Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania/ North Central Workforce Development Board

Request for Quotes

Staff Training Services (De-Escalation, Customer Engagement, and Empathy Training)

Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania / North Central Workforce Development Board referred to as Workforce Solutions throughout the remainder of this document is currently seeking quotes from qualified training providers to deliver staff training focused on: 1) De-escalation techniques, 2) Responding to disrespectful and unhappy customers, and 3) Embedding empathy and customer-centered approaches into service delivery.

Questions regarding this RFQ will be accepted until 12:00 pm Friday, **October 31, 2025** and should be directed to Pam Streich via email at pstreich@ncwdb.org. Responses to all questions will be compiled and sent to all inquirers to this RFQ by 4:00 pm on Monday, November 3, 2025.

Electronic submissions of the detailed quotes are required and are due by **3:00 PM on Friday, November 14, 2025.** Quotes should be submitted to pstreich@ncwdb.org with "RFQ Submission – Staff Training" in the subject line.

Summary

Workforce Solutions for North Central Pennsylvania (North Central Workforce Development Board), referred to as Workforce Solutions throughout the remainder of this document, is seeking quotes from qualified training providers to deliver staff training focused on: 1) De-escalation techniques, 2) Responding to disrespectful and unhappy customers, and 3) Embedding empathy and customer-centered approaches into service delivery.

The goal of this RFQ is to procure staff development training for all PA CareerLink® staff who directly interact with customers, providing them with the skills, strategies, and confidence needed to handle challenging interactions while maintaining professionalism, respect, empathy, and situational awareness. Situational awareness refers to recognizing and appropriately responding to environmental cues, customer emotions, and potential safety concerns to ensure positive and safe interactions for all.

The anticipated contracting period will be from approximately December 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026.

Bidders must follow exactly, and be responsive to ALL requirements of this RFQ. It is the bidders' responsibility to provide all specified materials in the required form and format.

Workforce Solutions encourages proposals that address all three topic: de-escalation, customer engagement, and empathy training as a comprehensive training package. However, we will also accept proposals focused **on** one or more individual topics. Bidders should clearly indicate which topic(s) their proposal addresses and provide a detailed curriculum, methodology, and pricing specific to each topic.

Background

Workforce Solutions oversees the workforce system in Pennsylvania's North Central region, which includes the counties of Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean, and Potter. Workforce Solutions provides staff to the North Central Workforce Development Board and leads workforce initiatives in alignment with its mission:

Workforce Solutions serves as the premier facilitator of an innovative workforce development system that meets the changing human capital needs of our employers and provides resources for our job seekers that maximize their career potential and focus on the customer's needs.

To fulfill this mission, Workforce Solutions recognizes the importance of preparing PA CareerLink® staff to engage respectfully with all customers—including those who may be frustrated, upset, or experiencing unseen challenges

to staff. Training must reinforce empathy, adaptability, and effective de-escalation.

Additional information regarding the organization can be found on our webpage – https://workforcesolutionspa.com.

Scope of Work/ Response Format (minimum requirements)
For ease and efficiency of review, Workforce Solutions has specified the numbering protocol for bidders. Please follow this numbering protocol exactly, and do not re-number, insert numbers, or otherwise modify the sequence.

1. **Company Profile**:
   - Name of the business, contact person, and contact information (address, phone, email, and website).
   - Bidders should clearly demonstrate organizational stability and capacity to manage the training.

2. **Qualifications**:
   - Description of your firm, including areas of expertise and experience in customer service, conflict resolution, empathy-based training and situational awareness.
   - Special consideration: Describe your experience with workforce development systems or other public service/customer-facing staff.
   - Include certifications, trainer qualifications, and previous successful training engagements.

3. **Work Plan/Training Topics:**
   - Detailed description of the training curriculum.
   - Outline of methods (role-playing, case studies, scenarios, etc.) used to reinforce learning.
   - Describe strategies for teaching staff how to meet customers where they are, practicing empathy, and managing challenging interactions.
   - Ensure organization is committed to an accessible, inclusive and harassment-free training environment for all participants, and that all training materials, including digital content and physical handouts, have been designed for accessibility.
   - Include any measurable outcomes or evaluation tools to track training effectiveness.

4. **Timeline and Delivery:**
   - Proposed schedule for training sessions
   - Training format options: (list any options that apply)
     - In person delivery with location options across six counties
     - Hybrid delivery (combination of in-person and virtual).
     - The ability to offer training at a minimum of two different locations within the North Central region to ensure accessibility of staff across Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter Counties.
   - Pricing and logistics details for each format.

5. **Experience and Ability to Perform this Work**:
   - Examples of relevant work with other organizations.
   - At least three (3) client references with contact information, project description and outcomes.
   - Names, credentials, and experience of training personnel.

6. **Pricing**:
   - Clear breakdown of costs, including trainer fees, travel, materials, and any other expenses.(see #4 above for additional details).

7. **Other Requirements**:
   - The selected provider must agree to Workforce Solutions' standard assurances and certifications.

Evaluation Criteria

CRITERIA	POINTS	Evaluation Details
Company Profile	10	Assessed for clarity, completeness, and evidence of organizational capacity to deliver training.
Qualifications	30	Assessed for relevance of expertise, prior experience with similar staff training, certifications, and knowledge of workforce development/public service settings.
Work Plan	25	Evaluated for comprehensiveness, alignment with training goals, instructional methodology, incorporation of interactive elements, and measurable outcomes.
Experience and ability to perform this work	20	Evaluated based on prior relevant projects, quality of references, trainer qualifications, and demonstrated success in similar engagements.
Pricing	15	Evaluated for clarity, reasonableness, and cost-effectiveness in relation to the scope of training services offered.

Award

Workforce Solutions reserves the right to determine the timing of the start of any work described above, to not proceed with some or all of the work, and to contract with more than one vendor for services described within this RFQ. Workforce Solutions reserves the right not to award a contract for the RFQ and will not reimburse the cost incurred by bidders who respond to this notice. If awarded, a contractual agreement will be entered into between the qualified provider and Workforce Solutions.

Workforce Solutions anticipates our review of responses the **week of November 17 – 21, 2025** including clarifications, if needed; and funding decisions, including letters of award, will be issued the **November 24 -28, 2025.** If awarded, a contractual agreement will be executed with the qualified provider. Anticipated project dates will be December 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026.