

**SUBJECT:** Green Jobs

**REFERENCE:** Workforce Investment Act of 1998; The Green Jobs Act of 2007; American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009; Energy Policy Act of 2005; TEN 44-08; TEN 40-08; Federal Register/Vol. 74, No. 120/June 24, 2009; State Workforce Investment Plan, as modified; Apprenticeship policy; and Demand Occupations policy.

**BACKGROUND:** On December 19, 2007, The Green Jobs Act of 2007 was signed into law, as Title X of H.R. 6, The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-140). The Green Jobs Act of 2007 amends Section 171 of the Workforce Investment Act by establishing the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Worker Training program. The program has two major components: 1) The collection, analysis, and exchange of labor market data with members of the workforce investment system, public and private industry, labor, and community and non-profit organizations, and 2) Grants for training target populations in energy efficiency and renewable energy industries including construction, renewable electric power, energy efficient vehicles, and biofuels. The Act authorizes \$125 million to be appropriated each fiscal year for activities contained in the legislation, with up to 20 percent for labor market data and research activities and the remainder for job training. No funding was provided for this program in the FY 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act. However, on February 17, 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 was signed into law and designated \$500 million in funding for projects that prepare workers for careers in energy efficiency and renewable energy as described in the Green Jobs Act of 2007. In the June 24, 2009 Federal Register, notices of the availability of funds and solicitations for grant applications announced opportunities to apply for these "green job training" funds.

**POLICY:** The purpose of the Green Jobs Act was to move the United States toward greater energy independence and security, to increase the production of clean renewable fuels, to increase the efficiency of products, buildings, and vehicles, to promote research on and deploy greenhouse gas capture and storage options, and to improve energy performance in the Federal government.

### Strategic Vision for Competitive Grants Under the Recovery Act

When the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training (ETA), formulated a series of grant competitions under the Recovery Act, they set forth the following strategic vision:

1. Assist individuals impacted by the recession by providing training and placement into employment, including the transition of auto and auto-related workers to jobs in the green energy sector. [In Nebraska, counties impacted by automotive-related restructuring include Buffalo, Dawson, Dixon, Platte, and Seward.]
2. Promote economic recovery by supporting the training needs of workers and employers in high growth and emerging industries.
3. Offer an opportunity to demonstrate how partnerships between the public workforce system and other public and private systems can meet the workforce needs of the energy efficiency and renewable energy sectors and other industry sectors including labor management partnerships, education institutions, community and faith-based organizations, and research institutions.
4. Undertake collaborative activities designed to define emerging energy efficiency and renewable energy jobs and train qualified workers to fill them.
5. Serve the purpose of training and teaching workers the skills being created in these emerging energy efficiency and renewable energy sectors.

### Workforce System Framework for Action

The U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Website provides a draft “green jobs” workforce system framework for action at [http://www.doleta.gov/pdf/No\\_Workers\\_Frame\\_0306.pdf](http://www.doleta.gov/pdf/No_Workers_Frame_0306.pdf). The framework identifies the foundational and operational elements required for serving the needs of the workforce system and its customers. It is designed to promote the development of new and existing green jobs, and hasten widespread employment in green careers across several industry sectors.

#### Foundational Principles

As part of the foundational principles, it divides transforming industrial sectors and occupations into:

1. Energy Generation/Efficiency/Security including:
  - a. Renewable/Green Energy (i.e., wind, solar, geo, biomass)
  - b. Sustainable Manufacturing;
  - c. Construction/Skilled Trades; and
  - d. Transportation.
2. Environmental Protection including:
  - a. Government Oversight
  - b. Water Management
  - c. Materials and Waste Management.

## Operations

The operational section of the Framework describes specific actions to be taken depending on the role of the agent.

1. Service Delivery Strategies, Policies, and Programs shall align to:
  - a. Invest in program resources focused on re-skilling/re-employing in green jobs;
  - b. Ensure program participants have access to “green skills” and “green jobs;”
  - c. Build on and leverage existing sector initiatives and green workforce solutions;
  - d. Focus program policy, direction, and strategic investments to reflect emphasis on “green;” and
  - e. Ensure One-Stop staff have knowledge about “green jobs” and focus service delivery strategies on “green.”
2. Education and Training Models should focus on these actions:
  - a. Map “green” education pathways leading to portable and industry recognized credentials – short term/long term;
  - b. Identify and leverage existing education and training resources/investments;
  - c. Educate and train to industry standards/credentials;
  - d. Build capacity of community colleges;
  - e. Refine/develop “green” apprenticeship models; and
  - f. Prepare workers for emerging industry occupations.
3. The role of Strategic Partnerships for Workforce Solutions is important and includes these actions:
  - a. Engage and meet with strategic partners;
  - b. Align “green” strategies with regional economic recovery and growth strategies;
  - c. Define workforce challenges;
  - d. Develop innovative workforce solutions;
  - e. Asset map to share/leverage knowledge products and resources; and
  - f. Collaborate with partners.
4. The Workforce and Labor Market Information role includes these actions:
  - a. Collaborate to develop and leverage new and existing data/information sources;
  - b. Project new jobs, changing jobs, occupational definitions and new skill needs;
  - c. Refine/develop competency models, assessment tools, and career ladders/lattices; [Note: Industry competency models are discussed in TEN 40-08.]
  - d. Adapt and refine career guidance tools; and
  - e. Collaborate to disseminate.
5. The Knowledge Sharing, Networking and Communications role includes these actions:
  - a. Develop new “green” learning opportunities for workforce system staff at all levels;

- b. Fully leverage the communication, knowledge sharing, and e-learning capacity of Workforce3 One;
  - c. Build and nurture a “green jobs” community of practice;
  - d. Leverage conferences and other communication forums to network and share knowledge; and
  - e. Promote peer to peer and mentorship learning opportunities and professional development.
6. Research and Accountability actions include:
- a. Research and evaluation;
  - b. Performance reporting and benchmarking;
  - c. Comprehensive system for training grantees/sub-grantees and monitoring compliance at all levels;
  - d. Competitive procurement for contracts and grants; and
  - e. Transparency of grant and contract making to public.

### Definitions

There are seven *energy efficiency and renewable energy industries* defined in section 171(e)(1)B(ii) of the Workforce Investment Act. They include:

- The energy-efficient building, construction, and retrofit industries;
- The renewable electric power industry;
- The energy efficient and advanced drive train vehicle industry;
- The biofuels industry;
- The deconstruction and materials use industries;
- The energy efficiency assessment industry serving residential, commercial, or industrial sectors; and
- Manufacturers that produce sustainable products using environmentally sustainable processes and materials.

A “*competency model*” is a collection of competencies that taken together define successful performance in a particular work setting. Developed for specific jobs, job groups, organizations, occupations or industries, models typically include: competency names and definitions; descriptions of activities or behaviors associated with each competency; and a graphic diagram of the model.

“*Renewable energy*” is defined as “electric energy generated from solar, wind, biomass, landfill gas, ocean (including tidal, wave, current, and thermal), geothermal, municipal solid waste, or new hydroelectric generation capacity achieved from increased efficiency or additions of new capacity at an existing hydroelectric project.” [Section 203(b)(2) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005]

“*Energy efficiency*” can be broadly defined as programs aimed at mitigating the use of energy, reducing harmful emissions, and decreasing overall energy consumption.”

Three general categories of occupations, based on different consequences of green economy activities and technologies, are examined in a research paper

titled “Greening of the World of Work: Implications for O\*NET-SOC and New and Emerging Occupations” drafted by the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) project. They include:

1. Existing occupations expected to experience primarily an increase in employment demand;
2. Existing occupations with significant change to the work and worker requirements; and
3. New and emerging green occupations.

This report and a listing of the identified occupations is available at <http://www.onetcenter.org/reports/Green.html>.

#### Eligibility – Target Populations

Under Section 171 of the Workforce Investment Act, as amended, the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Worker Training program established target populations of eligible individuals to be given priority for training and other services including:

1. Workers affected by national energy and environmental policy;
2. Individuals in need of updated training related to the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries;
3. Veterans, or past and present members of reserve components of the Armed Forces;
4. Unemployed workers;
5. Individuals, including at-risk youth, seeking employment pathways out of poverty and into economic self-sufficiency; and
6. Individuals with a criminal record [formerly incarcerated, adjudicated, non-violent offenders].

Note: Other individuals, such as untapped labor pools including individuals with disabilities and entry-level and incumbent workers that do not fit into the categories above, may also be served through grant projects subject to the priority considerations given to the populations above.

#### Strategic Planning Process

If Nebraska decides to develop a Sector Plan, it must use an inclusive process designed by the Nebraska Workforce Investment Board with the State workforce agencies, local WIBs, One-Stop Career Center delivery systems and partners (including labor organizations and employers or industry organizations) having a strong voice and integral role.

It is suggested that the strategic planning sessions encompass the following:

1. Review and analyze the Governor’s overall workforce vision and goals, energy policy and, if available, specific policies for energy efficiency and renewable energy industries; [As noted in the Strategic State Recovery Act Plan: “In Governor Heineman’s April 14, 2009 letter to Secretary Steven Chu (U.S. Department of Energy), he said “the State is committed to improving energy efficiency and renewable energy, as well as a balanced State energy

policy.”]

2. Establish the State strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce to meet the current and emerging needs of the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries, and aligning those efforts with overall workforce development, education, and economic development;
3. Analyze and determine the sectors where investments are or will be made and the occupations and skill needs within the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries that will be targeted;
4. Analyze and determine the populations that will be targeted, the characteristics of those populations that have specific workforce challenges or could benefit from specific sector strategies, and training activities that address the needs and demands of those targeted sectors and target populations; and
5. Develop an energy sector strategy for training workers in the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries, and propose training activities that lead to employment in targeted industry sectors. The strategy should include delivery of training services through local and regional project teams, led by local WIBs or regional consortia of Boards and their One Stop Career Center delivery systems, along with appropriate partners that will deliver training. This includes a plan for how funds will be distributed to those project teams that aligns with the State's vision and strategies.