

Direct Care Workforce Innovation Program

Questions and Answers

- Question:** Are applicants required to demonstrate that they have strategies in place to capture the reporting metrics required for the program?

Answer: No, the application does not require projects to demonstrate or justify that they will be able to capture the required program deliverables; however, applicants may choose to submit supplemental information along with their applications that demonstrates their ability to accurately capture data. Any applicant who is awarded a grant must also comply with the reporting requirements set forth in the policy.
- Question:** Does the training itself have to end with a promotion or credential?

Answer: There are no requirements that participants earn a wage increase or title promotion, or credential upon training completion.
- Question:** Does it make a difference if there are only 1-2 students in a program compared to larger cohorts?

Answer: Review teams will not be instructed to weigh applications in favor of those that serve more individuals. Review teams are assessing applications based on the quality of the project proposed and the project's adherence to grant application requirements.
- Question:** Is there a match of funds required?

Answer: Yes, applicants must be able to demonstrate a 100% cash or in-kind match of the requested award total.
- Question:** Does the training partner have to be a HBCU?

Answer: No, there are no partnership requirements for the Direct Care Workforce Innovation Program; however, MD Labor strongly encourages partnerships between and among training providers, supportive service providers, and employers, as needed.
- Question:** Does the project plan with the projected job openings need to be submitted as an Excel spreadsheet?

Answer: Question 3B on the grant application includes space for applicants to provide information on current or projected job opening or relevant Labor Market Information related to direct care workers in the region to be served by the project. An applicant may choose to submit supplemental documentation, if needed.
- Question:** Can we mix some sources of Apprenticeship funds and use them for the match?

Answer: Matching funds can include a variety of items such as but not limited to staff time, training space, and instructor costs. Matching funds may come from state, federal, philanthropic, or other in-kind sources.

8. **Question:** Would a nonprofit that has educated Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) and other nursing home/assisted living staff, not as a training school but as a private entity, be eligible on its own or in partnership with a nursing home that does NOT currently train its CNAs?

Answer: Non-profits that have an established record of recruiting or providing training to direct care workers are eligible to apply for the grant. Applicants must also be in compliance with any requirements of the Maryland Higher Education Commission and/or the Maryland Department of Health. Non-profits without an established record of recruiting or providing training to direct care workers would also be eligible to apply if they develop a new training in consultation with an organization that does have a record of providing training..

9. **Question:** If an applicant plans to establish a training program in consultation with an “organization with an established record of providing training to direct care workers” does that consulting organization have to be an established CNA training school or could it be another kind of training entity?

Answer: The primary applicant does not need to be an established CNA training school if they are working in consultation to develop a training program with another organization that has an established record of providing training to direct care workers.

10. **Question:** We anticipate that many trainees will have significant barriers passing the written and skills exam now required for Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) certification. Will MDOL consider allowing grant funds to support candidates with English and other test prep services?

Answer: Recognizing the importance of providing innovative services to recruit and retain program participants, a variety of supportive services may be funded. This could potentially include supportive services tailored for English language learners and test prep. Applicants should identify barriers relevant to their target participant population and describe their proposed solutions in the grant application narrative. Supportive services outside those enumerated in the policy must be approved in writing by MD Labor.

11. **Question:** Would a public community college be eligible to apply?

Answer: Any nonprofit organization, labor organization, employer of direct care workers, or entity with shared labor-management oversight that meets the eligibility requirements set forth on page 8 of the policy would be eligible to apply:

<https://labor.maryland.gov/employment/mpi/mpi3-26.pdf>.

12. **Question:** Are Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) eligible to be considered as a type of “Direct Care Worker” for applicants to serve under this funding opportunity?

Answer: Yes, Direct Support Professionals may constitute "direct care workers" under this funding opportunity, to the extent they are performing the role that is sometimes called "personal aide." For a full chart of allowable occupations, please review pages 7-8 of the program policy.

13. **Question:** If you are currently a DCWIP grant recipient, can you participate in this new grant as well - maybe for a different population for the new grant?

Answer: Yes, past and current grantees may be eligible to apply. Funds may be used to continue activities that were previously underway or to implement a new project. Please bear in mind that the Division may not award a matching grant to an eligible entity that exceeds \$50,000 each year. In addition, grant funds must be used to supplement, not supplant, the amount of funds that would be available absent the grant award.

14. **Question:** Must the training provider be headquartered and based in Maryland?

15. **Answer:** No, there are no geographic requirements for training partners for the Direct Care Workforce Innovation Program. However, please consider that the purpose of the program is to increase the number and availability of direct care workers across Maryland, and "Direct Care Workers" for the purposes of this program are defined by reference to Maryland certifying agencies. Additionally, priority consideration will be granted to entities that are working to increase the number of direct care workers who live or will work in Maryland ENOUGH communities.