



On-the-Job Training Grant Program Guidelines

Program Start: **September 1, 2025**
Program End Date: **December 31, 2026**
Or until funding is depleted

***Updated: July 1, 2026**

Population Served: **Adult, Business**

Agency: **Dept. of Labor**

Source of Funding: **State**

Overview

To support small and medium-sized businesses with On-the-Job Training, wage subsidy, skills upgrading, and skills retraining. When a company invests in its employees through training that allows them to elevate their skillset, it provides the employer with resources to elevate their performance in their industry. On-The-Job Training grants can assist in the acceleration of promotable employees by alleviating some of the costs associated with retaining talent and attracting new talent.

Reimbursement

This is a **reimbursement grant**. With an On-the-Job Training application and approved training plan, a business can be **reimbursed** for up to 50% of training costs and 50% of wages. Business is required to pay for training and wages upfront.

Grant Parameters & Guidelines

- ✓ Business must be located in one of the 8 WNY Counties:
 - Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, or Wyoming County
- ✓ Business can be for-profit or not-for-profit
- ✓ Business must have at least 2 or more employees
- ✓ Business must have been in business for more than 1 year
- ✓ Employees must be at least 18 years old
- ✓ Employees must work full-time (32 hours or more per week)
- ✓ Employees must be employees of the business and paid by the business
 - 1099 employees are NOT eligible
- ✓ Employees must be mid-tier level employees or must make more than \$18 per hour
 - Payroll information and proof of payment of wages must be provided
- ✓ Employees must meet Federal and State minimum wage standards¹
- ✓ Employees must earn less than a pre-deduction wage of \$91,556/yr (\$44.02/hour)
- ✓ Employees can be newly hired employees or current employees
- ✓ Employees can take different training(s)
 - Employees must complete training no later than 12/31/2026

¹ Minimum Wage Requirements: [Federal](#); [New York State](#)

- Reimbursement submissions must be received by 1/10/2027
- ✓ A training program plan must be approved by the Amherst Chamber before training begins
- ✓ Business must be able to pay for training up front
 - Business, upon approval, would be reimbursed up to 50% after training is completed
 - A reimbursement request form with receipts and report is required
- ✓ Business must pay employees during the training
- ✓ Business must continue to provide employment upon completion of the training

Awards

- Awards range from \$500-\$10,000
- Business may submit and potentially be approved for up to two (2) training programs

Diversity & Inclusion Requirements (MWBE & SDVOB)

Commitment to Diverse Procurement

As an administrator of New York State Department of Labor grant funds, Amherst Chamber of Commerce is committed to promoting efficiency, economic progress, and equity through the inclusion of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOB) in all contractual and training opportunities.

Participation Goals

Applicants and procurement partners are strongly encouraged, and in some instances required, to utilize NYS-certified MWBE and SDVOB entities for training services, instructional materials, or other contractual obligations funded by this grant.

What is Required of Applicants?

1. **Solicitation:** You must demonstrate that certified MWBE and SDVOB firms were given a fair, meaningful opportunity to bid on any subcontracted training or contractual services.
2. **Good Faith Efforts:** If you are unable to secure an MWBE or SDVOB provider, you may need to document and submit evidence of your "Good Faith Efforts" (e.g., copies of outreach emails, bids received, and reasons for non-selection) to be considered for a waiver.

Directory Resources:

To locate certified New York State partners, please utilize the official directories:

- **NYS MWBE Directory:** ny.newnycontracts.com
- **NYS SDVOB Directory:** online.ogs.ny.gov/SDVOB/search

How To Apply

Submission Dates are rolling throughout September 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026

1. Verify your business is eligible by using the guidelines provided
2. Complete the **On-the-Job Grant Application**
 - Submit a thorough **Training Plan** that outlines:
 - The name(s) of employee(s) to be trained

- Position/title and pay structure
- Date of hire
- Detailed training program(s) for each employee
- 3. Confirm that the training program includes all eligible costs
 - See **Ineligible Training Costs** section
- 4. Submit application to grants@amherst.org
- 5. An Amherst Chamber team member will schedule a screening call to review your application, discuss eligibility, any additional needs plus review the training program submitted. There may be further materials requested to support the request.
- 6. A written email confirmation of approval or disapproval (or request for additional enhancements or information) will be sent within 2-4 weeks of submission

Additional Considerations for Training Plan:

- Detailed overview of the training to be offered for which the applicant is seeking assistance from this funding, including an estimate of the increased capacity to be created using the grant award.
- Applications must provide evidence that the training program effectively prepares participants for in-demand, high-quality employment opportunities with potential for career advancement. Applicants are required to articulate how their training leads to "good jobs," defined as skilled positions that offer at least a living wage, enabling individuals to support themselves within the contemporary economy. These positions should also facilitate career progression, enhance salary growth, ensure economic stability, and diminish reliance on additional support mechanisms.
- Training may be in person/classroom style or online training activities that occur outside of an employee's day-to-day work activities (i.e. a second or third shift employee who receives training during first shift).
- The related training plan provides career pathway opportunities for mid-skill workers in high demand, good jobs as demonstrated by industry standards.
- The approval of submitted Training Plans **prioritizes** underemployed, underrepresented, underserved populations, and/or incumbent workers or other marginalized populations.
- Applicant demonstrates sufficient planning to implement the proposed activity within the stated timeline as shown through the application process.
- Include a statement regarding the impact that the training program will have on the business.
- An onsite visit may be requested *prior to approval* and upon completion of training program.

Evaluation Criteria

- Preference will be given to training programs that are thorough and detailed that provide opportunities for the greater development of the workforce in Western New York
- Applications will be evaluated on the extent to which they fulfill the goals of the program and meet the listed guidelines

Eligible Training Costs

The following costs are samples of eligible reimbursements:

- ✓ External Instruction
 - The cost of an external training provider (tuition, salary, consulting fee)
- ✓ External Space
 - Space that is rented specifically for training
- ✓ Books, materials, curriculum development, and supplies*
 - Materials that are specifically related to training and approved
- ✓ 50% of the wages for the employee(s) for their time (per hour) attending the training

*All expenses must be reasonable, necessary, allowable, and conform to general guidelines

Ineligible Training Costs

The following is a non-exhaustive list of costs that are **ineligible** for reimbursement:

- Jobs that include religious or political activities are likewise ineligible
- Legally mandated training: Sexual Harassment Prevention training, etc.
- Internal Employee Trainer wages
- Internal instruction wages for owner-led trainings
- License costs or fees (to NYS or license agency)
- Fringe benefits
- Purchasing hardware, equipment such as laptops, machines, software, subscriptions
- Travel, food, or any other hospitality expenses for trainers or trainees
- Training in non-transferable skills such as a new hire orientation
- Training that has started before or after the contract term
- Capital improvements or renovation of facilities
- Uniforms
- Jobs that pay by commission are not eligible, as are seasonal, temporary, and part-time jobs because the intent of the program is for permanent, full-time, and self-sufficient employment
- Costs related to hiring a temporary worker to perform the duties of an employee being trained
- Any items or materials that produce goods or services for sale
- Alcoholic beverages as part of the materials and supplies cost

Reimbursement Process

- ✓ Once the training plan is implemented and completed, the business can submit a **Grant Reimbursement Request Form** to grants@amherst.org
 - All receipts of expenses and payroll must be included

Follow-Up Survey and Site Visits (An on-site visit may be required)

- A follow-up **Retention & Survey Form** will be sent out 6-months after the completion of the training program
- These surveys aim to determine if the trainee(s) remain employed with the company and whether any promotions have occurred
- Any data collected from these surveys serves to assess On-the-Job Training employee retention rates for grant reporting purposes

Eligible Training Examples

- Training for newly purchased technology or equipment
- Training to offer new services/products to reach new markets
- Training to give current staff new skills to advance in the organization
- Training to enhance obsolete skills and “upskill” for the business to stay competitive

Sample Training Scenarios

- A dock worker could be upskilled through a CDL training program
- A line cook could be upskilled through training to be a Sous Chef
- A nurse could pursue certifications to improve emergency care services
- Administrative staff for a business could pursue a marketing or digital marketing certificate
- Manufacturing firms could train staff on new equipment employees could be upskilled
- Upskilling through trade apprenticeships