

Next Step

Reentry Readiness Initiative Grant Notice of Grant Availability (NGA)

Bureau of Workforce Development Administration (BWDA)
Live Bidder's Conference August 14, 2025, at 11 AM via Teams

Pennsylvania

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Next Step

Reentry Readiness Initiative Grant

Notice of Grant Availability (NGA) Overview

Application Due Date: September 8, 2025 by 4:00 PM ET

Applications must be submitted to the BWDA Grants Services resource account RA-LI-BWDA-GS@pa.gov with the email subject:

“Next Step Reentry Readiness Initiative Grant Application –
Program Year 2025.”

An auto-reply email will be sent upon receipt of your application. This is confirmation the application was received and should be retained.

Questions Due Date: August 22, 2025 by 4:00 PM ET

Questions must be submitted by email to RA-LI-BWDA-GS@pa.gov with the email subject:

“Next Step Reentry Readiness Initiative Grant Questions”

In fairness to all applicants, questions received after this date will not be answered.

A complete list of Q&As will be posted at www.pa.gov/dli/grants.

- Continue the work of the First Step Act Initiative
- Prepare incarcerated individuals for reentry into their communities through activities such as:
 - Pre-release workforce training and job search activities
 - Reintegration success strategies
 - Coordination of post-release services and supports

Eligible Applicants Must:

- Have prior experience working within federal institutions
- Meet all facility-specific clearance and security requirements
- Successfully complete all background checks
- Obtain all necessary approvals

Additionally; Eligible Applicants Must:

- Be capable of connecting program participants to services to achieve the project goals
- Demonstrate the capacity to coordinate and engage multiple partners to successfully achieve the project goals
- Be able to coordinate, manage, and implement all aspects of the design of the project, including the project budget, and performance reporting
- Be capable of administering and monitoring the fiscal components and submitting the required reporting elements

- The Next Step Reentry Readiness Grant will have a 12-month period of performance
- The Grant will run from November 1, 2025 through October 31, 2026
- \$1,000,000 in state funded Reemployment funding has been made available to support this Grant Initiative

Eligible participants must be located in one of Pennsylvania's minimum or low risk federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) facilities at the time of enrollment and scheduled to soon be released to a residential reentry center (RRC)

Key Program Elements



- Continuation of the Employment Lab
- Curriculum Implementation and Reentry Skills Development
- Labor Market-Aligned Training
- Program Collaboration and Enhancement
- Coordination with PA CareerLink® and SkillUp™ PA
- Community Strengthening Through Reintegration
- Post-Release Technology Integration
- Post-Release Case Management
- Post-Release Referral-Based Support Network
- Post Release Job Coaching, Advocacy, and Follow-up

To enhance and build upon an existing employment-focused reentry program with an emphasis on securing stable, high-quality jobs.

Additional goals include:

- Reducing recidivism among program participants;
- Improving employment outcomes among program participants;
- Developing safety nets to help ensure no participants fall through the cracks;
- Increase the justice and workforce development systems partnership

Outcomes data collection, analysis, and reporting are key to the success of this project. Applicants are required to describe how they will improve current statistics such as:

- Number of/Percentage of individuals who:
 - Are not reincarcerated
 - Obtain self-sustaining/family-sustaining employment
 - Obtain employment with one or more of the following job quality components:
 - Worker voice and representation
 - Job security
 - Pay equity
 - Predictable, stable scheduling and paid leave
 - Retirement savings opportunities
 - Health benefits
 - Special/positive working conditions
 - Opportunities for advancement and skill building
- Other measurable performance outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of the project

- The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) is interested in identifying metrics that will allow us to work collaboratively with the awarded grantee to monitor and improve performance during the life of the grant.
- L&I has identified initial metrics of interest and looks forward to working collaboratively with the awarded grantee to add to or refine this list as needed.
- Applicants should propose other measurable performance outputs and outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of their project.

Grant Application Submission Instructions



Completed applications must include the following required documents and sent to RA-LI-BWDA-GS@pa.gov:

- A. Application Form
- B. Project Summary Cover Page
- C. Project Narrative
- D. Letters of Support
- E. Budget Form and Budget Justification (GFRP)
- F. EO 2021-06 Worker Protection Certification Form
- G. Local Board Notification Email
- H. Grant Action Plan

Initial Review Criteria

Prior to a comprehensive merit evaluation, L&I will perform an initial review to determine that:

1. The applicant is eligible;
2. The information required by the announcement has been received by the deadline;
3. The proposal is aligned with and responsive to the NGA; and
4. All mandatory components have been received

Only those applications that pass the initial review will be scored in the merit review.

Merit Review Criteria

Awards are based on a merit evaluation using scores achieved on the following:

- Project Design and Management Plan
- Performance Outcomes
- Stakeholder Engagement and Partnership
- Impact and Sustainability
- Other Evaluation Criteria
- Budget Form and Budget Justification (GFRP)

Applications must follow this format.

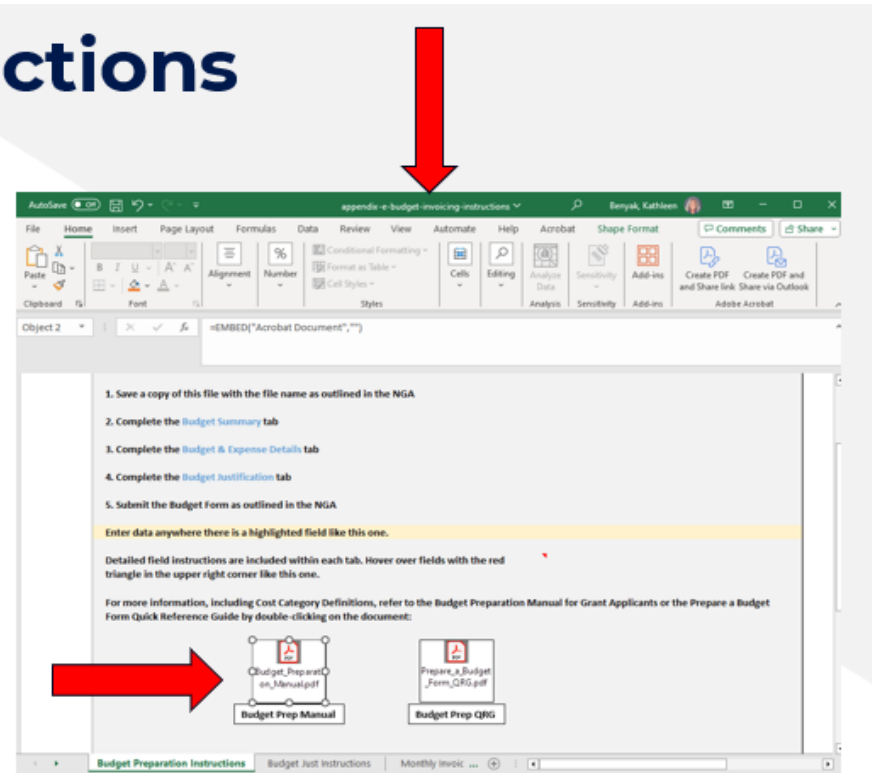
Following this format offers the best chance of ensuring applications will receive their highest possible score.

GFRP - Budget Form and Justification

- Appendix E
- Submit as an Excel Spreadsheet
- Complete for the entire period of performance

Appendix E - Instructions

Open Appendix E to view Cost Categories to assist with Cost Allocations during budget preparation.



For questions, please contact:

The Grants Services Resource Account: RA-LI-BWDA-GS@pa.gov

Questions must be submitted by email to RA-LI-BWDA-GS@pa.gov

with the email subject:

“Next Step Reentry Readiness Initiative Grant Questions”

no later than Friday, August 22, 2025 at 4:00 PM ET.

Questions received after this due date will not be answered

Thank you and Open Discussion



Thank you for your interest in the Nest Step Reentry Readiness Initiative Grant and for attending today's Bidders Conference.

Resources noted in the Q&As

[American Job Center](#)

[PA CareerLink® - Welcome to PA CareerLink](#)

[PA IDOL | Department of Labor and Industry | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)

[PA IDOL 2025.xlsx](#)