



Request for Proposals

to

**Deliver Workforce Services to Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth, and to Provide
Business Services to Employers**

and

**Serve as a One-Stop Operator for Kentucky Career Centers
in the EKCEP Service Area**

**Services to be Performed
During the 2025-2026 Program Year
(July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026)**

Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board

April 1, 2025

1. Description of EKCEP

Section 1.01 General. Eastern Kentucky C. E. P., Inc., a Kentucky nonprofit corporation (“**EKCEP**”), is a workforce development solution in Eastern Kentucky which provides comprehensive services across twenty-three (23) counties in far Eastern Kentucky: Bell, Breathitt, Carter, Clay, Elliott, Floyd, Harlan, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Morgan, Owsley, Perry, Pike, and Wolfe (the “**Local Workforce Area**”). EKCEP connects individuals with sustainable careers and helps businesses grow through innovative solutions.

Section 1.02 EKWIB. The Eastern Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (the “**WIB**”), working in concert with EKCEP, determines the workforce development strategies and policies for the Local Workforce Area. The WIB was formed and certified under the provisions of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (as amended, “**WIOA**”). The full text of WIOA is available online at <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>.

Section 1.03 Contracting for Services. EKCEP does not provide Direct Workforce Services to employers and individuals in the workforce system, nor does it serve as a One-Stop Operator, preferring instead to contract with third parties for the delivery of such services. However, EKCEP, through its staff or partners, may provide workshops, seminars, and other trainings (e.g., soft skills training, computer literacy) that support the Direct Workforce Services and One-Stop Operators. Additionally, EKCEP provides leadership, guidance, professional development, technical assistance, monitoring, and other activities to ensure that the contractors faithfully execute the strategies and policies of the WIB when performing the Direct Workforce Services or serving as a One-Stop Operator.

Section 1.04 Funding. EKCEP receives funding primarily from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, through the Kentucky Cabinet for Education and Workforce Development, under WIOA. EKCEP also receives grants from a variety of other private and public sources.

2. Services Solicited by this RFP

Section 2.01 General. This Request for Proposals (this “**RFP**”) seeks proposals from organizations (“**Bidders**”) to perform one or two of the following elements of workforce service delivery in the Local Workforce Area:

- (a) Deliver Direct Workforce Services to employers (“**Employers**”) and job-seeking individuals (“**Clients**”) through the comprehensive career center(s), Affiliate Career Center(s)(as defined below), or other service outlet(s) associated with Eastern Kentucky’s workforce services network in the counties proposed to be served by the Bidder.
- (b) Deliver Direct Workforce Services to Youth (as defined in WIOA) between the ages of 16-24 through the comprehensive career center(s), Affiliate Career Center(s), or other service outlet(s) associated with Eastern Kentucky’s workforce services network in the counties proposed to be served by the Bidder. The Youth services program to be delivered under this RFP will be called “Prosper Appalachia” and will encompass In-School and Out-Of-School Youth Services as such terms are defined in WIOA.

- (c) Serve as the One-Stop Operator (as defined in WIOA) for Eastern Kentucky’s workforce services network in the Local Workforce Area where a Comprehensive Career Center (i.e., one-stop center) is located. The duties of the One-Stop Operator include coordinating the services of one-stop network partners at the Comprehensive Career Center(s), any associated Affiliate Career Center(s) and other service outlet(s) in the counties they propose to serve. Proposals to serve as a One-Stop Operator will only be accepted from organizations that propose to serve either or both of Perry County (Hazard) and Floyd County (Prestonsburg), the two counties in the Local Workforce Area that currently have a Comprehensive Career Center. Bidders proposing to serve any other counties in the Local Workforce Area should not respond to the One-Stop Operator portion of this RFP.

Because the functions of the One-Stop Operator are closely interconnected with the provision of Direct Workforce Services, and because the funding available to support the functions of the One-Stop Operator is very limited, EKCEP has chosen to accept proposals to serve the counties that have Comprehensive Career Centers only from Bidders that are able and willing to perform both the Direct Workforce Services and One-Stop Operator functions.

Section 2.02 Direct Workforce Services.

- (a) **Description.** “**Direct Workforce Services**” are workforce development services for Employers and Clients as further described below.

- (i) **Employers:**

- 1) Direct Workforce Services will include helping Employers find, train, and hire needed workers.
 - 2) Direct Workforce Services will be provided primarily to Employers in businesses and industries that fall within sectors of emphasis identified by the WIB.
 - 3) The Bidder will help Employers find and, when necessary, train or otherwise prepare workers to fill the positions that the Employers’ businesses need.
 - 4) Typically, Direct Workforce Services will be provided to Employers pursuant to the terms of a memoranda of understanding or similar agreement between the Employer and the Bidder that identify such Employer’s workforce needs and define a plan by which those needs will be met.
 - 5) The Bidder will conduct active outreach to Employers to promote specific employment opportunities and recruit Clients as candidates for these opportunities.

- (ii) **Clients:**

- 1) Direct Workforce Services will include helping eligible Clients prepare for, obtain, and succeed in self-sustaining employment.
 - 2) Direct Workforce Services will be provided primarily to Clients who are appropriate candidates for the positions area employers are seeking to fill.

- 3) Direct Workforce Services will be provided to Adults (as defined in WOIA), Dislocated Workers (as defined in WOIA), and Youth between the ages of 16-24 who qualify for services under a variety of programs and funding streams administered by EKCEP.
 - 4) Bidder will implement a Client-centered approach, the goal of which is to facilitate each Client's preparation and strategic planning for the next phase of his/her career; and
 - 5) Direct Workforce Services include case management and career counseling via in person meetings, video conferencing, phone conversation, or other technology-assisted conversations.
- (b) **Career Advisors' Role.** The core position in the EKCEP service model is the career advisor. Career advisors will recruit, identify, and prepare Clients for the job opportunities identified in the MOUs with Employers, and will be the primary contact for job-seeking Clients. Career advisors must:
- (i) provide career advising, coaching and case management services;
 - (ii) build effective, trust-based relationships with Clients that result in quality job placements in positions that meet Employer's demands;
 - (iii) maintaining current knowledge of the job opportunities, skill requirements and other prerequisites identified by Employers in and around their service area;
 - (iv) work closely with workforce partner agencies, educational institutions, other community organizations, and local governments to ensure all Clients are aware of the employment opportunities and workforce services available;
 - (v) contact Employers to determine such Employer's workforce needs and help develop action plans to meet such needs; and
 - (vi) stay abreast of technological developments that allow the Direct Workforce Services to be provided remotely.
- (c) **Components of Direct Workforce Services.** Successful Bidders must satisfy the following conditions in order to provide Direct Workforce Services:
- (i) **Required Staff.** Bidder will employ individuals to serve in the following positions:
 - 1) **Career Advisors.** Career advisors will perform the duties set forth in Section 2.02(b).
 - 2) **Business Solutions Consultant.** Business solution consultants will specialize in reaching out to Employers within their service counties to determine Employers' workforce needs and communicate them to the career advisors. Business solutions consultants will collaborate with career advisors, community leaders, educational institutions, local partners, and EKCEP's business solutions strategists to identify and develop action plans to meet local Employers' needs.

- 3) **Workforce Managers.** Workforce managers will manage, supervise, and oversee the activities and functions of the career advisors and other staff who provide the Direct Workforce Services, including by providing strategic guidance, planning, and leadership to staff; ensuring that performance and productivity goals are met; monitoring the quality of Direct Workforce Services provided; ensuring that proper records are kept; ensuring that EKCEP policies, federal regulations, and other relevant rules are adhered to; managing budgets; initiating and overseeing successful community outreach and education; and communicating and collaborating with EKCEP to ensure that the best possible results are achieved for their service area.
- 4) **Receptionist.** Receptionist will provide a first point of contact for those entering or contacting the Facility.

EKCEP will provide technical assistance and training for the forgoing staff positions prior to Contract execution, if needed, and on an ongoing basis throughout the Contract, as needed. Staff will be required to participate in such trainings and technical assistance activities. Staff may be required to achieve specific levels of competencies prior to performing on behalf of the Bidder pursuant to the Contract.

The Bidder may be able to justify hiring other support staff to support the work of the career advisors and workforce managers. EKCEP will consider the necessity of any such support staff positions when evaluating proposals.

- (ii) **Fiscal Services.** Bidders must be able to (i) provide the fiscal services necessary to deliver the Direct Workforce Services, including receiving and making payments, and (ii) use the accounting and bookkeeping procedures required to meet applicable regulations. EKCEP will provide funding for direct training (such as tuition and on-the-job training wages) and intensive services (such as internship wages) as needed, based on Client activity and Employer needs within the counties being served.

(iii) **Service Delivery Capacity.**

- 1) Bidders must have or be able to acquire the capacity to effectively deliver Direct Workforce Services to the population of the Local Workforce Area they propose to serve, including the ability to provide services, either virtually or in-person, to one physical location (a “**Facility**”) per county within the Local Workforce Area they propose to serve.
- 2) Notwithstanding the foregoing, Bidders who propose to serve multiple counties within the Local Workforce Area may be required to provide Direct Workforce Services virtually in less populated counties. The determination of locations of Facilities will be made based on the location of partner programs, historical service data, and other efficiency considerations.
- 3) Facilities should include adequate offices and meeting room space for the delivery of in-person Direct Workforce Services. Facilities should be located in or near the population centers of the area to be served to provide reasonable convenience and accessibility to Direct Workforce Services. Facilities must comply with all requirements for handicapped accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- 4) Facilities may include:
- a) A Comprehensive Career Center hosted by the Bidder or its partner. “**Comprehensive Career Center**” is a workforce center that has been so designated by the WIB after meeting criteria established by the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the WIB, and completing the application and certification process. As of the date of this RFP, there are two Comprehensive Career Centers in the Local Workforce Area: the Kentucky Career Center JobSight located at 412 Roy Campbell Drive, Hazard, Kentucky, and the Kentucky Career Center JobSight located at 686 North Lake Drive, Prestonsburg, Kentucky.
 - b) An Affiliate Career Center hosted by the Bidder or an EKCEP partner. “**Affiliate Career Center**” is any location where two or more of EKCEP’s five core partner agencies (Office of Employment and Training, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Office for the Blind, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act - Title IB, and Adult Education) in the Kentucky Career Center network in Eastern Kentucky provide services and maintain a regular schedule during operating hours.
 - c) An Access Point associated with EKCEP’s career center network. “**Access Point**” is a location that provides a single point of entry for individuals to learn about and connect with various programs and resources available to job seekers, workers, and employers.
- 5) Bidders must have the capacity to deliver Direct Workforce Services remotely to Employers and Clients who do not reside near Facilities or who may prefer virtual services. In addition to having the required equipment, connectivity, and knowledge, the Bidders must embrace virtual services as an integral part of the service model, including using social media platforms as a large part of the outreach and recruitment.

Section 2.03 One-Stop Operator.

- (a) Section 121[D] of WIOA establishes the One-Stop Operator position but allows local workforce areas a great deal of latitude in defining the specific functions of the position. In the Local Workforce Area, the functions of the One-Stop Operator are to:
 - (i) Coordinate the delivery of services by One-Stop Partners (as defined below) and service providers in the county where a full-service career center (i.e., one-stop center) is located and in any surrounding counties that the One-Stop Operator serves. In addition to the Direct Workforce Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers funded under Title I-B of WIOA and awarded under this RFP, the “**One-Stop Partners**” in any county include, but are not limited to Youth Program services funded under Title I-B of WIOA, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Career and Technical Education, Unemployment Insurance, Veterans Services, and employment services under the Wagner-Peyser Act. This coordination of services may involve multiple offices and/or service outlets, including a Comprehensive Career Center or Affiliate Career Center, if such exist within the One-Stop Operator’s service area.

- (ii) Foster a culture of collaboration and excellent customer service among One-Stop Partners that promotes delivery of innovative, high quality workforce development services to all customers of the workforce development system, including Employers and Clients.
 - (iii) Convene and lead regularly scheduled meetings (e.g., monthly, quarterly) of the One-Stop Partners to build a collaborative culture, improve service delivery, and evaluate progress toward shared goals.
 - (iv) Serve as a resource for staff of all One-Stop Partners in regard to the objectives, processes, requirements, and regulations of WIOA and the workforce services delivery system.
 - (v) Provide support, assistance, and resolution to all staff of One-Stop Partners in response to collaboration issues, facilities needs, or other problems.
 - (vi) Provide direction for the team leads of the One-Stop Partners.
 - (vii) Ensure that comprehensive cross-training and development plans are established for the One-Stop Partners.
 - (viii) Measure Employer and Client satisfaction with the workforce delivery system in the applicable service area.
 - (ix) Lead the establishment of performance goals for the workforce services network in the One-Stop Operator's service area, and track and evaluate performance in pursuit of those goals.
- (b) If and when appropriate, the One-Stop Operator will also be required to participate in the Kentucky Career Center certification process for any locations within its service area that choose to apply for certification as a Comprehensive Career Center or Affiliate Career Center.
 - (c) If the Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky chooses to so require, the One-Stop Operator must also collect specific performance information from One-Stop Partners regarding on-the-job training, customized training, incumbent worker training, internships, paid or unpaid work experience opportunities, and transitional employment; and use the information to determine whether the One-Stop Partners meet the performance criteria required by the Governor.
 - (d) In coordinating local services, the One-Stop Operator must not establish practices that create disincentives to providing services to Clients with barriers to employment who may require longer-term services, such as intensive employment, training, and education services.
 - (e) EKCEP will prefer to contract with a Bidder that is knowledgeable about workforce development services, their objectives, and the regulations that govern them, including:
 - (i) Career services (described in WIOA Section 134(c)(2)).
 - (ii) Training services (described in WIOA Section 134(c)(3)).
 - (iii) Employment and training activities carried out under WIOA Section 134(d), if any.

- (iv) Programs and activities carried out by One-Stop Partners, including Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, postsecondary education, Unemployment Insurance, and Veterans Services.
 - (v) Data, labor market information, and analysis from Wagner-Peyser (described in Section 15(a) of the Wagner-Peyser Act).
 - (vi) Labor exchange services authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act.
- (f) A Bidder that applies to be a One-Stop Operator in the Local Workforce Area must have:
- (i) Competent management skills.
 - (ii) Commitment to excellent customer service.
 - (iii) Cooperative culture among management and staff.
 - (iv) Commitment to the integrated service delivery model.
 - (v) Willingness to partner with others.
 - (vi) Flexibility and ability to adapt to change.
- (g) A Bidder that applies to be a One-Stop Operator in the Local Workforce Area must disclose in its proposal any potential conflicts of interest that could arise from its relationship(s) with particular training service providers or other service providers, including, but not limited to, other Direct Workforce Services providers.
- (h) The WIB will oversee and evaluate the performance of the One-Stop Operator for the Local Workforce Area.

3. IT Services and Cybersecurity

Section 3.01 EKCEP recognizes the critical importance of technology in providing effective and efficient workforce services. Therefore, Bidders must demonstrate a robust information technology (“IT”) infrastructure and a strong commitment to cybersecurity.

Section 3.02 EKCEP will carefully evaluate Bidders’ IT capabilities and cybersecurity measures to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of Employer and Client information. Cybersecurity requirements will include the following:

- (a) **Data Protection.** Proposals should include methods for protecting sensitive Employer and Client information, including personally identifiable information. This may include data encryption, access controls, and regular data backups.
- (b) **Password Security.** Bidders should have in place strong password policies and procedures to prevent unauthorized access to Bidder’s systems. This may include password complexity requirements, password expiration policies, and multi-factor authentication.

- (c) **Network Security.** Bidders should have secure local networks to prevent cyberattacks and unauthorized access. Attention will be paid to the inclusion of firewalls, intrusion detection systems, and regular security assessments.
- (d) **EKCEP Platform Integration.** Bidders must be able to ensure the secure integration of local IT systems with any EKCEP-provided software or platforms. This should include data exchange protocols, access controls, and adherence to EKCEP's cybersecurity standards.
- (e) **Cybersecurity Training and Testing of Personnel.** Bidders must have a policy on, as well as evidence of, regular cybersecurity training plus phishing email testing of all personnel who are authorized users of the Bidder's IT.
- (f) **Third-Party Risks.** Bidder should monitor and vet the cybersecurity resilience of its third-party contractors and software vendors who access, transmit, or connect to Bidder's IT. Such vetting should mirror the requirements set forth in EKCEP's own cyber resilience requirements.
- (g) **Incident Response.** Proposals should outline an incident response plan in case of a cybersecurity breach, including procedures for identifying, containing, and recovering from a breach, as well as communication protocols for notifying affected parties.

4. Funding for Bidders' Activities

Section 4.01 Pursuant to the Contract, funding will be provided to the successful Bidder on an annual basis. EKCEP will fund three (3) types of activities:

- (a) **Overhead.** Funding may be used to cover overhead costs associated with providing fiscal services, Facilities, and virtual capacity described above in Section 2.02, and potentially additional staff members as set forth in Section 2.02(c)(i). Proposals must include a detailed budget statement itemizing overhead costs for the Contract term. In evaluating the proposed overhead budgets, EKCEP will consider the population of the Local Workforce Area and the potential for return on investment.
- (b) **Staff.** Funding may be used to cover employee salaries and related costs. Proposals must include a detailed budget statement itemizing these employment costs for the Contract term. In evaluating the proposed employment budget, EKCEP will consider the population of the Local Workforce Area and the potential for return on investment.
- (c) **Client Services.** Funding may be used to cover Client service costs allowed by EKCEP policy (e.g., internships, paid work experience, on-the-job training, tuition, supportive services, etc.). The total of these funds will **not** be a part of the Contract. EKCEP will provide these funds to the Bidder throughout the Contract term, based upon caseload, actual services and activities, Employer needs within the Local Workforce Area, and funding availability.

5. Outcomes and Performance Requirements

Section 5.01 EKCEP's performance is measured against the goals, objectives, and standards attached to each funding stream that it administers. The EKCEP service model is designed to provide activities and services that will achieve these goals and objectives, and standards. The overarching objectives of all of

EKCEP's programs are to prepare and place the Local Workforce Area's workers in jobs that provide a wage that makes them self-sufficient, and to build the Local Workforce Area's economy by ensuring that the Local Workforce Area's employers, whether existing or new, are able to hire qualified workers that help their businesses succeed.

Section 5.02 The performance of a successful Bidder will be measured against the goals, objectives, and standards attached to each funding stream that supports the services and activities that they will deliver under the Contract. Such goals, objective and standards will be discussed and identified during the Contract negotiations and set forth in the Contract. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the performance measures for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs supported by WIOA funds are set forth in Sections 116(2)(A)(i) and (iii) of the WIOA and the performance measures for the Youth programs supported by WIOA funds are set forth in Sections 116(2)(A)(ii) and (iii) of the WIOA. In accordance with WIOA, EKCEP and Bidder will negotiate acceptable performance levels against the standards set forth in the WIOA.

6. Bidder Requirements

Section 6.01 To submit a proposal, Bidders must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- (a) Bidder shall have provided services similar to those set forth in this RFP in nature and complexity for at least three (3) consecutive years;
- (b) Bidder shall have contracted with at least one (1) organization similar in scope and size to EKCEP within the past three (3) years;
- (c) Bidder shall have customer service-oriented staff;
- (d) Bidder shall have a proven record of technological adaptivity;
- (e) Bidder shall be eligible to do business in the Commonwealth of Kentucky;
- (f) Bidder shall not be barred from receiving federal funds and resources;
- (g) Bidder shall provide an unqualified audit for the past three (3) years;
- (h) Bidder shall maintain insurance coverage in the Local Workforce Area; and
- (i) Bidder shall have the flexibility to increase or decrease the proposed number of persons to be served, based upon funding regulations.

By submitting a proposal, Bidder assures the WIB that: (1) Bidder will provide appropriate services under any of EKCEP's current or future funding sources for the specific Local Workforce Area the Bidder proposes to serve, as requested by EKCEP; and (2) Bidder will work cooperatively and effectively with any entities that partner with EKCEP in grants that include services in the region the applicant proposes to serve.

7. RFP Timeline and Process

Section 7.01 Overview. This RFP will be available on EKCEP's website (www.ekcep.org) beginning on April 1, 2025. The timetable for this RFP process is set forth below:

- (a) RFP Release: April 1, 2025
- (b) Question & Answer Period: April 8 – April 22, 2025
- (c) Bidders Conference: April 7, 2025
- (d) Proposals Due: April 29, 2025
- (e) Evaluation of Proposals: April 30 – May 21, 2025
- (f) Board Consideration of Proposals: June 11, 2025
- (g) Contract Negotiation Period: June 12 – June 20, 2025
- (h) Contract Approval: June 23, 2025
- (i) Contract Implementation: July 1, 2025

Section 7.02 Bidders Conference and Inquires.

- (a) An optional bidders conference will be held in-person at 1:30 p.m. EDT on April 7, 2025 at the LKLP building (formerly Primary Care Center), 145 Citizens Lane, Hazard, Kentucky. Bidders must notify EKCEP of their interest in participating in the bidders conference via email (rfp@ekcep.org) by 5:00 p.m. EDT on April 6, 2025.
- (b) The bidders conference will address Bidders' questions about either of the two roles sought by this RFP: Direct Workforce Services provider and One-Stop Operator. The bidders conference will end no later than 4:00 p.m. EDT, but may end earlier if questions are exhausted. Bidders are not required to attend the bidders conference and failure to attend will not affect the score of a Bidder's proposal.
- (c) Questions from Bidders may also be submitted at any time through April 22, 2025 via email to rfp@EKCEP.org. Questions and answers that provide significant clarification of the intent of this RFP, the services requested by this RFP, or other factors affecting proposals will be posted on the EKCEP website at www.ekcep.org/rfp.

Section 7.03 Submitting Proposals.

- (a) **Submission Instructions.**
 - (i) EKCEP must receive proposals no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on April 29, 2025.

- (ii) EKCEP will only receive proposals electronically. Bidders must submit proposals at rfp@ekcep.org.

- 2) If an electronic copy is submitted, it should be sent to: RFP@EKCEP.org.

- (b) **Formatting Requirements.** Each proposal must meet the following requirements:
 - (i) Pages are numbered;
 - (ii) Sections are clearly identified;
 - (iii) PDF or Microsoft Word file format;
 - (iv) Single-spaced; and
 - (v) 12-point Arial font.

- (c) **Content Requirements.** Each proposal must include the following content in the following order:
 - (i) **Proposal Cover and Affirmations Form.** Bidders will complete the Proposal Cover and Affirmations Form as attached hereto as Appendix 1.

 - (ii) **Table of Contents.**

 - (iii) **Narrative Question Responses.** Bidders will respond to the narrative questions set forth below. Full or partial points will be awarded according to the amounts noted below. Each response should be less than 750 words.
 - 1) **Direct Workforce Services:**
 - a) **Section 1: Organizational Overview (15 points)**
 - i) Describe your organization's mission, vision, and values. How do these align with EKCEP's mission and the goals of this RFP?
 - ii) Provide a brief history of your organization, highlighting your experience and expertise in providing workforce development services.

 - b) **Section 2: Service Delivery (30 points)**

- i) Describe your proposed service delivery model, including staffing plans, service locations, and outreach strategies. How will your approach ensure effective and accessible services for both job seekers and employers?
 - ii) What training and professional development opportunities will you provide to ensure staff are equipped to meet program goals?
 - iii) Explain how you will leverage technology to enhance service delivery, such as virtual services, online resources, and data management systems.
 - iv) Detail your plan for collaborating with EKCEP, community partners, and other stakeholders to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive workforce development system.
- c) **Section 3: Addressing Workforce Needs (30 points)**
- i) Demonstrate your understanding of the specific workforce needs in the Local Workforce Area, including challenges and opportunities. How will your services address these needs effectively?
 - ii) Describe your strategies for recruiting, training, and retaining qualified staff to provide high-quality services. How will you ensure staff competency and professional development?
 - iii) Describe your organization's experience and qualifications in providing workforce services to young people both in school and out of school between the ages of 16 and 24, dislocated workers, and unemployed or under-employed adults. Include specific examples of past projects, outcomes achieved, and any relevant certifications or accreditations.
 - iv) Describe your organization's experience and qualifications in providing recovery and reentry services. Include specific examples of past projects, outcomes achieved, and any relevant certifications or accreditations.
 - v) Explain how you will measure and evaluate the effectiveness of your services, including performance metrics, client outcomes, and employer satisfaction.
 - vi) Describe any innovative approaches or best practices that you will implement to enhance service delivery and achieve best outcomes for clients and employers.
- d) **Section 4: Fiscal Management (10 points)**
- i) Provide a detailed budget that outlines all proposed expenses, demonstrating cost-effectiveness and responsible resource allocation.

ii) Explain your organization's financial stability and capacity to manage EKCEP funds effectively. How will you ensure compliance with all applicable fiscal regulations and reporting requirements?

e) **Section 5: IT Services and Cybersecurity (10 points)**

i) Describe your organization's IT infrastructure and capacity to support the delivery of workforce services. How will you ensure system reliability, data security, and client privacy?

ii) Detail your cybersecurity measures to protect sensitive client information, including data encryption, access controls, and incident response planning.

iii) Describe your cybersecurity training offered to all personnel who are authorized users of your IT systems.

iv) Explain how you vet third-party contractors and software vendors for cyber resilience.

v) Explain how you will comply with accepted cybersecurity standards and any relevant data privacy regulations.

2) **One-Stop Operator Services.** Only Bidders proposing to provide One-Stop Operator services should respond to the below questions. Each response should be less than 750 words.

a) Identify the county (or counties) in which you propose to serve as One-Stop Operator, and the specific location of the Comprehensive Career Center which serves those counties. (5 points)

b) Are you currently the leasee, owner, or tenant of a facility or facilities in the county (or counties) where you would serve as One-Stop Operator? If so, identify those facilities. If not, explain your plan for acquiring or otherwise establishing such facilities. (Include each of the counties identified in question i above.) (5 points)

c) Describe your organization's experience managing multi-agency workforce centers or other multi-agency collaborative ventures. (15 points)

d) Describe your commitment to an integrated service delivery model and your plan for integrating the services of all required workforce partners and other partners in the counties you would serve. (10 points)

e) Explain the depth of your organization's knowledge and experience with WIOA. (15 points)

f) Explain how your organization will measure the customer satisfaction level with the Comprehensive Career Center and with the workforce delivery system in general in your service area. (10 points)

g) Describe how your organization will track and evaluate performance goals for the workforce services network. (5 points)

h) Describe how your organization will perform the responsibilities described in Section 2.03, including: (a) how they will ensure all One-Stop Partners are collaborating and cooperating in the delivery of comprehensive workforce services; (b) how your organization will train One-Stop Operator staff; and (c) how you will foster cross-training for the staff of One-Stop Partners. (10 points)

i) Describe your organization's customer service experience and your process for handling complaints and/or concerns from customers. (10 points)

j) Describe your organization's IT infrastructure and capacity to support the delivery of workforce services. How will you ensure system reliability, data security, and client privacy? (10 points)

(iv) **Budget.** Bidders will provide the following information:

- 1) A detailed line-item budget of expenses for the overhead (i.e., facilities, equipment, accounting, maintenance, etc.) required to deliver Direct Workforce Services for one year (July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026) for each Facility where services will be provided.
- 2) A detailed budget for staff (i.e., salaries, fringe benefits, travel, etc.) to deliver Direct Workforce Services for one year (July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026).
- 3) If applicable, a budget for the delivery of One-Stop Operator services for one year (July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026), in a total amount not to exceed \$10,000 per Comprehensive Career Center that you intend to serve.

(v) **Organizational Documentation.** Bidders will provide copies of the following documentation:

- 1) An internal organizational chart showing all of Bidder's employees;
- 2) Two (2) years of audited financial history; and
- 3) A report on the status of any costs that have been disallowed by any state and/or federal agency within the past three (3) years.

Failure to submit this documentation will disqualify a Bidder from consideration.

Section 7.04 EKCEP Review.

- (a) EKCEP's review team will evaluate each proposal based on the criteria set forth in this RFP. The review team members' scores will be tabulated. The maximum score for Bidders applying to provide only Direct Workforce Services is 100 points. The maximum score for Bidders applying to provide Direct Workforce Services and serve as a One-Stop Operator is 200 points. The scores will be used as a guide for discussion and Bidder selection.
- (b) In addition to the other requirements set forth herein, each proposal will be evaluated by EKCEP's review team based upon the Bidder's:
 - (i) Responsiveness to the information requested and format prescribed in this RFP;
 - (ii) Demonstrated ability to provide the fiscal and administrative capacity to support EKCEP's service delivery model;
 - (iii) Cost reasonableness;
 - (iv) Innovation and creativity in developing strategies to address the challenges identified in the narrative questions;
 - (v) Creativity and eagerness to reach out to new customers and partners for workforce development services;
 - (vi) Demonstrated capacity to work proactively and effectively within the communities they serve, including consideration for a history of successful collaboration and outreach with partner agencies and employers; and
 - (vii) Demonstrated understanding of the economic and workforce needs of the Local Workforce Area.
- (c) The review team reserves the right to request additional information from any Bidder, including, without limitation, lease agreements, personnel policies, and Indirect Cost Rate approval letters.
- (d) Proposals meeting the requirements set forth in Section 7.03(c) will receive 5 points.
- (e) The review team will also evaluate the budgets included in each proposal, with an emphasis on the appropriate proportion of line items in relation to the services and initiatives identified in the proposal's narrative. Proposed budgets are not final and may be adjusted through Contract negotiation.
- (f) EKCEP staff will recommend certain proposals to the WIB, but the final selection of awardees will be made by the WIB.

Section 7.05 Negotiating and Awarding the Contract.

- (a) Upon initial selection of the preferred proposal(s), EKCEP and the WIB retain the right to negotiate with each Bidder to modify the proposal(s) and determine the terms of the contract between such Bidder and EKCEP (the “**Contract**”). If such negotiations fail to produce a mutually acceptable Contract, EKCEP and the WIB reserve the right to retract their approval of any proposal and select another proposal.
- (b) The duration of the Contract will be one (1) year (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026). However, based on successful performance, the WIB may choose to renew the Contract annually for up to three (3) additional years.
- (c) The Contract will require Bidder to:
 - (i) Comply with EKCEP’s standard terms, conditions, and policies;
 - (ii) Comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations;
 - (iii) Provide the applicable services regardless of EKCEP’s current or future funding sources;
 - (iv) Work cooperatively and effectively with any entities that partner with EKCEP in grants;
 - (v) Employ appropriate staff members if EKCEP obtains additional funding which requires Bidder’s employees to maintain special competencies or certifications;
 - (vi) Accept full responsibility for payment of all unemployment compensation, contributions or reimbursements, insurance premiums, all income tax deductions, social security deductions, and any and all other employee taxes and payroll accounting required for all of its employees; and
 - (vii) Hold EKCEP and its directors, officers, managers, and employees harmless from any and all liabilities or claims caused or resulting from a breach of Bidder’s obligations under the Contract, along with other special indemnities which shall be negotiated among the parties.

8. Reservation of Rights.

Section 8.01 EKCEP reserves the option to use this RFP to add or increase workforce services within the Local Workforce Area if additional funding for related workforce services becomes available and it is in the best interest of the Local Workforce Area and EKCEP to do so.

Section 8.02 EKCEP reserves the right to delay, amend, reissue, or cancel all or any part of this RFP at any time without prior notice. Notice of cancelation shall be sent to all Bidders that submitted a proposal.

Section 8.03 This RFP does not commit EKCEP to accept any proposal and EKCEP will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by a Bidder in the preparation of responses to this RFP or in Contract negotiation.

Section 8.04 EKCEP reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to accept or reject any or all items in any proposal, and to award Contracts in whole or in part as is deemed to be in the best interest of EKCEP. EKCEP reserves the right to negotiate with any Bidder after proposals are reviewed.

[End of text.]

APPENDIX 1

Proposal Cover and Affirmations Form

Please copy, complete, and sign the cover and affirmations form that appears on the following page. Use the completed form as the first page of your proposal.

Proposal to Deliver Workforce Services to Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth, and Provide Business Services to Employers and/or to Serve as a One-Stop Operator in the Kentucky Career Center Network in the Eastern Kentucky C.E.P. Local Workforce Area

During Program Year 2025
(July 1, 2025—June 30, 2026)

Full Name of Bidder:			
Full Mailing Address (Street, City, State, ZIP):			
Proposing to Provide: <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Workforce Services <input type="checkbox"/> One-Stop Operator Services			
Organization Type (non-profit, for-profit, LLC, etc.):	EIN Number:	Year Established:	Phone Numbers (include area code):
Contact Persons			
Name:		Title:	
<p>AFFIRMATIONS: The person signing below affirms that he/she is authorized to submit this proposal on behalf of the Bidder. The person signing below further affirms that the Bidder is capable of performing the services (including fiscal management and information tracking and reporting) as described in the attached proposal and agrees to the terms of service as described in the Request for Proposals to which this proposal responds.</p>			
Signature:			Date:
Printed Name:		Title:	

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