direct marijuana businesses (i.e., ones that grow, produce, process, distribute or sell marijuana or marijuana products), even if legal under state law, are not eligible for training funds.</p> <p>When eligibility is in question, the state director will consider on a case-by-case basis.</p>

## Employee:

- All permanent, full-time employees are eligible regardless of job title or company size.
- **Employee social security numbers (SSNs)** are required but will not be uploaded to or stored on the WEDnetPA server.

Using a process called “hashing,” a mathematical function is applied to an SSN to create a unique, new identifier that will be used to track an employee’s training cap. Each time the hashing algorithm is applied to an SSN, it produces the same output (unique identifier).

Today, everyone confidently processes online credit card purchases, banking and other important transactions requiring sensitive data. WEDnetPA now uses the same proven technique used by financial institutions to safely process your transactions with us. It is virtually impossible to reconstruct the input data (SSN) from the UID.

The hashing process takes place in the browser of your company’s computer each time you submit training for reimbursement. You will see that SSNs are changed to the new identifier before the data is uploaded to WEDnetPA. Only the new identifier and last four digits of the SSN are uploaded to and stored on the WEDnetPA server.

This new approach will enable WEDnetPA to accurately track funding caps while eliminating the possibility of a security breach that could compromise sensitive data.

## Training:

- At least one or more training events must start or be scheduled by December 31, 2023 or within 30 days of the contract approval date (whichever comes later) or grant funds will be at risk of forfeiture at the discretion of the WEDnetPA partner.
- The training provider invoice or other acceptable documentation must include training event name and training cost. If the documentation is dated outside the fiscal year, it must also include the training dates or other acceptable support documentation. Support documentation may include, but is not limited to, certificates of completion, web site documentation or email clarification from training provider.
- Training CDs, DVDs and videos are generally considered eligible but cannot exceed \$500 per training topic without advanced approval by the state director.
- Certification training is eligible and encouraged. The cost of a certification test is eligible only if it accompanies certification training.
- An employee cannot be reimbursed for the same training more than once in a program year.
- Company orientation and on-the-job training are not eligible for reimbursement.

- Regardless of the company, any training that directly supports or is specifically related to the use, growth, distribution, or enhancement of marijuana is not eligible.

## Examples of Eligible Training Topics (not all inclusive):

- **Business Operations:**
  - Customer Service
  - Human Resources
  - Leadership
  - Math
  - Problem Solving
- **Computer Operations:**
  - Database Software
  - Electronic Medical Records
  - Presentation Software
  - Spreadsheets
  - Word Processing
- **Machine Operations and Maintenance:**
  - Hydraulics
  - Industrial Electricity
  - Motor Controls
  - Pneumatics
- **Manufacturing Fundamentals:**
  - Basic and Industrial Electricity
  - Blueprint and Schematic Reading
  - Geometric Dimensioning and Tolerancing
  - Machine Setup
  - Soldering
  - Tooling and Grinding
  - Welding
- **Manufacturing Technology:**
  - 3D Printing
  - CAD, CAM, CNC, PLC
  - Electronics
  - Rapid Prototyping
  - Robotics
- **Product and Process Control:**
  - Continuous Improvement
  - Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
  - Internal Auditor
  - ISO 9000+
  - Kaizen
  - Lean Enterprise
  - Lean Manufacturing
  - Non-destructive Testing (NDT)
  - Project Management
  - Quality Assurance
  - Root Cause Analysis
- **Product and Process Control cont'd:**
  - Six Sigma
  - Statistics
  - Total Productive Maintenance (TPM)
  - Total Quality Management (TQM)
- **Software Implementation:**
  - Coding/Programming
  - E-Commerce
  - Information Security
  - Network Administration
  - SCRUM
  - Software Engineering
  - Website Design and Development
- **Health and Science Applications:**
  - Biology
  - Chemistry
  - Infection Control
  - Nursing
  - Phlebotomy
  - Physics
- **Workplace Behavior Skills:**
  - Communications
  - Diversity
  - Drug and Alcohol Abuse
  - Sexual Harassment
  - Teamwork
- **Workplace Health and Safety:**
  - Active Shooter
  - ARC Flash
  - Blood-borne Pathogens
  - Confined Space
  - Driver Safety
  - Electrical Safety
  - Fall Protection
  - Fire Safety
  - First Aid, CPR, AED
  - Food Safety
  - Forklift Safety
  - Hazardous Materials Handling
  - Lockout/Tagout (LOTO)
  - OSHA
  - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
  - Workplace Violence



# Application Process

## Eligibility:

If the eligibility of your company, employees or training is uncertain, consult with your WEDnetPA partner before starting an application or training.

## Application Process:

To apply for grant funds, a company employee must complete the following items online: inquiry, application, MOA and training plan.

To submit an initial inquiry:

- For first-time applicants: go to [wednetpa.com/Apply/inquiry.html](http://wednetpa.com/Apply/inquiry.html).
- For returning applicants: log in at [isaac.wednetpa.com](http://isaac.wednetpa.com) with your username and password.

An email notice will be sent when the inquiry has been accepted by the WEDnetPA partner.

After receiving this email, complete the application process:

- Step #1: Electronically execute or upload a signed MOA.
- Step #2: Complete a training plan.
- Step #3: Review application information and submit to WEDnetPA partner.
- Step #4: WEDnetPA partner reviews and approves.
- Step #5: State Office reviews and awards contract.

## Application Timeline:

Companies may apply beginning June 1, 2023. Applications are competitive and will be reviewed in the order they are received by the state office. Consideration will be given to quality of jobs, quality of training, industry partnership participation, geographic impact and company size. Application approval is also dependent upon passage of the state budget and program funding.

## Company Signing Authority:

Anyone who executes documents on behalf of the company must be an employee of the company and have signing authority. This includes the MOA, invoice submissions and other documents that are used in the administration of the program. Anyone who is not an employee of the company will not be considered to have signing authority.

## Company Description:

The company description should be at least 1-2 sentences and include what products/services offered and what industries are served by the company.

**Company Size:**

Company size is defined as the total number of PA employees by FEIN, not by location.

Small companies: 1-100 total PA employees

Medium companies: 101-250 total PA employees

Large companies: 251-500 total PA employees

Extra Large companies: more than 500 total PA employees

**North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code:**

Companies are required to provide their 6-digit 2022 NAICS code. If you do not know your company's NAICS code, it can be found online at <https://www.census.gov/naics/>.

**Training Plan:**

A training plan is required. Each training topic requires a 1-2 sentence course description that includes the learning objectives. A sufficient description is needed to determine eligibility.

A training event that is marked as "reviewed" in ISAAC does not mean that it has been approved for reimbursement. It means only that, based on the limited information provided on the training plan, the training appears to be eligible, assuming it meets all requirements of the program, including reasonable cost.

Multiple invoices can be submitted under one training event, as long as the event name, topics covered and provider type are the same.

# Invoicing

## Timing:

Companies must submit invoicing documentation for eligible training within 45 days of the completion of each training event or by the WEDnetPA partner's designated year-end invoicing deadline, whichever comes first. The last day the state office will approve invoices for payment will be July 15, 2024. The WEDnetPA partner may establish an earlier company deadline in order to meet this state office deadline.

## Limits:

If the cost of training exceeds the employee or company cap, the company will be responsible for the balance of the cost. The company will be responsible for the cost of any training that is determined to be ineligible.

## Reasonable Cost:

Companies are expected to incur reasonable and customary costs for training. Companies must be willing to pay the same cost for the training if it were not reimbursed through WEDnetPA.

Costs determined to be unreasonable, by and at the sole discretion of the state director, will not be reimbursed and will be the responsibility of the company. The examples below help to illustrate the intent of "reasonable cost," but are not intended to cover every possible scenario:

- When a company agrees to training arrangements, **it is the company's responsibility to be sure the cost is reasonable compared to local market rates** for comparable training. (Example: if the market rate for an 8-hour Excel course is \$250, then a cost of \$500 would be unreasonable.)
- When a company enters into an agreement with a training provider to purchase training at a fixed cost, **it is the company's responsibility to be certain that enough employees attend so the average cost per employee is reasonable.** (Example: If a two-day Teamwork course costs \$10,000 and twenty employees are expected to attend, the average cost is \$500 per employee – this seems reasonable. However, if only five employees attend, the average cost becomes \$2,000 per employee and is no longer reasonable.)
- When a company has a large number of employees attending the same training, **it is the company's responsibility to be sure the total cost is reasonable and, if necessary, negotiate a discounted rate.** (Example: if five employees attend a four-hour Lean Manufacturing course at a cost of \$200 each, the total cost of \$1,000 seems reasonable. However, if 40 employees attend the same four-hour course, the total cost is \$8,000 and is no longer reasonable.)

- Nationally recognized trainers can demand high fees. When a company brings in such a trainer, **it is the company's responsibility to ensure the cost is reasonable.** (Example: a company could engage a local safety trainer for a one-day session at \$3,000 to \$5,000 but, instead, decides on a nationally recognized trainer at a cost of \$20,000. This cost is not reasonable.)

#### **Partner-Provided and Third-Party Training:**

Invoicing documentation must include at least one of the following (in .pdf, .doc, .tif or .jpg format), and must include the specific training event name and training cost:

- training provider invoice
- paid registration confirmation/receipt
- unpaid registration with either proof of payment (copy of cancelled check or credit card receipt/statement) or certificate of completion

The training event name on the training plan must closely match what appears on the vendor invoice.

If a vendor invoice does not specify what training was provided or is not dated, it will not be accepted. Handwriting the training event name or date on the vendor's invoice will not be accepted.

If the vendor's invoice is in a foreign currency, bank documentation showing the foreign currency amount, conversion date, exchange rate of conversion and USD equivalent will also be required to be submitted with the vendor's invoice. Handwritten documentation will not be accepted.

In cases where an employee has paid for training out of pocket and the company is seeking reimbursement for this training, the company must provide proof that it has already reimbursed the employee for the training.

When calculating the cost per person for any training, the "number of employees receiving training" must be the total number of employees trained, regardless of eligibility for WEDnetPA. For example, if a training event costs \$10,000 for 100 employees, but only 25 of the employees are WEDnetPA eligible, the cost per person is \$100 (\$10,000/100 total employees trained), not \$400 (\$10,000/25 eligible employees).

#### **Library Training:**

Library training is defined as unlimited access to a catalog of training topics for a specific period of time and at a fixed price. To be eligible, a trainee must complete three courses within the library. For example, a Professional Development Library may include hundreds of courses. A trainee must complete at least three 30-minute courses to receive reimbursement for the library cost. "Complete" is defined as the review of all chapters within a course and the completion of the course assessments.

The company will be responsible for the full cost of library training for each eligible employee that does not complete a minimum of three courses. Training costs are typically incurred when an employee receives a login and password from the training provider.

In addition to invoice documentation, additional documentation is required from the training provider for the three courses taken by each employee. This information must include the employee's name, course name, course status (finished/completed), the amount of time required to complete each course and the start and end dates of the training.

When calculating the cost per person for a library, divide the total cost by the number of user licenses purchased. For example, if a library subscription costs \$4,500 for 100 user licenses, the cost per license is \$45. This represents the maximum potential reimbursement per trainee, regardless of how many employees complete the training. If the library purchase does not specify the number of licenses, but provides unlimited access to all employees, then the total cost must be divided by the total number of employees.

If the company is purchasing library training as a monthly subscription, each month is considered a separate library and employees must complete the three-course minimum for each month.

#### **In-House Training:**

The in-house training option is intended for limited use when third-party training is not available or when it is cost prohibitive. Unless an exception request is approved by the state director in advance:

- Group training is limited to a maximum of 40 hours per event.
- Single-employee training (i.e., one at a time) is limited to a maximum of 8 hours per event.
- Training that is structured in a way to circumvent the above limits, or when the cost is deemed excessive, can be denied at the discretion of the state director.
- Companies with more than 500 employees are not eligible for in-house training.

All in-house instructors must be employees of the company and properly qualified through education or experience. The company also agrees to maintain records of trainee attendance.

The instructor's hourly rate must be accurate and reasonable. A company may be required to provide payroll records (the employee's most recent redacted W-2, for example) to verify an instructor's hourly rate. Failure to provide requested payroll records will result in the invoice being rejected.

The instructor's rate per hour "description of cost(s)" field in ISAAC must include the name and job title of the instructor. If more than one instructor conducted the training, list each instructor's name, job title and hourly rate. The rate per hour field should reflect the average rate of all in-house instructors, not their combined hourly rate.

**Eligible costs for in-house training include, but are not limited to:**

- Hourly rate of the instructor for actual hours in training (cannot include prep time)
- Instructor benefits
- Copying
- Books/consumable supplies
- Off-site room rental

**Ineligible costs for all training include, but are not limited to:**

- Trainee wages during training period
- Travel expenses
- Food and beverage
- Preparation and development costs
- Sales tax
- Shipping and handling charges
- Membership fees
- Standalone test/exam fees (to be eligible, exams must accompany training)
- In-house online training
- Room rental for on-site training
- Materials and tools used on the job (calculators, calipers, hard hats, etc.)
- Reference materials and manuals
- Props or games that can be used after the training
- Training materials not consumed in the training event
- Hardware and software
- Fixed assets
- All other costs not associated with actual training

## Other Important Information

### **Next Generation Industry Partnerships:**

A Next Generation Industry Partnership (Next Gen IP) is a partnership of businesses, from the same industry and in a shared labor market region, that work with economic development, education, workforce development, and other public and community partners to address the overall competitiveness needs of the targeted industry. By addressing these business-driven priorities, Next Gen IPs not only support the overall competitiveness of an industry and regional economy, but also benefit workers, students, and the broader community.

Next Gen IPs help businesses with the following priorities:

- Identifying their workforce, education & training, and economic development needs
- Coordinating regional support teams
- Identifying public and community resources
- Identifying opportunities for collaboration

Ask your WEDnetPA partner for more information about how you can participate or visit this link for more information: ([www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Pages/Industry-Partnerships.aspx#](http://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Pages/Industry-Partnerships.aspx#)).

As part of the application process, companies will be asked if they participate in an industry or other workforce development partnership. If so, they will be asked to provide the name of the partnership. This will help to coordinate activities and to ensure we are providing the best possible service.

### **Data Security and Privacy Policies:**

WEDnetPA takes significant steps to secure and protect the information provided by companies. The information collected is used solely for purposes related to the administration of the program. We do not share information outside the WEDnetPA partnership, its funding source and other state departments, except as required by law. Our data security ([wednetpa.com/policies/data.html](http://wednetpa.com/policies/data.html)) and privacy ([wednetpa.com/policies/privacy.html](http://wednetpa.com/policies/privacy.html)) policies are available online.

### **Information Sharing, Administration & Analysis Center (ISAAC):**

ISAAC is WEDnetPA's online management system and requires the use of an Internet standards-compliant browser. Any of the following browsers are compatible and recommended: Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Safari and Opera.

Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE) is not a "standards-compliant" browser and is no longer supported. IE is not secure and some features in ISAAC will not work in IE, which will prevent users from being able to complete an application and/or invoice.

It is highly recommended that the ability to use one of the recommended browsers listed above be confirmed before submitting an application. WEDnetPA will not be responsible for IE issues that inhibit or prevent a company from submitting documentation and/or receiving reimbursement.

### **ISAAC Access Levels:**

It is important to remember that only employees of the company can be given password-protected access to ISAAC. Consultants, training providers and other non-employee entities are not permitted to access ISAAC on behalf of a company. User names and passwords should not be shared with anyone.

In User Management, ISAAC access levels are defined as follows:

- Manager-level access provides the ability to change anyone else's access level, privileges or preferences at their company *except for their own*. For example, a primary point of contact (POC) may have been given manager-level access, but only the payroll manager at their company (perhaps an ISAAC staff-level user) has the SSN privilege. The POC cannot self-assign SSN access against their company policy but must get another ISAAC manager at their company to do so -- or in extenuating circumstances, their WEDnetPA partner.
- Staff-level users have the ability to modify their own preferences, but not their privileges or access level. Those can only be changed by a manager-level user or WEDnetPA partner.
- Associate-level access is "read-only" for the purpose of reviewing reports and other information without being able to change or submit anything.

The designation of primary or executive POC does not convey any special access or privileges, but merely denotes to whom communications should be directed.

### **Terms and Conditions:**

- Grant awards are contingent upon the availability of funding and are subject to all terms and conditions of the program's contract with DCED, which is available upon request.
- Training can be provided by any third-party provider, the WEDnetPA partner or the company's qualified in-house staff.
- Companies will always select its training provider and is never required to use a WEDnetPA partner for training.
- WEDnetPA does not endorse any third-party providers.
- WEDnetPA funds cannot be used to reimburse for training that has been or will be paid for (in whole or in part) by another local, state, or federal funding source.
- From time to time, the training of some providers may be ineligible through WEDnetPA. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to confirm trainer eligibility through the WEDnetPA partner or the program's website. Should a training provider be identified as ineligible, reimbursement will be denied.
- This program is funded with public tax dollars and certain information about the company's participation may be made available to the public.



- Companies agree to participate in surveys. Feedback is critical to the success of the program.
- To help ensure continued funding, companies are encouraged to contact state legislators to share information about the WEDnetPA program and its benefits. Funds are provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development.
- Companies agree to provide, upon request, any information related to its contract(s) under this program (including but not limited to employee home addresses). Information must be provided for a period up to six years (current fiscal year plus the previous five fiscal years) when requested by the WEDnetPA partner, the WEDnetPA state office, Pennsylvania College of Technology, the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development, the Office of the State Inspector General, Comptroller or their designated representatives.

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