Impact Guidance Letter: Living Wage

**Objective:** Increase the number of adults earning a living wage through completing paid on-the-job training opportunities

**2030 target:** Ensure an additional 300,000 individuals live above 200% of the federal poverty level by 2030

**Counties served:** Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia

**Results-based accountability “story behind the curve” (background):** Hard-to-reach and underserved communities have generational and high concentrations of poverty resulting from unemployment or underemployment, an unequal distribution of fiscal resources, subpar education institutions and academic opportunities, limited workforce solution entities, quality health systems/care, limited social capital to link to valuable/timely resources, trauma and environmental influences, criminal experiences/history, and levels of generational and concentrated poverty that inhibit growth and sustained self-sufficiency. In addition, the undersupply of affordable housing disproportionately affects low-income households: among the poorest Americans, 80% pay more than 50% of their income for rent, allowing fewer funds to be directed toward the purchase of food, healthcare, and education.

**United Way’s work to date:** United Way’s Jobs Opportunity Investment Network (JOIN) initiative has achieved measureable results over the past ten years by acting as the “matchmaker” between industry and the workforce, leading partnerships that train low-wage workers for high-demand, available positions. These results, while important, cannot keep pace with the growing gap between employer needs and worker preparedness. To amplify United Way’s results, we have joined in partnership with key regional stakeholders and set community- and agency-performance levels to successfully turn this curve in a positive direction. United Way’s current investment in workforce solutions has trained and placed fifty returning citizens in jobs in the past three months. For more information on United Way’s work to date, visit: [https://www.unitedforimpact.org/our-work-to-date/](https://www.unitedforimpact.org/our-work-to-date/)
What works to turn the curve: Training opportunities that create or lead to pathways to living and sustainable wages include but are not limited to transitional and on-the-job (OJT) training opportunities in employer-demand jobs, incumbent worker training (e.g., credential attainment), dislocated worker training, and registered apprenticeship programs in employer-demand jobs—all training experiences create and/or lead to pathways to livable wages.

Required program components

1. Provide job seekers with job training, job placement, and/or job advancement opportunities
2. Form or engage with community partnerships to provide effective programs and services to job seekers
3. Provide workforce services to targeted job seekers (e.g., returning citizens, veterans, and individuals living with disAbilities [physical/mental])
4. Programs that align with the needs of employers who provide jobs that pay livable wages and benefits
5. Programs that demonstrate employer engagement

Preferred program components

1. Provide work-based training opportunities (e.g., transitional work opportunities, on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and “earn and learn” opportunities) that provide meaningful work experience and creates access to a living wage
2. Evidence of leveraging multiple funds to better serve employers, job seekers, and incumbent workers
3. Partners with 2-1-1 (NJ and/or PA) to maintain a current list of programs and services and promote 2-1-1 as a resource for individuals and families served, volunteers, donors, and staff
4. Providers and partners that have intentional partnership with other individual and family stability supports that increase the likelihood of success for job seekers to be successful and include:
   a. Delivering trauma-informed services
   b. History of volunteer management
   c. History of advocacy
d. Two-generation approach: consider dependents and their caregivers in approach to service delivery

5. Serve meaningful numbers of individuals and/or families living at or below 200% of the federal poverty level and/or communities/neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty (eligible zip codes detailed in the objective applications).

Agency performance measures

How much?

- # of unduplicated individuals served
- # of unduplicated individuals enrolled in a job training program
- # of unduplicated individuals enrolled in a job training program who are members of one or more of the following target groups: veterans, people living with disAbilities (physical or mental), returning citizens, and/or recipients of TANF
- # of unduplicated individuals enrolled in an employer-demand driven job training program
- # of unduplicated individuals enrolled in a credentialing program
- # of unduplicated individuals enrolled in a high school or GED attainment program

How well?

- # of unduplicated individuals who completed a job training program
- # of unduplicated individuals who completed an employer-demand driven job training program
- # of unduplicated individuals who completed a credentialing program
- # of unduplicated individuals who completed a high school or GED attainment program
- # of unduplicated individuals who received an industry-recognized credential
- # of unduplicated individuals who received their high school diploma or GED
- # of unduplicated individuals who were enrolled in at least one public benefit
Is anyone better off?

- # of unduplicated individuals placed in a job
- # of unduplicated individuals placed in a job who are members of one or more of the following targeted groups: veterans, people living with disabilities (physical/mental), returning citizens and/or recipients of TANF
- # of unduplicated individuals placed in a job where they earned a living wage
- # of unduplicated individuals placed in a job connected to a career pathway

**In partnership with others, United Way seeks to achieve the following objectives:**

Increase self-reliance among individuals and families requires working alongside the individual/family to create structures to support efforts that help meet immediate needs, secure stable/viable employment, and build a stronger asset base. In doing this we seek to achieve the following results:

1. Improve workforce development referral systems to reach job seekers, and dislocated and incumbent workers.
2. Establish collaborative workforce partnerships that lead to employment for job seekers.
3. Connect job seekers and workers to benefits supports and resources.
4. Connect job seekers to employment through paid on-the-job training programs.
5. Connect hard-to-serve job seekers to employment in jobs that pay or lead to a living wage.
6. Establish employer partner training programs with postsecondary institutions throughout the region that lead to job placement and/or advancement for employees or job seekers.
7. Expand utilization of 2-1-1 and ensure that it is an accurate and robust access point of information and referral for individuals, families, and community partners in our region.