

## Industry Engagement

---



### Going PRO Talent Fund

*Fiscal Year 2023*

### Frequently Asked Questions

*These FAQs were developed as a supplement to the Going PRO Talent Fund (Talent Fund) Overview. Questions regarding the Talent Fund Fiscal Year 2023 may be directed to your local Michigan Works! Agency (MWA) contact found [here](#).*

**1. How can I apply?**

Eligible employers must contact their chosen Michigan Works! Agency (MWA) to discuss the requirements for the Going PRO Talent Fund and determine if they are eligible to apply. For a list of MWA contacts please visit the Talent Fund [website](#). If determined eligible to apply, the MWA will provide further instruction.

**2. Where do we submit the Talent Fund application?**

Applying for a Talent Fund award is done exclusively online through the Work-Based Learning Online Management System (WBLOMS). A link to the portal is displayed on the LEO-WD Talent Fund website at [Michigan.gov/TalentFund](https://Michigan.gov/TalentFund). Prior to accessing the online portal, it is recommended that employers contact their MWA to determine eligibility. To gain access to an online application, employers must first submit an authorization request. Once an authorization request is approved, an application may be started. The MWAs will review the application for consideration before submission to the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, Workforce Development (LEO-WD).

**3. Can a training provider submit an application?**

No, all applications must be submitted by a Michigan Works! Agency.

**4. How will I be notified about the status of my application?**

LEO-WD will notify the Michigan Works! Agencies (MWA) of all awards and a Going PRO Talent Fund Awards list will be posted to the Talent Fund website.

**5. May I submit a new application following an unsuccessful cycle 1 application?**

Employers may apply in cycle 2 if not awarded a cycle 1 independent application. Employers may have no more than one (1) independent award and one (1) Industry-led Collaborative (ILC) award, based on employer location.

**6. My award is ending January 31, 2024. Am I eligible to apply for FY24 cycle 1?**

In order to apply for FY24 cycle 1 training, awardees must complete training under a FY23 award by January 31, 2024. Awardees that complete training under a FY23 award by June 30, 2024 may apply for FY24 cycle 2 training.

## **7. Who is a potential eligible employer?**

LEO-WD shall ensure that the Talent Fund provides a collaborative statewide network of workforce and employee skill development partnerships that addresses the employee talent needs throughout the state. Therefore, to be eligible for a Going PRO Talent Fund award, an employer must have a need for skill enhancement, such as apprenticeship programs and advance-tech training programs for current employee(s) or new employee(s). Additionally, employers must have a physical presence in Michigan; be in compliance with all state tax obligations including, but not limited to, corporate, sales, use, withholding, personal income and unemployment insurance taxes; and be willing to participate under the program's eligibility parameters and guidelines.

An eligible employer may be from the private sector only (for profit or non-profit). Governmental public institutions or entities are not eligible to apply. Unions are not eligible to apply as employers, however, they may be eligible training providers. Most Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) are not governmental entities and are eligible for Talent Fund awards. More information on FQHCs may be found on the [Michigan Primary Care Association](#) website. Unions are not eligible to apply as employers, however, they may be eligible training providers. Additionally, MWAs (at their local discretion) may work with employers from the Marijuana industry using state funds via the Talent Fund, in accordance with the following parameters:

- Federal funds may not be used to work with companies in the marijuana industry involved with products with a Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) level of more than 0.3%. The federal prohibition does not include marijuana industry companies working with Hemp products containing THC levels of less than 0.3%.
- In contrast to the federal restriction, there is no prohibition on MWAs working with marijuana industry companies in general with state-funded Talent Fund awards.
- Proper safeguards must be in place when MWAs or employers are braiding federal funds with the Talent Fund to support the overall operation of the Talent Fund program or marijuana industry related activities. MWAs need to ensure there are appropriate methods in place to prevent federal funds from being charged for the relative benefit of any effort, such as staff time for the submission and management of awards, training, and supportive services associated with marijuana related activities.

## **8. Who is an eligible training provider?**

Michigan community colleges; private and public college and universities; private training providers; labor unions; registered United States Department of Labor (USDOL) joint apprenticeship training centers (JATC); vendors providing training in operation of equipment or systems for which they were the provider; employers (only if their resources or equipment are exclusive where training is not available elsewhere and supporting rationale is documented in the application); other training providers identified by and agreed upon by all

partners that can do accelerated “just-in-time” training; and any proprietary institution providing training must comply with Public Act (PA) 148 of 1943, Private Trade Schools, Business Schools and Institutes. Proprietary schools must be licensed in Michigan. See [question #7](#) for additional details.

**9. Must training be provided by a licensed training provider?**

Any proprietary institution providing training must comply with [Public Act \(PA\) 148 of 1943](#), Private Trade Schools, Business Schools, and Institutes, which includes:

MCL 395.101 Sec. 1. (1) A person shall not operate a proprietary school in this state without a temporary permit or license from the department under this act. The department shall prescribe the form of license and temporary permit.

MCL 395.101a (b) "Person" means an individual, partnership, corporation, limited liability company, association, organization, or other legal entity. (c) "Proprietary school" means a school that uses a certain plan or method to teach a trade, occupation, or vocation for a consideration, reward, or promise of any kind. Proprietary school includes, but is not limited to, a private business, trade, or home study school. Proprietary school does not include any of the following:

- A school or college possessing authority to grant degrees.
- A school licensed by law through another board or department of this state.
- A school maintained or a program conducted, without profit, by a person for that person's employees.

If it is determined locally that an institution identified to provide training under the Talent Fund requires licensing, the forms necessary to begin the licensing process can be obtained at the following website: [Michigan.gov/lara](http://Michigan.gov/lara).

**10. Who is an eligible trainee?**

Trainees may be any Michigan resident 18 years of age or older. Trainees who live out-of-state and work for a Michigan company that pays all applicable taxes to the State of Michigan are also eligible. Trainees, both current and new employee(s), must be permanent, full-time employees of the employer. Seasonal and/or part-time employees, current or future, are ineligible.

**11. Is there a preference for hiring United States Veterans, Active Military Reservists, Older Workers, Returning Citizens, High School Diploma/Equivalency trainee, and new this year Public Assistance Recipient, and Individual with Disability (IWD)?**

Yes. An extra incentive may be reimbursed to an employer for each employee who qualifies under one of the categories, and who has been trained and retained by the employer. The additional incentive must be used to offset additional training costs. The maximum amount per trainee that an employer may receive as incentive funding is \$500 for each Veteran, Active Military Reservist, Older Worker, Returning Citizens, IWD, or Public Assistance Recipient new trainee; and \$1,000 for each High School Diploma/Equivalency new and incumbent trainee. An employer may only be reimbursed once for each trainee regardless of

how many categories they qualify for.

## **12. What types of training are eligible?**

All training must fill a demonstrated talent need experienced by the employer, be short-term, and lead to a credential for a skill that is transferable and recognized by industry.

The amount requested cannot exceed \$2,000 per person or \$3,500 per U.S. Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship. It must also meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Classroom or customized training (CRT)
- New employee On-the-Job Training (OJT), eligible with CRT
- Classroom and/or OJT Training for USDOL Registered Apprenticeship (first year through completion)

During the registration process, USDOL Registered Apprentices must be assigned to a training course with a training type *Registered Apprenticeship – Classroom* or *Registered Apprenticeship – OJT*. To be eligible to receive the \$3,500 per trainee reimbursement the correct type of training must be reflected on the WBLOMS training plan.

## **13. What is the definition of new employee OJT training?**

OJT activities are training services provided to eligible trainees via an agreement between the MWAs and the employer. Training allows the individual(s) to become proficient in the full-time job for which they were hired. Training is conducted at the worksite. Employers must commit to retaining the trainee at the end of a successful training.

## **14. Can companies submit an application that has training for new employees as well as current employee(s)?**

Yes, it is acceptable that an application has all types of training included (i.e., classroom, new employee OJT training and USDOL Registered Apprenticeship training).

## **15. What is the role of an employer participating in the Talent Fund?**

Please refer to the [Going PRO Talent Fund Program Overview](#) or the [Employer Guide](#) for expectations of employers.

## **16. Is there a maximum amount that may be requested on an application?**

Yes, no more than \$500,000 may be awarded to any individual employer site (for an independent and ILC combined). Companies need to drill down to the critical skill needs. The average award for Fiscal Years 2014-2022 was approximately \$32,500.

## **17. Can training take place outside of Michigan?**

The preference is for training to be completed in Michigan. However, if training must occur out-of-state, the documented need and rationale must be submitted to, and retained by the MWA.

## **18. Will classroom training be paid prior to the start of training?**

No, payment will be made after training has been completed. Talent Fund is a

reimbursement-based program and will not reimburse for training that has occurred prior to the application being awarded.

**19. Can the names of the trainees change between application and start of training?**

Yes. At the time of award closeout, the employer must ensure that the final list of employees who completed training is accurate and provide the required documentation for reimbursement.

**20. Is there a minimum number of hours in which the training must occur?**

No, there is not a minimum number of hours or weeks in which training must occur.

**21. What is an appropriate length of training?**

Funding will be utilized to provide short-term training to meet current, documented needs of employers. No single training should exceed six months, with the exception of USDOL Registered Apprenticeship training. Support for USDOL Registered Apprentices through completion is a priority of the Talent Fund. All non-apprenticeship training, including new employee OJT training, as well as the 90-day post-training retention period, should conclude within one year from the date of the award in order to receive reimbursement.

**22. Must an employer provide a prevailing wage for participants?**

It is expected employers pay wages that are equal to or above Regional Median Wage, according to Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives (LMISI) Regional Median Wages. The Talent Fund should not be utilized for low-wage, high turnover occupations; nor should it be used for high-wage, executive level positions.

**23. How does an employer document “need/demand”?**

By working with the MWA to determine whether the skill sets needed are available in the current labor pool.

**24. What are eligible training expenditures?**

Eligible training expenditures include the actual costs for the classroom, new employee OJT and USDOL Registered Apprenticeship training, as well as any other reasonable cost required for the successful completion of training. For example, a training provider may quote a fixed amount for training that includes the cost of their travel.

**25. What are the ineligible training expenditures?**

Ineligible training expenditures include wage reimbursement for current employees (unless the trainee is a USDOL Registered Apprentice), the purchase of tools or other equipment including laptops/computers, licensing fees, testing fees, curriculum development, travel costs to send trainee(s) to training, online training subscriptions, training that has occurred prior to the effective award date or used to offset current tuition reimbursement programs. Wages, purchase of tools or other equipment, and cost of travel may be indicated as part of their employer contribution/leveraged funds.

**26. Can the Talent Fund be used to pay for online training?**

Online training is eligible if it is live and instructor-led, versus recorded learning at the trainee’s own pace. A quality, instructor-led hybrid course that is both modularized and live is

also allowable. It must meet all eligible/ineligible training topic requirements, and result in a credential specific to a customized, short-term technical skill.

**27. Is in-house training provided by the employer eligible for reimbursement?**

In-house training for current employees that is exclusive in nature is eligible. Exclusive training is training that is owned and controlled by the business and is subject to laws such as copyrights, patents, or trademarks. The control of the training curriculum usually is retained by the business. It may be training on resources or equipment that is exclusive to a single business process. A company that wants to use its own training curriculum in a Talent Fund project must demonstrate a lack of capacity, or inability, to meet its own demand.

**28. Can more than one employer be involved in a Talent Fund award?**

Collaborative efforts are encouraged to reduce training costs. On a case-by-case basis employers may complete one application that includes multiple plants, sites, facilities, or locations. However, LEO-WD reserves the right to limit an employer to a maximum award amount for all locations combined.

It is preferred to see three or more employers as part of an ILC, however two employers are the minimum. ILC training must be shared by a minimum of two employers.

**29. Can an employer apply through a MWA other than the one in their area?**

Yes. This may occur when an employer is on a border of a county or has multiple locations in multiple workforce areas. An employer may choose to work with an MWA of their choice. The sponsoring MWA must notify the local MWA of the application and obtain a letter or email of support that will accompany the application.

**30. Can employers of an ILC cross counties/regions?**

Yes. There will need to be a lead MWA identified as the sponsor of the application.

**31. How will an employer be paid for the training?**

The employer will submit an invoice along with all required documentation to the MWA to request reimbursement. The MWA will reconcile the request with the approved application/training plan and make payment to the employer and/or training provider.

**32. Are employers responsible for reporting program outcomes?**

Employers are responsible for reporting final data at closeout of the award, including individual trainee data. Trainee information may also be requested at some point during the training cycle as a part of monitoring and performance.

Information requested may include but not limited to the names of employees who completed training, number and type of employees trained, training providers, types of training, credentials earned, targeted population incentives, pre-training hourly wages, hourly wages at training completion, hourly wages at six months post-training, employee retention at six months post-training, hire date and termination date (if applicable), revised employer contribution/leveraged funds, and an impact story.

### **33. How does an employer log in to WBLOMS?**

It is recommended that employers contact the MWA before attempting to log in. Employers may log in to WBLOMS before contacting the MWA, however, will have limited access within the online system until approved to submit an application. Employers may sign in to WBLOMS one of three ways. First, use an existing Pure Michigan Talent Connect (PMTTC) employer account. Second, a new employer account (User ID and Password) may be created for WBLOMS by registering as a new user. A new account created through this method will only be used to log in to WBLOMS, not PMTC or any other State of Michigan website. Additionally, this new account will not be connected to any previous Talent Fund applications. Third, you may log in using an existing WBLOMS account that was created for a previous Talent Fund application period.

### **34. What file formats can be uploaded in WBLOMS?**

Each section of the application that allows files to be uploaded will specify which file formats (.pdf, .csv, .doc) are acceptable. Please note, updates to the training plan must be made within the online system, uploaded files will not alter the training plan.

### **35. An employer attempted to reset their password by clicking “Trouble logging in?” and they did not receive a token code to reset their password.**

When attempting to reset the password for an employer WBLOMS account, the security token will be active for thirty minutes. Be sure to click “Reset Password” once and wait for the security token to arrive via email. If thirty minutes has passed you may click “Reset Password” again. Check your spam folder if the email has not arrived containing the security token. The token is usually sent within minutes of clicking “Reset Password.” The token will be contained in the body of the email.

### **36. Can I copy and paste in WBLOMS?**

Yes, you may copy and paste in most text boxes using the keyboard commands CTRL + C to copy and CTRL + V to paste. Please note some text boxes require you to select an option from a drop-down list. Refer to the employer training guide for more details.

### **37. Does WBLOMS automatically save my data?**

No, in each section of the application you must click “Save” or “Save and Continue” for your data to be saved. When you successfully save you may see a success message and you will notice a green checkmark on the left side of the screen.

### **38. Why can't I submit my application in WBLOMS?**

On the left side of the screen while editing an application there is a checklist. Each section must be complete before submitting the application. A completed section will be indicated by a green checkmark. All sections must have a green checkmark. If a section was believed to be completed but there is no green checkmark, return to that section and click “Save.” WBLOMS will not allow application submission after the deadline.

### **39. When are WBLOMS modifications needed?**

A modification is needed if the following details change before closeout: training provider

details, course details, number assigned to a training, average wage of trainees, or amount requested per trainee.

**40. Are modifications to training plans allowed?**

Yes, modifications to an award may be considered where circumstances dictate a need to adjust the Training Plan. MWA must grant approval to changes to the Training Plan prior to changes occurring and are otherwise subject to non-reimbursement. Any changes that occurred, and an explanation of the changes, must be reflected in the WBLOMS Final Training Plan.