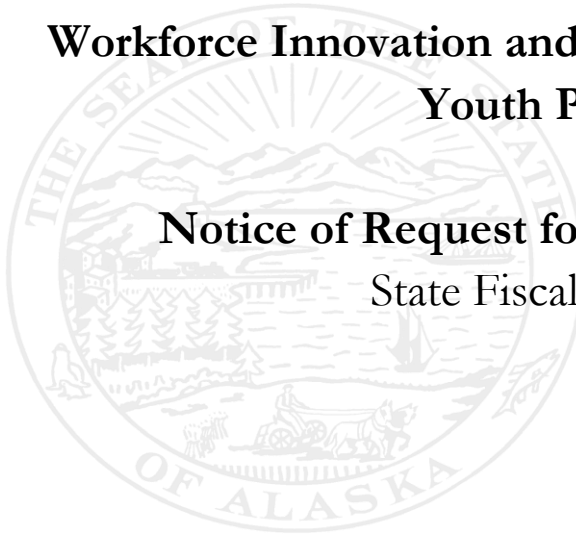


STATE OF ALASKA
Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Division of Employment and Training Services

Commissioner Heidi Drygas

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
Youth Program

Notice of Request for Grant Applications
State Fiscal Year 2019



Date of Issue: March 1, 2018

Application Deadline:

Grant Applications must be submitted through EGrAMS

By 5:00 p.m., April 27, 2018



GENERAL INFORMATION

Project Timeline - July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019

This solicitation is for a one year project period, with the potential for a second and third year extension. Year to year grant continuation will be based on sub recipient performance. Funding will be approved for the same or similar level each year based on federal funding availability subject to legislative appropriation.

Eligible Applicants - Non-profit or for-profit organizations, school districts, educators, industry trainers, employers, community services agencies, Alaska Native organizations, and other organizations with the capacity to provide the services identified in this Request for Grant Applications. If a contractor, subcontractor, or other entities will be relied upon to deliver services, they must be identified in the proposal. Each project partner must be qualified to accept and administer federal funding and have the ability to provide or facilitate the training or services as described in this solicitation.

EGRAMS - Grant applications must be submitted through the **Electronic Grants Administration and Management System**, EGrAMS accessed through the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development website at egram.s.dol.alaska.gov. A sample application form, grant agreement, definitions and references, and frequently asked questions are available for view in EGrAMS. Questions about EGrAMS should be directed to the EGrAMS Help Desk at (907) 465-4893 or dol.dbp.egram.s.helpdesk@alaska.gov

Program Contact - Questions about the content of this Request for Grant Applications (RGA) should be directed to Shane Bannarbie, Program Coordinator at (907) 269-4551 or shane.bannarbie@alaska.gov

RGA Informational Teleconferences - Two teleconferences will be held to answer questions about the Request for Grant applications (RGA) and application process.

Teleconference I	March 22, 2018	Time: 10:00 am
Teleconference II	April 3, 2018	Time: 02:00 pm

Dial in Conference Number: 1-888-354-0094
Conference ID: 7345413#

Americans with Disabilities Act - Auxiliary aides and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. To make arrangements for auxiliary aides or services, please contact the Department of Employment and Training Services at (907) 269-4551 no later than ten working days prior to the application deadline. The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. All sub recipients and sub-contractors must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

INTRODUCTION

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) title 1B youth program is administered by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration and operated by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Employment and Training Services. Alaska's WIOA youth program is designed to help disadvantaged and disconnected youth ages 14-24 access employment, education, training, and support services needed to compete in today's global economy.

The department is requesting competitive grant applications for the WIOA youth program to deliver innovative and effective youth services as prescribed by the US Department of Labor. Depending on funding availability, the amount of WIOA youth funds for competitive grants in Fiscal Year 2019 is anticipated to be between \$1.7 and \$2 million.

For disadvantaged and disconnected youth, the effects of limited education, social exclusion, employment gaps and lack of work experience can negatively impact the course of their lives with long-term consequences affecting individual earnings and self-sufficiency.

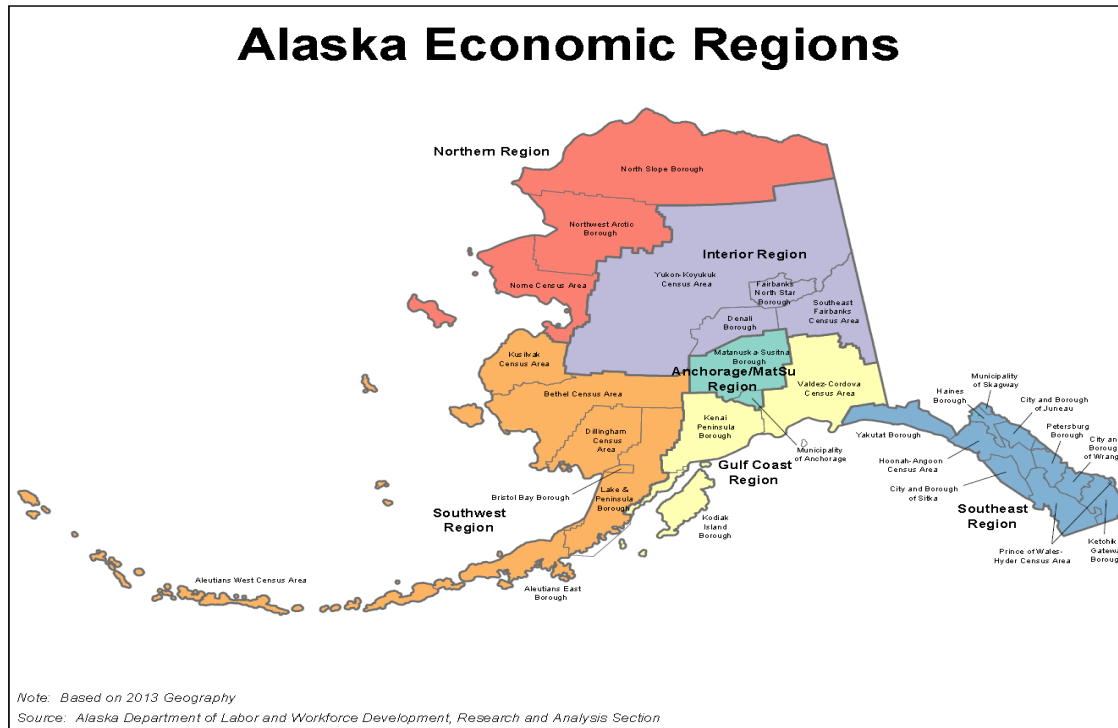
WIOA youth projects include activities leading to the attainment of secondary school diploma or equivalent; prepares youth for postsecondary education comprising of occupational, academic or registered apprenticeship training that leads to the attainment of an industry recognized credential; prepares youth for unsubsidized employment opportunities; and creates connections to employers for work in priority industries and in-demand occupations.

Alaska's WIOA youth program is aligned with the Governor's and Alaska Workforce Investment Board's priorities for workforce development, which includes the expansion of registered apprenticeship to develop Alaska's workforce and efforts to reduce and mitigate suicide among young Alaskans, particularly among Alaska Native youth.

In an effort to address youth suicide within the state, the department is requesting that applicants include suicide prevention awareness for all participants in youth programs. Successful applicants will receive suicide prevention resources and materials from the department. If an applicant already provides suicide prevention awareness, that information should be included in the proposal.

The division seeks applicants from the six economic regions of the state. Applicants must be able to provide academic, employment, and training services to eligible WIOA youth ages 14-24. Successful applicants will offer a comprehensive workforce development program that prepares youth for post-secondary education, employment and career development. WIOA youth programs should cultivate and expand relationships among industry, employers, schools, postsecondary vocational training, and sponsors of pre-apprentice and registered apprentice programs. The goal is to create sustainable workforce development programs for Alaska's neediest youth and young adults that lead to self-sufficiency.

The economic regions are Anchorage/Matsu; Gulf Coast, Interior, Northern, Southeast and Southwest as referenced in the map below:



WIOA places a priority on services to out-of-school youth and requires that a minimum of 75 percent of the total state allotment be used for this population and 25 percent to be used to serve in-school youth.

Projects focusing on out-of-school youth are strongly encouraged to apply; however projects serving in-school youth are also encouraged to apply in order to promote a well-balanced youth program.

At least 20 percent of total funds must be used for work based learning activities that have an academic and occupational education component. Work based learning includes summer employment, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships, job shadowing and on-the-job training.

WIOA requires the development of career pathways, defined as a combination of rigorous and high quality education, training and other services that:

- align the skill needs of industries in the regional economy involved;
- prepare an individual to be successful in secondary or postsecondary education;
- include counseling to support an individual in achieving their education and career goals;

- include, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- organize education, training and other services to meet the needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement to the extent practicable;
- enable an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least one recognized postsecondary credential; and
- help an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Successful applicants must be able to develop, implement and track participant career pathway progress.

Projects awarded funding from this solicitation shall operate a youth program in accordance with the guidelines and regulations promulgated within the WIOA. In order to guarantee youth programs serve participants for the amount of time necessary to ensure they are successfully prepared to enter post-secondary education and unsubsidized employment, this solicitation is for one year with an option to extend for up to two additional years based on performance and funding availability. Subsequent grant negotiations will occur prior to the beginning of each fiscal year to ensure alignment with available funding and the scope of work adjusted accordingly.

At any point during the grant period, funds may be recaptured in whole or in part if the division determines that the mandatory functions of the WIOA youth program are not being provided as identified in this solicitation and sub recipient scope of work. Recapturing of funds will be based upon grant recipients' ability to comply with WIOA regulations, division policies, program performance and activities. Sub recipient performance will be reviewed and assessed quarterly.

SCOPE OF WORK

This solicitation seeks to fund projects that provide a systematic approach to engage and ensure Alaska's disconnected and disadvantaged (neediest) youth receive the support and guidance needed to obtain the education, skills, training, experience and credentials required to be competitively employable and successful in today's job market.

Projects must be easily accessible to youth and grant recipients must have qualified staff, resource capacity, and experience to provide youth services as evidenced by project location, staff credentials and demonstrated performance in one or more similar youth employment programs.

Successful applicants will make available either directly, or through a partner agency, the WIOA youth 14 basic elements and provide all mandatory youth program functions described within the Project Framework section of the solicitation. Projects must have developed and documented relationships, such as a memorandum of agreement, with partner organizations and a clear understanding of how and which organization will provide services.

Sub recipients must incorporate work-based learning into their project and devote 20 percent of their budget to the mandated provision of paid or unpaid work experience activities to participants. Program expenditures for work based learning include participant wages as well as staffing costs for the development and management of these activities.

Youth attainment of degrees and industry recognized credentials leading employment to meet labor market demands are a priority and applicants are strongly encouraged to identify and partner with occupational training providers, [pre-apprenticeship](#) programs and registered apprenticeship programs. These partnerships shall be documented by a letter of commitment from the training provider and attached to the application. Applicants are responsible for determining how many participants they anticipate placing into contracted training, [pre-apprenticeship](#) or registered apprenticeship programs and budget accordingly to support their projections. If awarded a grant, projections and budgets for training partnerships will be negotiated based on actual award amount.

YOUTH PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

In-school youth are between the ages of 14-21 who are attending school and low income based upon the current Lower Living Standard Income Level ([LLSIL](#)) [poverty guidelines](#), and facing one or more of the following barriers:

1. deficient in basic literacy skills as has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level;
2. English language learner in addition to his or her native language;
3. homeless, a runaway, or in foster care;
4. pregnant, or parenting;
5. subject to the juvenile or adult justice system;
6. has a disability; or
7. requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment.

Out-of-school youth are between the ages of 16-24, not attending school and facing one or more of the following barriers:

1. a school dropout;
2. is within the age of compulsory school attendance but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter;
3. recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is low-income and basic skills deficient or an English language learner;
4. subject to the juvenile or adult justice system;
5. homeless, a runaway, or in foster care;
6. pregnant, or parenting;
7. has a disability; or

8. requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment.

All males age 18 and older participating in the WIOA youth program, including foreign nationals, must be registered with the Selective Service prior to enrollment. Sub recipients must ensure copies of Selective Service documentation is maintained in the participant's file.

Detailed program eligibility definitions can be located on the division's youth program website at http://labor.alaska.gov/bp/ygr/Eligibility_Definitions.pdf.

Priority Populations

Priority populations include those youth who have been defined as “neediest” according to the [Federal Shared Youth Vision](#). Applicants must demonstrate the ability to recruit and adequately serve the priority populations.

Neediest youth include:

1. children of incarcerated parents (either one or both);
2. youth involved, or at risk of involvement, with the criminal justice system;
3. homeless and runaway youth;
4. Alaska Native or American Indian;
5. migrant youth;
6. out-of-school youth;
7. youth most at risk of dropping out of school ([at risk situations can be found here](#));
8. youth in or aging out of foster care; and
9. youth with disabilities.

14 REQUIRED WIOA YOUTH BASIC ELEMENTS

There are 14 basic program elements that must be made available to participants in a WIOA youth program. The elements are intended as a realm of possible services available to meet each youth's unique need; it is not intended that *all* youth will need each service while in the program. Applicants must demonstrate they possess the necessary resources and partnerships to provide the 14 basic elements. Applicants will have the discretion to determine which program services will be provided to a participant based on each participant's objective assessment and individual service strategy.

The 14 basic elements include:

1. **tutoring, study skills training and instruction** leading to high school completion, including dropout prevention strategies;

2. **alternative high school services** which offer specialized, structured curriculum inside or outside of the public school system;
3. **summer youth employment** that takes place between May 15th and September 30th and consists of employment for which youth are paid a wage and results in occupational learning that leads to an employment goal;
4. **paid and unpaid work experiences** including internships and job shadowing, are short-term, planned, structured learning experiences that occur in a workplace and are focused on career exploration and the development of work readiness skills;
5. **occupational skills training** that lead to the attainment of a certificate or credential; including participation in Job Corps, apprenticeship programs, and training programs that provide skills necessary to enter or advance in a specific occupation;
6. **leadership development opportunities** including community service and peer-centered activities that encourage responsibility, employability, and other positive social behaviors;
7. **adult mentoring** in a one-to-one supportive relationship between and adult and a youth that is based on trust and lasts for duration of at least 12 months;
8. **supportive services** to enable an individual to participate in program activities such as housing, meals, medical care, daycare, transportation, school related supplies, and training related supplies;
9. **follow-up services** to monitor the success of youth during their transition to employment or education and provide assistance as needed for a successful transition;
10. **comprehensive guidance and counseling** to help youth make and implement informed educational, occupational, and life choices;
11. **financial literacy education** to gain skills needed to create household budgets, initiate savings plans, and make informed financial decisions about education, retirement, home ownership, wealth building, and other savings goals;
12. **entrepreneurial skills training** using a curriculum based training module that teach youth the value of being skilled and applying those skills to meet a consumer need or demand, to think creatively and critically, to problem solve; how to recognize opportunities, and other skills related to entrepreneurialism;
13. **career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration** using labor market and employment information on in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area; and
14. **activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training** including exposure to post-secondary education options, assisting youth with placement into post-secondary education, and placement into training opportunities such as apprenticeships and occupational training.

Applicants will need to clearly define how each element will be provided and by whom, and how success will be achieved in their project proposal. If other partners or agencies will be tasked with providing one or more of the elements, applicants must provide documentation of the agreements with the other agencies.

PROJECT FRAMEWORK

A WIOA youth project requires the following components:

1. outreach and recruitment;
2. intake;
3. objective assessment;
4. individual Service Strategy (ISS) development;
5. exit and follow-up services; and
6. referrals to other resources.

Project proposals shall clearly outline how each of the following will be delivered.

Outreach and Recruitment

Outreach and recruitment activities are intended to increase awareness of the WIOA youth program services and may be delivered via multiple means. Applicants must have a strategy for actively recruiting eligible youth through established partnerships, area schools, places frequented by youth and other social service agencies serving youth and their families.

Intake

Intake involves registration, eligibility determination, the collection of information to support eligibility, pre-screening of potential participants to provide a general orientation to self-help services, and referrals to other partners and resources. Each youth will complete a program application, and an eligibility determination must be made within five business days of requested services. Completion of the application, a determination of eligibility, and delivery of a service will constitute enrollment into the program. All individuals served by this program must be entered into the division's Individual Case Management (ICM) system within 30 days of the first youth service.

Objective Assessment

The objective assessment is a process that identifies a participant's academic level, goals, interests, skill levels, abilities, aptitudes, supportive service needs and employability potential. The sub recipient shall perform an objective assessment on each participant using interviews, questionnaires, standardized tests, recent school records, and other approved assessment tools. A new assessment is not required if the provider determines it is appropriate to use a recent assessment or Individual Service Strategy (ISS), that was completed by another education, rehabilitation, or training program partner agency. Applicants must have staff qualified to perform objective assessments and include the assessment tools they will use in their proposal.

Referral

If the objective assessment indicates that a youth participant requires services other than those available through the WIOA youth project, a referral must be made to an appropriate agency that can provide the

needed services. This encourages leveraging of similar resources and benefits. For example, Youth with disabilities may be referred or co-enrolled with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for additional services. Out-of-school youth age 18 – 24 may be co-enrolled with the WIOA Adult program available through the Alaska job centers to leverage resources and services.

Individual Service Strategy Development

The Individual Service Strategy (ISS) is the plan that identifies education and employment goals, associated services, timeframes and costs necessary to achieve the goals. An ISS will be developed for each youth based on the needs identified by their objective assessment and will include both short and long-term goals. Goals may include obtaining a high school diploma, obtaining employment, entrepreneurial activities, post-secondary training, pre-apprenticeship, registered apprenticeship and other services as appropriate to meet their individual needs. Each identified need shall be listed in the ISS with a plan for addressing that need. The ISS must be completed and signed by the participant and the sub recipient's career planner. For participants under the age of 18, the participant, parent and career planner signatures are required.

Exit and Follow-up

Participants will “exit” the program when they have completed the services outlined in the ISS and achieved their goals. Any youth who has not received services for 90 days and is not scheduled for future services, except follow-up services, must exit the program. The exit date is based on the end date of the last service, and follow-up services are provided for a minimum of 12 months following the exit date. Follow-up services include monthly contact with the youth to provide assistance with work or training related problems that may arise, peer support groups, adult mentoring, counseling, assistance in securing a better paying job, additional career development, and needed supportive services. All grant applicants must clearly explain what systems they have in place to provide follow-up services.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The WIOA youth program has specific performance indicators that must be met in order to continue to receive funding. Performance levels are based on a state/federal negotiated rate for each measure.

Placement in Employment or Education after Exit

- The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second AND fourth quarter after exit from the program.

Median Earnings

- The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

Credential Attainment

- The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent program within one year after exit from the program.

Measurable Skills Gains

- The percentage of participants who have measurable skills gains during participation in the program.

BUDGET

Proposed program budgets must reflect funding requests for one fiscal year. Funding for additional years will be negotiated based on program performance and funding availability and determined prior to the subsequent fiscal year.

Proposed program budgets should reflect the percentage of out-of-school and in-school participants to be served. Additionally, budgets must reflect a minimum of 20 percent of total funds being used for work experience activities, regardless of out-of-school and in-school ratios.

To ensure youth receive substantial training and support, the department requires a minimum of 40 percent of proposal be budgeted for direct services to youth participants for work experience, training and support services. This 40 percent includes the WIOA mandated 20 percent for work experience activities as outlined above.

Budget Narrative and Budget Summary

The budget section in EGrAMS includes two parts: a Budget Narrative and the Budget Summary. The Budget Narrative is used to explain and justify the costs included in the Budget Summary. Costs must be reasonable, practical, and determined based on provision of services that best support project needs.

Maintaining Participant Information

Applicants must consider all costs associated with maintaining and providing participant-related information and include that in the budget. The grant agreement will specify the types of information required, the format and frequency for submission. All personal information obtained from participants will be confidential and all case management-related records maintained for seven years following the end of the grant.

Sub Recipient Contribution

While direct matching funds are not required, leveraging other private sector, community, state, or federal resources with the WIOA youth program is highly desired. Applicants providing matching or leveraged funds and will rank higher than applicants not providing non-grant resources. WIOA youth grant

contributions may be a direct cash match, and indirect contribution or from leveraged resources, including unsubsidized wages paid by an employer to the participant. Information on sub recipient contributions may be located at http://labor.alaska.gov/bp/forms/Subrecipient_Contributions.pdf.

Funding Limits

Funding requests must be reasonable and practical, and will be assessed and evaluated based on the percentage allocated for administration, cost per participant, ratio of staff costs to participant benefits and division objectives.

SELECTION AND AWARD PROCESS

Application Review

The division will perform an initial review of all properly submitted applications and forward all complete, responsive, and eligible applications to a review committee composed of AWIB members.

Evaluation

The AWIB review committee will evaluate applications and provide the Commissioner with a list of applications recommended and not recommended for funding. If necessary, the division may request clarification of information from applicants to assist the AWIB in making final funding recommendations. The Commissioner, after consultation with the AWIB, is solely responsible for making all grant award or denial decisions under this solicitation.

Results of Application Review and Evaluation

Each applicant approved by the Commissioner will be provided a written Notice of Intent to Award. Upon issuance of a Notice of Intent to Award, the application will move to the grant negotiation stage with the division. The Commissioner reserves the right to revoke a Notice of Intent to Award if the decision was made based on inaccurate information provided in the application.

Applicants not recommended for funding will receive a written Notice of Denial of Award.

Grant Negotiations

The division reserves the right to negotiate with all awardees pending award of a grant as needed to achieve the best outcomes for WIOA youth participants. This may include the grant award amount, numbers of participants served, performance expectations and other conditions to ensure positive outcomes. Awards are subject to availability of federal funds.

Grant Award

Grant agreements must be signed within 45 days of receipt from the division or the award may be rescinded in order to redirect the funds to a responsive grant applicant.

Due Diligence

All sub recipients and any sub-contractors receiving over \$25,000, which are not state agencies, are required to go through a multi-step due diligence process to demonstrate their suitability to receive grant funds. Additional information can be found in division policy [07-527 Due Diligence](#).

Reconsideration and Appeals

A grant applicant that receives a Notice of Denial of Award may file a written request for reconsideration as outlined in the division policy [Grant Award and Appeal Policy 07-507](#). Appeals should be addressed to: Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Commissioners Office, PO Box 111149, Juneau, AK 99811.

GRANT TERMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Required Training: Sub recipients will be required to attend annual WIOA youth program training, required monthly meetings, and ad hoc technical assistance sessions on youth program deliverables, program management, case management, financial management, performance accountability and the Individual Case Management System.

Program Reports: Sub recipients must complete and submit a monthly program report in EGrAMS. Program reports must include narrative updates on the progress of the project and statistical data related to the sub recipient meeting the goals and objectives of the project scope. Upon completion of the project, the sub recipient may be required to submit a final program report.

Financial Reports: It is critical to the success of the program that grant funds are fully expended by the end of the award period. To ensure that budgets are on target, sub recipients are periodically required to demonstrate how their budget will be fully expended by the end of the period of performance. Sub recipients that are not meeting their planned expenditures may have a percentage of their award recaptured for use in other program projects and objectives.

The division will provide electronic forms to request reimbursement of expenditures and submit periodic reports and income reports. Reimbursement requests and sub recipient contributions must be supported with clear and concise financial reports and expense documentation.

Success Stories: Success stories and photographs are critical components to the continuation of the program and can be submitted at any time. The sub recipient must submit three (3) success stories by the completion of the grant period.

Participant Data Collection and Reporting: Sub recipients are required to collect personally identifiable information (PII) for participants receiving services and entered in a timely manner in the Department's Individual Case Management system (ICM) per division policy [07-508 Participant Performance Data](#)

Collection. Data to be collected includes name, birthdate, and address; social security numbers for participants receiving wages associated with activities conducted under this grant; services provided; and demographics.

Information collected in ICM will only be used by the department to develop impact measurements and aggregate statistics. All information, including PII, will only be shared with the USDOL and other State of Alaska departments and only as necessary to develop aggregate statistics.

Equal Opportunity Responsibilities: Sub recipients must disseminate, and prominently display in a conspicuous location, the *Equal Opportunity Is the Law* notice, providing initial and continuing notice that it does not discriminate on any prohibited basis; and, ensure all subcontractors or partners adhere to *Equal Opportunity is the Law* notices. All organizations that provide training or services for which participants must apply or register must maintain a signed copy of the *Equal Opportunity is the Law* certification form for each applicant or registrant.

Monitoring: Sub recipients are subject to monitoring by the AWIB and the division. Monitors will include review of grant recipient files and records to ensure adherence to the project scope, objectives, goals, training schedules, financial, and equal opportunity compliance. Monitoring may be conducted on-site. Sub recipients will receive written notices to inform them of a project monitor and a detailed list of items to be reviewed. Additional monitoring information may be found in division policy [07-523 Grant Monitoring](#).