	NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS
	DWS Operational Guidance Number: OG 04-2022
	Date: August 23, 2022
	Subject: American Rescue Plan Act Grant Funding Available to Local Area Workforce Development Boards
	From:
	Chet Mottershead
	Chet Mottershead **Assistant Secretary for Workforce**

Purpose: To transmit the guidelines and application for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant funding. Local Area Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) will have the opportunity to apply for three separate grant opportunities: Substance Use Disorder Recovery, Reentry Support, and Small Business Work-Based Learning.

Background: The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was enacted on March 11, 2021, to provide relief to address the continued impact of COVID-19 on the economy, public health, state and local governments, individuals, and businesses. A component of ARPA is the State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF), which provides $5.4 billion to North Carolina to help turn the tide on the pandemic, address its economic fallout, and lay the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery.

The N.C. General Assembly appropriated SFRF in Session Law 2021-180. The N.C. Pandemic Recovery Office (NCPRO) is responsible for overseeing and monitoring the use of the SFRF, as well as reporting to the U.S. Treasury on behalf of state agencies.

The Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) has been allocated ARPA funds to focus on three workforce development areas. DWS has designated $2 million in funding to assist individuals with a Substance Use Disorder, $2 million for expanding Reentry Jobseeker Services, and $6 million of the $10 million awarded to DWS for Work-Based Learning opportunities to assist small- and micro-businesses (i.e., businesses with twenty-five [25] or fewer employees), as well as expand funding for On-the-Job Training (OJT), Work Experience (WEX), and Incumbent Worker Training (IWT). These programs are in keeping with the spirit of both North Carolina's "First in Talent" Plan and Governor Cooper's NC Job Ready initiative.

Each grant provides DWS an opportunity to engage with new partners or provide innovative and enhanced services that are not easily administered through current Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) guidelines. The grants are to serve individuals and businesses during the period of October 24, 2022 to December 30, 2026.

NCWorks Substance Use Disorder Recovery Grant funding may be utilized to further implement and enhance programs to assist local communities impacted by the opioid epidemic and other substance use disorders (SUDs). The goal is to increase workforce participation and job retention of persons in recovery through an increase in education, knowledge, and workforce skills and by ensuring they are ready to work. These efforts may include training in soft skills required in the workplace, providing access to postsecondary educational opportunities for training specific to high-demand employment sectors, and offering support for job retention. Grant activities could also include direct support from case managers and wraparound services (e.g., transportation, childcare, food stabilization) to help remove barriers to employment.

NCWorks Reentry Support Grant funding may be used to provide comprehensive services to Justice-Involved (JI) individuals focusing on their specific challenges and job search needs post-release. Grant activities may include providing individuals with information about community resources for housing, clothing, and medical needs. Supportive services provided may include assistance with transportation needs. In addition to this funding opportunity, NCWorks Reentry staff will provide information on expungement clinics, vital records appropriation, certificates of relief, letters of explanation, and resume writing within correctional facilities.

Local Area WDB applications that include partnering with the Fierce Fellows Reentry training program and have an active Reentry program will be given special consideration.

NCWorks Small Business Work-Based Learning Grant funding may be used to establish work-based learning opportunities targeting small- and micro-businesses (i.e., businesses with twenty-five [25] or fewer employees) to bridge the gap for business retention and expansion with funding for OJT, WEX, and IWT. Emphasis should be placed on historically underutilized businesses, industries significantly impacted by the pandemic, or businesses located in an economically distressed Tier 1 or Tier 2 county. This funding will also assist with marketing and technology expenses to develop and maintain the training platform and to market and promote the trainings.

Action: A Local Area WDB may apply for multiple ARPA Grants by submitting completed applications by **September 23, 2022.**

Local Area WDB grant requests may not exceed $200,000 for Substance Use Disorder Recovery funding, $200,000 for Reentry Support funding, and up to $1 million for Small Business Work-Based Learning funding.

The WDB must consider the need for training, supplies, and support for customers. All participants served must be co-enrolled in WIOA Title I and registered in NCWorks.gov. Eligibility information for each training participant, including specific information identified for the grant initiative, must be entered in NCWorks.gov. Grant participants served will be tracked as other WIOA enrollments and are included in performance calculations.

Note: Funds shall be awarded based upon availability. ARPA funding must be obligated by December 30, 2024 and must be expended by December 30, 2026. WDBs are

responsible for returning unexpended funds on the approved project.

**Effective
Date:**   August 23, 2022

Expiration: December 30, 2026

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Attachments: 1. ARPA Grant Guidelines
2. ARPA Grant Application
3. ARPA Grant Goals, Outcomes, and Measures
4. ARPA Grant Application Budget
5. ARPA Grant Sample Report