

Ohio Means Jobs: Project HIRE Initiative

Goal: The goal of Project Hometown Investment in Regional Economies (HIRE) is to facilitate connections between jobseekers and employers by holding events around the state that bring companies in targeted regional industries and job seekers with incentives for hiring and training together. Project HIRE is a collaboration between the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD), the Ohio Board of Regents (OBOR), and the local Workforce Investment Areas.

By packaging job seekers' existing skills with a tax credit and additional training, these individuals will become more attractive to prospective employers, beyond what the job seekers could have accomplished on his or her own. The job training will be funded through the use of Ohio Learning Accounts (OLA), which will provide dislocated workers short-term training resulting in an industry-recognized, portable credential to expand employment opportunities. The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a federal credit administered by the state that employers can take for hiring workers from the following disadvantaged groups: unemployed veterans, disconnected youth in need of skills, member of a family receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), long term family or food assistance recipient, person living in a federally designated empowerment zone, summer youth program employee, vocational rehabilitation referral, ex-felon, and supplemental security income (SSI) recipient

Total Funds: The initiative will be funded with **\$8 million** from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Statewide Workforce funds in Fiscal Year 2010.

Ohio Learning Accounts: Up to \$6,000 for training per individual

Work Opportunity Tax Credit: Up to \$9,000 per qualifying individual hired

Target Population: The program targets individuals who have lost their primary source of income

Project Activities: Ohio Department of Development business services representatives will identify targeted industry employers interested in participating in Project HIRE. These employers will be asked to provide information about the occupations for which Project HIRE participants would be appropriate. This information will be shared with ODJFS. Using the job skill and occupational information that ODJFS already maintains, ODJFS and local One Stops will identify job seekers with skills and experience that are directly or indirectly related to the occupations for which the employers have expressed interest. Job seekers that will bring federal tax credits to employers who hire them will also be identified.

Program Start Date: August, 2009