

ON-THE JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions

Our company was just awarded a contract for a project with training hours on it. Now what?

Start thinking about whether or not you have a woman or a minority male already in your company's workforce to whom you would like to offer on-the-job training. If so, speak with the employee to see if he/she is interested in the opportunity to learn new skills. Once you've determined that there is someone within your workforce that you'd like to place in the OJT program, call the OJT Program Manager so she can follow up with the potential trainee by sending materials and talking with him/her on the phone. EVERY OJT PLACEMENT HAS TO BE APPROVED BY THE OJT PROGRAM MANAGER BEFORE THE TRAINING ACTUALLY STARTS.

If you don't have a potential OJT in your workforce, you should contact the OJT Program Manager for any referrals she may be able to make. We work with women and minority males extensively to determine whether or not this industry is the right fit for them and if they would make good training candidates. When the time is right, start advertising in local newspapers to fill the position. The OJT Program Manager can provide sample wording for newspaper and Department of Labor ads. In addition, there is a list of statewide Employment Resources in the [OJT Program Manual](#) (pages 21-25) with whom you should make contact, depending on the project location.

Complete and submit an OJT LETTER OF INTENT to the OJT Program Manager. This form is available on line and will be part of the paperwork supplied to the prime contractor at the Pre-Construction Conference for the project.

What is the definition of a "minority male?"

According to the Executive Order 11246 (included in every contract), a MINORITY MALE is defined as:

- American Indian
- Black
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Hispanic
- Cape Verde an
- Portuguese

What am I supposed to train the OJT to do?

This depends upon the type of project on which the OJT will be working and the skill level of the OJT. For instance, if you are working on a bridge project with a relatively inexperienced or new-to-the-industry trainee, you may want to use the Bridge Construction Trainee job description. However, if you have an employee who has worked on some of your bridge projects in the past and would like to learn more skills, you could use the Intermediate or Advanced level of Bridge Construction Training. You may have a great employee who shows potential and you want to groom him/her to be a Foreman's Assistant or Construction Supervisor, both of which are valid training programs. Give some thought into who will be supervising of the trainee. Recognize that completion of the training hours is a contract requirement which will require some time and effort on your part.

Keep in mind that we do have some flexibility with this program and can develop customized training programs where appropriate.

What hourly wage am I required to pay a trainee?

Although trainees are not subject to Davis-Bacon wage rates, there is wording in the Training Special Provisions that requires a trainee to be paid "no less than the prevailing rate for labor as shown in the contract decision." Typically, a trainee starts at a certain wage and then earns increases at 1/2 way through the training, 3/4 of the way through the training, and at the end of the training. Contractors are encouraged to call the OJT Program Manager prior to completion of the "Wages" section of the OJT Enrollment Form.

As the trainee completes his/her hours, how do I request reimbursement by VTrans of the amount that we bid on this line item?

Complete, sign and submit the OJT Weekly Progress Report and give the original (top page) to the VTrans Resident Engineer on the project. This form tracks the number of the hours worked each week and the cumulative number of hours the trainee has completed to date. As indicated, it is to be completed on a WEEKLY basis.

Our trainee has not been showing up for work or calling to let us know why. What should I do?

Treat the trainee just as you would any other employee. We do not encourage “bending the rules” for trainees since this does not set a good example for the rest of your workforce nor does it instill good work ethics in the trainee. You should also call the OJT Program Manager to let her know what is going on.

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I know there is a two-week probationary period for every trainee and then the OJT Program Manager will do an on-site OJT enrollment. Do I need to submit OJT Weekly Progress Reports during this two-week probationary period?

Yes. These reports are to start as of the first day of the training. Keep in mind that the probationary period does not start until:

- The OJT has been approved by the OJT Program Manager;
- There is an agreed upon START DATE and OJT CLASSIFICATION for the trainee;
- The contractor has completed and submitted an OJT Enrollment Form; AND
- The trainee’s wages have been approved by the OJT Program Manager.

Our trainee quit after before completing the required number of training hours. What happens now?

Make sure the trainee’s supervisor has completed all the OJT Weekly Progress Reports to account for all hours worked. When these have been submitted, depending upon the number of hours completed, the OJT Program Manager will make a decision about whether or not to remove unfilled training hours or to ask the contractor to find another training candidate.

The project on which the trainee is working is at a standstill because we are waiting for a steel delivery (or some other reason). Do I have any options besides a short layoff?

Yes! You should contact the OJT Program Manager to let her know the situation and discuss possible options. In the past, we have allowed trainees to move to another project on a short-term basis and, depending upon what the trainee is doing on that project, it may be able to be counted as “Off-Site Training.” There is a form (page 37 of the OJT Program Manual) that needs to be completed and approved by the OJT Program Manager before credit will be given for hours completed on a project other than the one to which the OJT hours are assigned. The VTrans Resident Engineer on each project must be in agreement with this as well.

I just hired a trainee who is new to this industry and doesn’t have steel-toed boots or the money to purchase them. We require them to work on our projects.

Our office offers a number of supportive services to OJTs which includes help with purchasing some of the necessary clothing, boots, and tools for use on the job. We have a voucher system that allows the trainee to make purchases of boots and clothing without paying for the items directly. It is not uncommon on bridge projects for the trainee to need a number of small hand tools. The OJT Program Manager will work with the trainee’s supervisor to come up with a list of tools needed and then work with the trainee to see how to best purchase them.

The ideal time for the trainee to make purchases of things like rain gear and boots is BEFORE he/she starts work on the project, so the sooner our office is aware of the situation, the better. If there is a need for the trainee to purchase tools, we will address this at the OJT enrollment, following the two-week OJT probationary period.

Our project has 1040 training hours assigned to it. Does this mean we have to fill two training positions (520 hours each) or can one individual complete a 1040-hour training program?

This very much depends upon the type and length of the project and what the contractor is proposing to use as a training classification. After a conversation with the contractor to get more specifics about the proposed training, the OJT Program Manager will make a decision. In many cases, 520 hours is not enough so having one person complete 1040 hours of training makes for a more comprehensive training.

OTHER QUESTIONS? CONTACT:

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