

# **CUMBERLAND SALEM WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**

## **Business Development Initiative Plan**

Funding Sources Provided by:  
NJDOLEWD Interdepartmental Funds & ARRA WIA Rapid Response

*Prepared: January 21, 2011*

**Purpose:** To develop and provide sustainable and ongoing Business Development activities in our local workforce area in partnership with local Economic Development, New Jersey Business Action Center and other partnering agencies.

Outlined below is a seven (7) point plan which describes how the Cumberland Salem WIB intends to continue and enhance successful business and economic development partnerships, enhance marketing and business outreach, provide staff development and package a preventative Layoff Aversion Guide.

1. **WIB Division Director** – The WIB Division Director will serve as the single point of contact for businesses. We will enhance relationships with local economic development, community colleges, vocational schools, NJBAC and other partnering agencies to retain and expand business and industry. In addition to coordinating and facilitating various business attraction meetings with the above-mentioned partners, we intend to identify training needs in various industry sectors through focus groups.

Through the efforts of the WIB, we plan to increase our visibility and create awareness of various services by promoting what we have to offer. Examples include (but not limited) a comprehensive Business Retention/Layoff Aversion Guide, Loan Programs, Federal and State Tax Incentive programs and a variety of special grant programs. This will consist of presenting at new and current speaking engagements at local chamber events, CEO Groups, Small Business Development events, etc.

Outcome: Enhanced strategies and improved relationships with strategic partners as well as building sustainable partnerships with the business community.

Estimated Cost: \$10,900.00

2. **Business Services/Job Developers** - We intend to boost employer outreach in an effort to increase awareness throughout the local area. A part of job development will be to explain and promote programs and services to owners, human resource managers, department/plant managers, and business executives and other organizations (including but not limited to OJT, tax, credits, human resources recruitment assistance services, etc.) In addition, the job developer(s) intends to secure job orders for use in placing One-Stop Career Center training completers and other qualified customers back into the workforce.

The job developer(s) will also be involved in the following as assigned by the WIB Division Director:

- Organizing and/or participating in special events such as job fairs, hiring events and related business services development group activities,
- Making presentations to business groups about One-Stop programs and services,
- Making direct on-site visits and attempting to re-engage businesses that have previously used the One-Stop for hiring purposes but who are no longer doing so,
- Researching, identifying, making direct on-site visits and opening new employer contacts avenues to identify and securing job orders,
- Sharing job openings developed with **ALL** appropriate One-Stop staff,
- Following-up to confirm that job orders have been entered, placed in OSOS in a accurate and timely manner,
- Receiving and reviewing reports of referrals made to job orders,
- Maintaining and presenting reports on work performed to the WIB and/or its committees.

Included in the Business Services/Job Developers employer outreach efforts are activities to identify potential businesses that may appear they are having difficulty “keeping their doors open” or may have a possible layoff. This will be accomplished through a variety of questions asked at the time of the visit. Should the employer fall in this category, the WIB Division Director will be notified to take further action including but not limited to following up with the employer to discuss Layoff Aversion Strategies.

*Outcome:* Engaging businesses that may be hiring and improving the local business community’s knowledge of and access to the One-Stop Career Center services thereby increasing the quantity and quality of job orders placed with the One-Stop.

*Estimated Cost:* \$27,250.00

3. **National Professional Certification Training:** We intend to offer Business Service certification training to staff. The training is intended to be highly interactive, with discussion, small group activities, presentations by participants, and case studies action planning. The training will include customization to the local system, which would include identifying local businesses to come and speak during the workshops about their message and how to better communicate and serve them.

Successful participants will obtain a nationally recognized Business and Employer Services Certification. The seven modules are:

1. Business Communications
2. Information Services

3. Development of Business Relations
4. Human Resource Services
5. Knowledge of Economic Development
6. Job or Career Development Skills
7. Customized Services

**NOTE:** Training will be coordinated with other local areas in the South Jersey region and will be made available to those areas should they choose to participate. Both state and local staff whose primary duties involve business services will be invited to participate. Training will also be coordinated with similar efforts being made by NJDOLWD so as to supplement and enhance (not duplicate) any State sponsored professional development activities that may occur.

Outcome: This training/certification will assist staff members on strategies to engaging business customers and to better develop a delivery strategy to customize services for businesses in our local area.

Estimated Cost: \$2,500 - \$5,000

4. **Layoff Aversion:** Currently, the state considers a layoff averted when a worker's job is saved with an existing employer that is at risk of downsizing or closing; or a worker who is at risk of dislocation transitions to a different job with same employer or a new job with a different employer and experiences a minimal spell of unemployment.

We believe business retention activities are most successful when implemented through broad partnerships at the appropriate level of operation. Our local Business and Industry Committee plans to improve its coordination of technical and financial assistance for communities and regions, firms and workers impacted by sudden severe economic distress.

Through the efforts of the Business Services/Job Development Team it is our intention to identify employers at risk of layoffs or closings and provide employers a variety of preventative measures and strategies to assist in averting layoffs, such as offering the availability of Customized Training Grants, On-the Job, SBDC Services, NJBAC, EDA, etc.

A two-part plan/guide outlining strategies for action in addressing layoff aversion needs will be developed. The plan/guide will:

- identify protocols to be followed and resources that can be accessed to avert business closing/downsizing, and
- identify protocols to be followed and the assistance and services that can be accessed in the event that business closing/downsizing do occur (i.e., create a methodology for and institutionalize a local analog to the state rapid response team).

References to the technical assistance, loan programs, grants and related layoff aversion assistance that is available will be included in our Marketing package and routinely presented to employers as the “team” conducts their business retention visits.

In order to facilitate this process we will be working with a consultant to enhance the current state Layoff Aversion Toolkit as well as our local marketing package to include the above-mentioned programs.

Outcome: Expanded services to employers and development of a comprehensive Layoff Aversion/Business Retention guide will be available to staff and businesses.

Estimated Cost: \$4,000 - \$6,000

5. **Marketing Upgrades:** Currently we offer a marketing packet to businesses which provides employers information on education and training to meet business and industry needs. Also included in the packet are “Successful Practices and Benefits to Employers”, “Federal and New Jersey State Tax Credits”, “Customized Training and On-the-Job Training Programs”, etc. The packet is somewhat outdated and we intend to make various upgrades of information to include but not limited to:

- Frequently Asked Questions/Businesses
- Layoff Aversion Strategies/Business Retention
- The Small Business Development Center and Calendar of Events
- Business Services events related to employers (tax credit seminars, OSHA Forklift certification, etc.)
- Customer Referral and Employer Feedback Forms
- Job Order Forms
- New Jersey Business Action Center Contact Information
- Economic Development Authority

We also intend to development of a Power Point presentation of Business Services/Business Retention strategies to be made available at area chamber meetings, Rotary meetings, Southern NJ Human Resource Associations, WIB web site, etc.

Outcome: A total comprehensive marketing package to businesses during site visits and employer forums/workshops.

Estimated Cost: \$4,000 - \$6,000

6. **Economic Development and Workforce Investment Board Meeting:** At a recent SETC meeting a presentation was made related to New Jersey Business Action Center's (NJBAC) work to enhance linkages between economic development and workforce development at the State level. The NJBAC representatives also expressed a desire to see similar linkages developed/enhanced at the local level.

We found the NJBAC presentation informative and believe that sharing this information will assist us in furthering our local system building efforts. We have made arrangements to combine both the Economic Development Board and the Cumberland Salem Board meeting and have NJBAC Executive Director, Linda Kellner, NJBAC Director Lauren Moore, NJBAC Domestic Business Advocate for Cumberland Salem Joe Constance along with NJDOLWD Chief of Staff Matthew McDermott visit our local area to make a similar presentation.

*Outcome:* Building a better system and enhancing partnership relations.

*Estimated Cost:* \$750 - \$1,000

7. **Economic Development and Workforce Development:** We intend to enhance our outreach and promoting efforts of Business Services, Economic Development, and NJBAC to businesses as a member/guest through the following employer associations:

- CEO Group
- Economic Development Breakfast
- Southern NJ Human Resource Association
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Food Processors Association
- Employer Legislative Committee
- Small Business Development Association

Using relationships developed with business/employer groups (such as those mentioned above), we plan to identify training needs in various industry sectors by conducting focus groups. Focus group activities will be done in partnership with Economic Development entities under the auspices of our local Business and Industry Committee,

*Outcome:* Increase visibility and awareness through presentations/guest speaker activities. We will attend a minimum of six (6) employer association events and outreach to over 300 employers. We will form a minimum of two (2) focus groups to address specific industry sector workforce and training needs.

*Estimated Cost:* \$4,000 - \$5,000