

ADDITIONAL SPECIAL PROVISION 1 (ASP 1) HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION SKILLS TRAINING (HCST) PROGRAM EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENTS AND APPRENTICESHIPS

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Section 5204(e) – Surface Transportation Workforce Development Training and Education, provides for 100 percent Federal funding if the core program funds are used for training, education, or workforce development purposes, including “pipeline” activities. The core programs include: Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program, Highway Bridge Program (HBP), Interstate Maintenance (IM), National Highway System (NHS), and Surface Transportation Program (STP). These workforce development activities cover surface transportation workers, including OJT/SS programs for women and minorities as authorized in 23 U.S.C. §140(b).

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation OJT program was originally established in 1995. Highway Construction Skills Training (HCST) was previously known as Transportation Alliance for New Solutions (TrANS) and underwent a name change in early 2023. HCST is an industry driven plan of services to address the outreach, preparation, placement and retention of women, minorities, and disadvantaged persons as laborers and apprentices in the highway skilled trades. Candidate preparation and contractor coordination services (OJT Supportive Services) are provided by contracted community-based organizations.

I. BASIC CONCEPTS

Training reimbursements to employing contractors for new placements, rehires or advancement to apprenticeship of Highway Construction Skills Training (HCST) graduates and employing eligible trainees in qualifying trades will be made as follows:

- 1) **On-the-Job Training, Item ASP.1T0G, ASP 1 HCST Graduate.** At the rate of \$5.00 per hour on Federal-aid projects when HCST graduates are initially hired, or seasonally rehired, as unskilled laborers or equivalent.

Eligibility and Duration: To the employing contractor, for up to 2,000 hours or two years, whichever comes first from the point of initial hire as a HCST placement.

Contract Goal: To maintain the intent of the Equal Employment Opportunity program, it is a goal that _____ HCST Graduate(s) be utilized for _____ hours on this contract.

- 2) **On-the-Job Training, Item ASP.1T0A, ASP 1 Apprentice.** At the rate of \$5.00 per hour on Federal-aid projects at the point when an employee who came out of the HCST Program is subsequently entered into an apprenticeship contract in a qualifying trade.

Eligibility and Duration: To the employing contractor, for the length of time that the HCST graduate is in apprenticeship status.

Contract Goal: To maintain the intent of the Equal Employment Opportunity program, it is a goal that _____ HCST Apprentice(s) be utilized for _____ hours on this contract.

- 3) The maximum duration of reimbursement is two years as a HCST graduate plus time in apprentice status.
- 4) If a HCST program is not available in the contractor's area and another training program is utilized, payment of On-the-Job Training hours may be approved by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) if the training program meets the established acceptance criteria. Only On-the-Job Training Hours accumulated after WisDOT approval will be reimbursed as specified

under Items ASP.1T0G and ASP.1T0A. For more information, contact the Department of Transportation Labor Development Specialist at the phone number listed below.

- 5) WisDOT reserves the right to deny payments under items ASP.1T0G and ASP.1T0A if the contractor either fails to provide training or there is evidence of a lack of good faith in meeting the requirements of this training special provision.

II. RATIONALE AND SPECIAL NOTE

The \$5.00 per hour now being paid for HCST placements is intended to cover the duration of two years to allow for reaching entry-level laborer status. An additional incentive, the \$5.00 rate, would promote movement into the underutilized skilled trades' apprenticeships and applies until the individual completes their apprenticeship. These incentives benefit HCST candidates by giving them a better opportunity to enter a skilled trade; benefits contractors who will be assisted in meeting their EEO profiles and goals; and benefits the public who will see the program reinforce larger public-private employment reform in Wisconsin. The pool of HCST graduates was created for the purpose of addressing underutilization in the skilled trades, an objective that is further reinforced by a parallel retention pilot program, known as the Companywide Reporting. Whether or not reimbursement is involved, the WisDOT reassures contractors who are in the Companywide Program that HCST placements still contribute toward fulfilling the new hire goal of 50% women and minorities. Based on data administered by United States Department of Labor (US DOL), the highway skilled trades remain underutilized for women statewide (less than 6.9%); and for minorities in all counties (% varies by county).

NOTE: Unless using other advancement strategies, contractors are encouraged to use some or all of this monetary incentive to offset the cut in hourly wages an individual may incur when entering an apprenticeship if the full general laborer hourly rate has been previously paid. No special accounting measures are required.

III. IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of ASP 1 is intended to cover only the amount of time it takes for underutilization to be resolved across the trades. This will be measured annually at the county and/or state levels using data administered by WisDWD in relation to goals set by the USDOL page 2 Dated January 2012 OFCCP. With appropriate state and federal approvals, we may also do some measurement at the company level. It is the contractor's responsibility to note on their Certified Payrolls if their employee is a HCST graduate or a HCST apprentice. The compliance specialists utilize the information on the Certified Payrolls to track the hours accumulated by HCST Graduates and HCST apprentices on WisDOT contracts. Payment under this ASP 1 is made based on the hours recorded off of the Certified Payrolls. Tracking may eventually include improved linkages with the WisDWD apprentice database, information from company and committee level sources. HCST is nondiscriminatory by regulation and is a tool for optional use by contractors to address the underutilization of women and minorities as laborers and apprentices in our industry's skilled trades.

IV. HCST TRAINING

As part of the contractor's equal employment opportunity affirmative action program, training shall be provided to employees enrolled in apprenticeship and on-the-job training programs as follows: The contractor shall provide on-the-job training aimed at developing full journey workers in the type of trade or job classifications involved. In the event the contractor subcontracts a portion of the contract work, the contractor shall determine how many, if any, of the trainees are to be trained by the subcontractor provided, however, that the contractor shall retain the primary responsibility for meeting the training requirements imposed by this special provision. The contractor shall also ensure that this training special provision is made applicable to such subcontract. Training and upgrading of minorities and women toward journey workers status is a primary objective of this training special provision. Accordingly, the contractor shall make every effort to enroll minority trainees and women (e.g., by conducting systematic and direct recruitment through public and private sources likely to yield minority trainees and women trainees); to the extent such persons are available within a reasonable area of recruitment. The contractor will be given an opportunity and will be responsible for demonstrating the steps that they have taken in pursuance thereof, prior to determination as to whether the contractor is in compliance with this training

special provision. This training commitment is not intended, and shall not be used, to discriminate against any applicant for training, whether a member of a minority group or not. No employee shall be employed as a trainee in any classification in which they have successfully completed a training course leading to journey workers status or in which they have been employed as a journey worker. The contractor should satisfy this requirement by including appropriate questions in the employee application or by other suitable means. Regardless of the method used, the contractor's records should document the findings in each case.

V. APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) policy is to require full use of all available training and skill improvement opportunities to assure increased participation of minority groups, disadvantaged persons, and women in all phases of the highway construction industry. The FHWA On-the-Job Training (OJT) Program requires the State transportation agencies (STAs) to establish apprenticeships and training programs targeted to move women, minorities, and disadvantaged individuals into journey-level positions to ensure that a competent workforce is available to meet highway construction hiring needs, and to address the historical underrepresentation of members of these groups in highway construction skilled crafts.

The OJT Supportive Services (OJT/SS) Program was established in Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 230 to supplement the OJT program and support STA training programs by providing services to highway construction contractors and assistance to highway construction apprentices and trainees. The primary objectives of OJT/SS are:

- (1) To increase the overall effectiveness of the State highway agencies' approved training programs.
- (2) To seek other ways to increase the training opportunities for women, minorities, and disadvantaged individuals.

The STAs are responsible for establishing procedures, subject to the availability of Surface Transportation and Bridge Funds under 23 U.S.C. §140(b) (Nondiscrimination), for the provision of supportive services with respect to training programs approved under 23 CFR, Part 230(a) (Equal Employment Opportunity on Federal and Federal-aid Construction Contracts – including Supportive Services).

The contractor and subcontractor shall maintain records to demonstrate compliance with these apprenticeship requirements. Reasonable exemptions and modifications to and from any or all of these requirements will be determined by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation-Office of Business Opportunity & Equity Compliance (OBOEC). A request for an exemption or modification, with justification, shall be made in writing, addressed to WisDOT OBOEC - Labor Development, 141 NW Barstow Street, Suite 411, PO Box 798, Waukesha, WI 53187.

VI. PROGRAM CONTACTS

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