

Ottawa County Michigan Works! Agency Waiver Request: Incumbent Worker for Program Year 2010

Ottawa County Michigan Works! Agency (OCMWA) is requesting a waiver of WIA statutory and regulatory requirements to allow up to 20% of Dislocated Worker allocations to be for an Incumbent Worker Program. OCMWA will utilize these funds following the state's incumbent worker program policy, Bureau of Workforce Transformation Policy Issuance 10-07, issued July 16, 2010 and following OCMWA's Incumbent Worker Program plan. This waiver will give the MWA the flexibility to meet the demands of employers for a skilled workforce, and the needs to incumbent workers.

Statutory Requirements to be Waived

Ottawa County Michigan Works! Agency is seeking a waiver of restrictions on the use of our dislocated worker formula allocations in order to operate an incumbent worker program. The waiver would allow us to use up to 20% of the funds allocated under Sections 128(b) of the WIA, to operate an incumbent worker program as described under Section 134(a)(3)(A)(iv)(I) and consistent with 20 CFR Sections 652 and 660-671 and Training and Employment Guidance Letter 30-09.

This waiver also strengthens the state's workforce investment system and aligns with the state's strategic plan goals by addressing the need for a more skilled workforce and facilitating business retention within Michigan.

State or Local Statutory Barriers

There are no existing state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementation of this waiver request.

Outcomes to be Achieved by obtaining the Waiver

Obtaining this waiver will enhance training to be offered to companies in our region – Ottawa, Kent, Allegan and Muskegon counties. It will provide flexibility to enable Ottawa County Michigan Works to offer training to meet the demands of these employers; to identify the training needs of incumbent workers, and to arrange the training to help the incumbent workers upgrade their skills and prevent layoffs. We want to meet the business needs of these employers to keep them within our region and provide them with a competitive workforce in order to avert layoffs.

The goals of this waiver are to:

1. Increase employer exposure to services offered by Ottawa County Michigan Works! and the overall workforce development system;
2. Improve the economic and business climate of the West Michigan region by expanding the Ottawa County Michigan Works Incumbent Worker Training program to the contiguous counties of Kent, Allegan, and Muskegon based on employer demand;
3. Upgrade incumbent workers' skills and/or job classifications in order to prevent layoff; and
4. Increase incumbent worker wages.

Description of Monitoring Activities

The County of Ottawa contracts with a CPA firm, to conduct fiscal and programmatic monitoring of our administrative office as well as all of our service providers. This incumbent worker program will be incorporated into the monitoring schedule and reviewed at least once during the year.

Ottawa County Michigan Works! has both a fiscal supervisor and program supervisor who conduct a desk reviews of all programs and monitors data for accuracy and completeness. The fiscal supervisor for Ottawa County Michigan Works monitors expenditures to ensure compliance with state and federal fiscal guidelines.

The Business Services Unit, Michigan Works Administrative staff, in consultation with local and state economic development partners, and member of OCMWAs Workforce Development Board reviews all Incumbent Worker applications and awards funds. The Business Services Unit will provide for the outreach and development of long lasting professional relationships with the business community. This will be accomplished through business visits, obtaining business data, assisting in business attraction, retention and expansion projects that meet the needs of business. The concept is to leverage all available partner assets to keep business competitive in a global market in order to save as well as create jobs.

Description of Public Review Process

This waiver request will be made available for download on our website www.miottawa.org/michiganworks for a period of 30 days in order to allow for public review and comment. Two methods will be available for public comment:

Email to Program Supervisor, or
Mail to the Ottawa County Michigan Works office.

Any public comments that express disagreement with this waiver request will be forwarded to the Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth.