



## EARN Program

Comprehensive Workforce Services to TANF, ETANF, SNAP PEER, and SNAP Volunteer Participants

## Request for Proposals for the Central Region

Centre · Clinton · Columbia · Lycoming · Mifflin · Montour · Northumberland · Snyder · Union

Issue Date: February 13, 2026

Submission Deadline: March 23, 2026

Advance Central PA is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Program funded with federal dollars. For more information, visit: <https://advancecentralpa.org/about-us/public-notices/>

The enclosed specifications may be modified as required per the United States Department of Health and Human Services, US Department of Agriculture, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, the Advance Central PA Workforce Development Board or Local Elected Officials Board without prior notice to Proposers.

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## RFP Summary and Timeline

<b>Advance Central PA competitively seeks one or more qualified providers to deliver high quality, effective services to meet individuals' needs, including but not limited to access to education and training, barrier remediation, and wellness services, etc. to move TANF and SNAP recipients toward family economic stability.</b>	
RFP Issue Date	February 13, 2026
Deadline for Questions	March 16, 2026 Email to: <a href="mailto:poconnor@AdvanceCentralPA.org">poconnor@AdvanceCentralPA.org</a> and <a href="mailto:klucas@AdvanceCentralPA.org">klucas@AdvanceCentralPA.org</a>
Answers Posted <a href="http://www.AdvanceCentralPA.org">www.AdvanceCentralPA.org</a>	On a rolling basis, within 4 business days of receipt
Notify Advance Central PA of Intent to Submit Proposal by	February 27, 2026 Email to: <a href="mailto:poconnor@AdvanceCentralPA.org">poconnor@AdvanceCentralPA.org</a> and <a href="mailto:klucas@AdvanceCentralPA.org">klucas@AdvanceCentralPA.org</a>
Proposals Due	March 23, 2026, 4:00 p.m. EST
Proposal Submission Process	Use the templates provided and refer to the checklist including submittal of the proposal in PDF format and the Budget Sheet in Excel format. Do not submit attachments that are not requested. Email to: <a href="mailto:poconnor@AdvanceCentralPA.org">poconnor@AdvanceCentralPA.org</a>
RFP Website	<a href="http://www.AdvanceCentralPA.org">www.AdvanceCentralPA.org</a>
RFP Official Contact	Patrick O'Connor, Advance Central PA Adult Programs Coordinator
Notification on Status of Proposals	Initial (not final): April 10, 2026 Ratified: June 17, 2026
Anticipated Contract Start	July 1, 2026
Anticipated Contract Length	July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027 with options to extend annually through June 30, 2031

# Section 1: The Opportunity

## 1.1 Summary

Advance Central PA competitively seeks one or more qualified providers to deliver comprehensive Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) programming for the following counties: Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union.

The overall structure of EARN has been developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide a range of services to meet individuals' needs, including but not limited to access to education and training, barrier remediation, and mental health services, to move clients toward employment that provides economic stability for themselves and their families. The program is based on human-centered design and includes a combination of case management, coaching, licensed counseling, and peer-to-peer experiences to develop a career pathway through job placement and job retention goals. Participants are made eligible and referred by the County Assistance Offices as:

- TANF- Recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- ETANF- Recipients of Extended Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (60 months or more)
- SNAP PEERs- Recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- SNAP Volunteers- Recipients of benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program who volunteer for EARN and do not qualify for TANF or ETANF

Herein, unless otherwise specified, the term EARN participant refers to any participant in EARN; TANF EARN refers to both TANF and ETANF; SNAP EARN refers to SNAP PEERs and SNAP.

Advance Central PA is a recipient of EARN program funds from DHS. Therefore, the EARN services being procured will follow all guidelines and requirements of DHS EARN and DHS SNAP EARN in addition to local goals and expectations.

Programming must help eligible EARN participants take charge of the trajectory of their lives through services such as family needs assessments, barrier remediation, career awareness, goal development, credentialing, holistic case management, wellness services, and placement in a job for which they are prepared to persist and move along a career pathway. Advance Central PA's tagline for EARN is "Good things ahead" and providers are expected to implement service delivery with that in mind.

Expected accomplishments and outcomes include:

- Successful enrollment of EARN participants into programming
- Delivery of relevant and impactful services individualized to meet participants where they are, connect them with resources they need to stabilize their families, help them overcome barriers, set goals, and increase their skills
- Effective utilization of the available allowable activities
- Effective opportunities for peer networking and wellness benefiting the individuals and families served, including but not limited to topics such as parenting, nutrition, and persistence in education
- Successfully complete credentials, including high school equivalency and other post-secondary certifications related to employment goals
- Placement and retention in good jobs
- Overall compliance (e.g. data entry accuracy and timeliness, etc.)
- Meets/exceeds DHS defined outcomes and locally defined metrics described herein

## 1.2 Background

### Advance Central PA

Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation (CPWDC), doing business as Advance Central PA, is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization formed in 1999 and is a local Workforce Development Board (WDB) authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. The Central Region Local Workforce Area includes Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Mifflin, Northumberland, Snyder and Union counties (referred to as Central Region).

Designated as a WDB, Advance Central PA is the grant recipient and administrator of these and other employment and training funds received for programs operated throughout the Central Region. Advance Central PA has a federal mandate to be the lead organization for workforce development planning and to arrange for a system of service delivery that meets the workforce needs of jobseekers, young adults/youth, and business alike. Advance Central PA is responsible for developing and implementing strategies around a broad workforce development agenda. Advance Central PA's diverse partners in the workforce development system range from public agencies to private and non-profit businesses, to education and training providers including secondary schools, to community and economic development partnerships, to job seekers and young people using the PA CareerLink® system.

Advance Central PA is governed by a private-sector led Workforce Development Board (WDB) representing diverse sectors in business, labor, community development, and education. Further, one commissioner from each of the nine counties in the Central Region serves on the Local Elected Officials Board (LEO) with specific governance and oversight. All are dedicated to increasing the quality and accessibility of services for businesses, job seekers, and young people.

The WDB guides and directs PA CareerLink® operations and ensures high quality services to all customers, including EARN program participants. EARN funds support programming which serve TANF and SNAP recipients referred by the County Assistance Office.

Advance Central PA's EARN Committee is a standing committee of the WDB dedicated to overseeing the implementation of the EARN program design and evaluating performance to ensure the program offerings are family-centric and impactful. Comprised of WDB members and each of the County Assistance Office directors from across Central PA, the EARN Committee is also charged with ensuring services of the highest quality via competitive procurement.

Advance Central PA is an equal opportunity employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

### PA Department of Human Services (DHS) Requirements

DHS releases manuals each year with an overview of the required program structure, scope of work, and performance targets. The manuals are attached to this RFP and respondents are strongly encouraged to review them and reference them in composing a proposal.

- EARN Program Policy and Procedures Manual (PY25-26)
- SNAP EARN Program Policy and Procedures Manual (PY25-26)

### Advance Central PA's Region and Demographics

The Central Region includes the following nine counties: Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Mifflin, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union. The region is primarily rural with several higher-density population areas throughout. A majority of the region is white with many families having lived in the region for generations. There are pockets of diversity, including refugees and other individuals with a first language

other than English; driven by data, Advance Central PA requires that critical program documents be available in Spanish and Haitian Creole.

The Central Region supports over 280,000 jobs across the nine-counties, with nearly 19% in goods-producing industries and 81% in service-providing industries. Health care and Education are the largest industry clusters, while Advanced Manufacturing, Building and Construction, Logistics and Transportation, and Agriculture and Food Production continue to provide strong employment opportunities. Protective, food, building, and personal service occupations comprise the largest occupational cluster, and rapidly expanding occupations include Home Health and Personal Care Aides, Registered Nurses, Fast Food & Counter Workers, School Bus Drivers, Office Clerks, and Behavioral Health Workers. Workforce demographics reveal that 58% of jobs are held by prime-age workers, with 27% of positions occupied by workers aged 55 and older, highlighting an increasing need to upskill younger employees to fill vacancies caused by impending retirements.

Most jobs in the region (60%) require a high school diploma or less, and demand is projected to increase for occupations requiring a bachelor's degree or higher and for roles needing moderate to long-term on-the-job training. Current estimates indicate approximately 33% of workers have a high school diploma or less, while 35% hold a bachelor's degree or higher. This suggests potential underemployment, as a greater share of workers possess higher education levels than is typically required for entry into many jobs. Additionally, 20% of workers have completed some college but did not earn a degree and 10% hold an associate degree, which indicates an interest in higher education credentials but also highlights potential barriers preventing workers from attaining degrees.

Transportation is a major barrier for individuals in the region who might otherwise search for work. Many EARN participants do not have access to their own reliable mode of transportation, and rely on family members, friends, and limited public transportation. Fixed bus routes for transportation are only available in 3 of the 9 counties in the Central Region: Centre, Lycoming, and Northumberland. Other transportation options, such as rideshares, are expensive to use. Therefore, service delivery options must be tailored to individuals with easy access available in-person and remotely. Programmatic transportation is strongly encouraged and Advance Central PA does have vehicles available for the selected provider.

## **EARN Data**

### **TANF EARN**

New TANF EARN enrollments are trending downward at approximately 205 each year with the highest numbers stemming from referrals from the Lycoming CAO (89 in PY24) and Northumberland CAO (42 in PY24.)

This aligns with statewide trends: the number of TANF recipients have decreased by over 70% since 2007, despite persistent child poverty rates, with only 19 of every 100 families in poverty receiving support. The average family size is three, with monthly benefits of around \$403. December 2024 data shows the number of individuals receiving TANF across the Central Region varies significantly. Lycoming County reports the highest TANF population with 846 individuals, followed by Northumberland with 461 and Clinton with 249. Moderate counts are observed in Mifflin (134), Centre (118), and Columbia (90). The lowest number of individuals are recorded in Union (45), Montour (30), and Snyder (29).

### **SNAP PEERs**

SNAP EARN enrollments have shown a steady upward trend as training and employment exemptions lapse under new federal regulations. A total of 81 individuals who receive SNAP were newly enrolled in EARN across Advance Central PA's workforce development from July 1, 2025 through February 10, 2026. The data highlights a strong geographic concentration, with Northumberland (36) and Lycoming (32) counties accounting for the majority, approximately 84%, of enrollments. Conversely, Centre, Mifflin, and Snyder counties reported zero enrollments during this period.

Per the DHS Bureau of Program Support, Division of Statistical Analysis, the total estimated population of Pennsylvanians with Employment and Engagement Requirements (PEERs) in the Central Region is about 8,873 individuals. This demographic is spread across nine counties, with the highest concentrations found in Northumberland (2,465) and Lycoming (2,101) counties.

An estimated 4,992 SNAP recipients, roughly 56% of the total PEERs population in the area, are projected to lose their benefits due to a failure to meet employment or engagement requirements. This impact is most severe in Northumberland and Lycoming counties, which are projected to see losses for 1,592 and 1,357 individuals, respectively.

## **Program Locations/PA CareerLink® Locations**

Providers will be core partners in the PA CareerLink® network in Central PA. Associated costs for one Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) within these facilities are pre-determined. PA CareerLink® locations are as follow.

### **PA CareerLink® Centre County**

240 Match Factory Place, Bellefonte

### **PA CareerLink® Clinton County**

8 North Grove Street, Suite F, Lock Haven

### **PA CareerLink® Columbia/Montour Counties**

415 Central Road, Suite 2, Bloomsburg

### **PA CareerLink® Lycoming County**

329 Pine Street, Williamsport

### **PA CareerLink® Mifflin County**

6395 SR 103 North, MCIDC Plaza, Building 58, Lewistown

### **PA CareerLink® Northumberland/Snyder/Union Counties**

225 Market Street, Sunbury

Advance Central PA also has a mobile unit, referred to as **The Link** which is certified as a specialized site. All core PA CareerLink® program staff are welcome to schedule time with the procured operator of The Link, to take services into communities.

## **Problem Statement**

### **Barrier Remediation**

EARN participants often are experiencing significant barriers, including but not limited to generational poverty. Advance Central PA requires that each individual receive services within a model centered on the whole person and their needs as well as their family needs. Social indicators of health must be assessed and prioritized with each participant. Individuals must receive assistance in overcoming barriers so they are able to persist in EARN services, including program services, credentialing programs, and employment. EARN providers must actively participate in local county coalitions that meet the requirements of “Local Management Committee” where they will collaborate with community agencies and service providers to the benefit of participants. The selected provider must be able to readily connect with local community resources and advocate for the EARN participant as needed, so that they overcome challenges and make clear improvements in regard to social indicators of health.

## Wellness

With barriers, poverty, and instability, EARN participants can often benefit from counseling and social work services, yet proactive wellness often comes with stigma. Additionally, when crisis situations arise, EARN participants often turn to the EARN program team for guidance. In accordance with DHS requirements, the selected provider must have a demonstrated plan to support participants by providing access to professionals with credentials vetted and approved by DHS to support local EARN participants, including to offer: one-on-one services in accordance with established timelines, peer wellness sessions, intensive assistance and consult, immediate support in times of crisis, and referrals to other therapeutic or counseling services.

## Credentialing

Both secondary and post-secondary credentials lead to increased earning potential for the individual and stability for families. There are also outcomes such as increased confidence and improved academic and economic outcomes for children. EARN participants frequently lack a high school diploma/equivalency, and those who have one often do not have post-secondary credentials. PA CareerLink® offers individuals unmatched connection to services, including high school equivalency programs. Within EARN, certification programming as well as in-house credentials vetted by DHS are an allowable activity, yet few participants engage and/or persist in obtaining credentials. The selected provider must have demonstrated capacity and well-designed plans to support credentialing outcomes.

## Outcomes, including Placement and Retention

Attainment of required and desired outcomes is critical, including all performance outlined by DHS in addition to local metrics defined by Advance Central PA. Services of the highest quality and relevance must be provided to support participants in setting their goals and meeting them. It is equally critical that the program provider is expert in accurate and timely data entry within the integrated system of record used by the Commonwealth, CWDS. Untimely and/or inaccurate data entry leads to failed performance. All of this must be balanced with a people-centric program design that meets individuals where they are and is able to adapt quickly for changing needs.

## Increasing Demand for SNAP EARN Services

With changes to federal work requirements for SNAP recipients, Advance Central PA is experiencing an increased demand for services for this population. The challenge is in regard to the limited funding available to support SNAP EARN participants. Respondents must be willing to commit to serving SNAP EARN participants in the most efficient way possible while maintaining service delivery of the highest quality.

## Summary

With this procurement, Advance Central PA seeks solutions from collaborative-minded organizations poised to immediately make a positive impact by implementing successful strategies that provide: demonstrated ability to assess social indicators of health and develop collaborative strategies to overcome barriers, effective plans for wellness services compliant with DHS requirements, clear pathways to credentials with plans to support participation and persistence, and plans to assist participants in attainment of good jobs that sustain their families and set them on a positive trajectory, all while adhering to state and local data entry requirements.

## **1.3 Outcome Goal Overview**

The successful provider will address each of the following broad goals.



## Individual Outcomes/ Performance

Advance Central PA expects providers to meet/exceed the DHS defined Performance Outcomes, Reporting Measures, and Service Delivery Standards further defined herein and fully explained in the attached EARN Program Manual and SNAP EARN Program Manual. These overarching goals can be achieved via implementation of a program design that includes: individualized services and peer networking that improve social indicators of health, wellness services, access and support in credentialing, and ample preparation for success and placement in a good job along a career pathway. Related is the following:

- **Expert data entry-** technical expertise and accurate and timely data entry into the Commonwealth's system of record is critically related to performance.

## Meaningful and Impactful Service Delivery

Advance Central PA requires services to be tailored to the individual and their family. Provision of services must include both accessible in-person and remote options that allow the person to develop goals, overcome barriers, participate in meaningful allowable activities, and increase skills related to success in the workplace. As a best practice, Advance Central PA policy currently incentivizes on-site participation once per week at one-month intervals. While remote service delivery must be made available, on-site delivery of services allows for the best staff to participant rapport building and peer-to-peer networking.

Ample opportunities to relevantly connect with peers who are also enrolled in EARN is required, along with outstanding customer service. Evidence of effective and meaningful service delivery is also required, including within the case file and the system of record, including the case progress notes.

## 1.4 Award Terms

### Number of Contracts

Advance Central PA competitively seeks one or more qualified providers to deliver EARN Program Services for the following counties: Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union. This request may use the singular form of proposer, provider, etc. although Advance Central PA may choose to select more than one proposal/provider. Advance Central PA will determine the number of contracts awarded based on proposals received.

### Availability of Funds

A cost-reimbursement contract will be finalized during contract negotiations with the successful respondent.

The following funding budget is an estimate provided for planning purposes and is the amount anticipated to be available for EARN Program Services across the entirety of Central PA. The TANF EARN budget amount includes shared costs of being in the PA CareerLink® referred to as "PA CareerLink® FTE Costs" on the **RFP Budget Template**. Due to limited SNAP EARN funding, respondents should include all PA CareerLink® FTE Costs within the TANF EARN budget.

The actual allocation for the contract period will be negotiated with the selected provider and will be contingent on funding.

**Estimated Budget Total: \$1,837,300**

Comprised of: \$1,790,600 TANF EARN and \$46,700 SNAP EARN

Advance Central PA reserves the option to modify contracts on a year-to-year basis. Funding for subsequent years of the contract will be determined on an annual basis and may increase or decrease based on annual funding allocations.

All activities, services, facilities and/or equipment, including leased items, which will be subcontracted by the proposer, must be competitively procured following applicable regulations.

Advance Central PA has final approval of all contract costs before budget funds are made available and dispersed.

## **Leveraging Resources**

Proposers are strongly encouraged to leverage both financial and programmatic resources, including to partner with other organizations to maximize funding. Proposers are also strongly encouraged to prove they will match awarded funding with cash and in-kind donations. Examples include other grants and staff assigned to this project who are funded in whole or part through a non-EARN source.

## **Contracting Period**

Funds released through this RFP will be contracted to provide services in the Central Region from July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027, with an option to extend funding annually for up to four years through June 30, 2031, based on successful performance outcomes, fiscal integrity, compliance, and available funding.

## **Adherence to Federal, State, and Local Policy**

By submitting a proposal, an organization agrees that they must adhere to any and all Federal, State, and Advance Central PA policy changes.

## **Section 2: Scope of Work**

Advance Central PA expects services to adhere to the goals and performance metrics outlined in this RFP. The following scope of work is aligned with DHS requirements and additional local expectations and goals which ultimately are tied to the overarching goal of providing necessary services leading to stability, increased skills, and direct connection to long-term employment with family-sustaining wages. Placement is essential and Advance Central PA expects that EARN participants leave the program with placement and a clear career pathway plan.

Advance Central PA values a program design that will help EARN participants improve their lives and the lives of their children and reach their full potential. That program design must be connected to the full array of services available through the PA CareerLink® system without duplication.

### **Assumption of Existing Caseload**

Proposers are expected to assume full responsibility for providing continued services to EARN participants on the existing caseload.

### **Project Duration**

Enrollment length will vary based on the needs of the individual, approved program design, and funding availability. The selected provider will offer an intensive program that places each participant in employment when there is a demonstrated readiness and a defined career path. Participants are expected to receive services from the point of referral through employment and during retention (12-months for TANF EARN participants and 90 days for SNAP EARN participants.)

## 2.1 Services to be Provided

### Customer Service-Centered Staffing

The selected provider will employ enough staff to effectively deliver high-quality, compliant services that result in customer satisfaction and outcomes. Staff will be customer service oriented and provide services with a smile. Staff must be trained to work with adults with employment barriers and receive ongoing staff training grounded in proven best practices, such as motivational interviewing, trauma-informed care, and de-escalation tactics. The provider will adhere to all current laws including those for background checks and clearances. All staff must have no record on the following: Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Records Check (Act 34), Department of Public Welfare Child Abuse History Clearance (Act 151), and Federal Criminal History Record.

Staffing requirements include the following.

#### EARN Supervisory Staff

The selected provider is responsible for hiring local supervisory staff who will oversee program staff and operations. Supervisory staff will be the main point of contact between the program and Advance Central PA, and will ensure that all local, state, and federal guidelines and policies are followed. Advance Central PA will consider various supervisory structures.

#### EARN Case Management Staff

The selected provider is responsible for hiring front line, case management staff who will provide responsive, engaging, relevant case management and overall service delivery to registered participants both during the active program and retention phases of the program. Staff must be specially trained to work with adults with barriers.

Case management will serve the needs of participants according to their Individual Employment Plan (IEP), which is further defined herein, and immediate needs. Staff will be trained to recognize how to meet individual participants where they are and help them move forward. A holistic approach will be taken to ensure that if participants require non-workforce assistance in order to succeed, intentional warm referrals will be made to experts in the required areas, e.g. food, housing, mental health supports, etc.

Case management will have an approach that empowers participants to recognize possible discrepancies in their thinking and lead them to determine the best course of action and next steps.

It is recommended the proposed title of staff is something other than “case manager” and should help promote a first impression that is both professional and workforce relevant.

#### Wellness Staff

The EARN provider is required to provide ready access to ongoing social service and/or licensed counseling from staff who are trained and certified, with credentials approved by Advance Central PA and DHS. These wellness staff will offer emotional and mental health support to participants. They must offer one-on-one meetings with TANF EARN participants and while the **EARN Program Manual** outlines a requirement for that to occur within 14 days of enrollment, Advance Central PA requires this to occur more quickly. A best practice the selected provider will follow is for the wellness staff to offer services immediately and to help facilitate the family needs assessment at orientation/enrollment.

#### Other Staff

Proposed staffing models may include other staff aligned with Advance Central PA’s goals for the program. Examples of other staff include but are not limited to positions such as the following:

- Instructors responsible for development and delivery of specialized curriculum designed to help EARN participants increase their skills and improve employability. (It is important to note that PA CareerLink® workshops open to the public must also be utilized by the EARN provider and should therefore not be duplicated.)
- Data entry coordinators responsible for timely and accurate data entry.
- Job developers responsible for working with EARN participants who are ready for placement and for serving as a liaison with PA CareerLink® Business Solutions Team staff.

## **Referral/Enrollment**

EARN participants will be enrolled from the County Assistance Office (CAO) electronically via the system of record, the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS). Providers are required to contact participants to warmly welcome them to EARN, help them understand what to expect (what's in it for them), listen and respond to concerns, and schedule their orientation. Referrals to SNAP EARN will be screened for PEER status for further discussion with the CAO.

The EARN provider is expected to successfully enroll each referral. A minimum enrollment rate of 65% is required. Processes to reject referrals, including timelines, must be strictly adhered to.

Initial enrollment includes welcome, staff introductions, orientation, one on one completion of the family needs assessment, and development of the Individual Employment Plan. The enrollment day must be one that is focused on showing the EARN participant there are "good things ahead!" with participation in EARN. As with all programming, the enrollment may be in-person or virtual to meet participant needs. Enrollment scheduling must be flexible enough to account for individual needs, existing appointments, etc.

The CAO develops an Agreement of Mutual Responsibility (AMR) with each EARN participant. This includes critical information the EARN provider must use to develop plans with the participant at the time of enrollment and throughout participation, including their hourly activity requirements.

## **Family Needs Assessment**

Provide an objective full family assessment with each participant to identify their strengths, barriers, and family safety and economic security. Advance Central PA has a family needs assessment (FNA) for the selected provider to use. Changes to the FNA may be negotiated. Improvement in social indicators of health must be measured and reported. Prioritization of needs in the FNA must be determined by the participant.

The **TANF EARN Manual** and **SNAP EARN Manual** outline DHS requirements for completion. Advance Central PA requires a more stringent timeline as a best practice: the FNA shall be completed at the time of enrollment.

The FNA will be used to inform the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) as well as the overall EARN team, including case managers and wellness staff so that service delivery is meaningful and relevant.

## **Individual Employment Plan (IEP)**

The Individual Employment Plan (IEP) required by DHS, will be key to the overall case management strategy and on-going development and re-assessment of goals. Proposers must agree to work collaboratively with each participant to help them develop a written plan of long and short-term goals addressing educational, employment and individual development priorities, documented barriers and remediations, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services for the participant. The provider will ensure the IEP is a living document that is referred to during case management meetings with participants. The IEP must directly link to performance. The Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) IEP will be used for EARN, no other versions of an IEP are acceptable. The provider must adhere to all signatory requirements; including to obtain the participant signature upon initial completion and when updates are made thereafter.

## **Comprehensive People-Centric Services**

Participants will have ready and intentional access to comprehensive case management, wellness, and overall service delivery. Proposers are responsible for ensuring most of each day involves staff spending time with participants facilitating quality activities, providing case management, helping individuals develop and revise goals and plans, and providing all other aspects of the program including warm referrals to partners to meet each individual's needs.

Both in-person service delivery and remote service delivery must be robust providing equal opportunity.

When considering effective delivery models, proposers should take the following into consideration.

- a. Intensive, individualized case management and career coaching
- b. Provision and facilitation of peer-to-peer engagement
- c. Feedback from EARN participants
- d. Assistance identifying and communicating goals in an attainable way and outlining them into pathways
- e. Have an overall people-centered approach so that individuals know what's in it for them and are supported throughout the journey to placement and beyond
- f. Achieve performance targets

### **Intensive, Comprehensive Case Management**

Provider is responsible for providing intensive and on-going case management. Case management will be engaging and based on the needs of individual participants according to the IEP, immediate needs, and required hours. Case management will have an approach that guides participants to recognize possible discrepancies in their thinking and lead them to determine on their own what the best course of action and next steps will be.

### **Career Exploration, Development, and Job Readiness Services**

The proposed design will incorporate individualized services including activities, as required, to help participants learn about who they are and how their interests, skills, and experiences relate to career goals. Career exploration is valued as extremely important so that individuals learn about opportunities they may not have considered or previously been aware of. Career pathway planning and credentialing is an expectation.

The provider will provide the full menu of allowable activities that lead to increased job readiness skills, including but not limited to executive thinking, leadership, professional behavior, communication, problem solving, financial literacy, collaboration, and digital literacy. These must be facilitated in engaging, relevant ways so that participants increase their skills and prepare for success.

Financial literacy is an important topic to fully cover with EARN participants since earned income will reduce their public benefits. Preparation along with increased skills will assist EARN participants in their transition to work.

### **Referral and Advocacy**

Intentional connection to community resources such as for shelter, legal assistance, and other needs is a requirement. The selected provider will maintain an active and coordinated connection to outside agencies to provide warm hand-offs and to follow-up so that the expected services are adequately delivered.

## **Credentialing**

The provider will have demonstrated plans to develop and facilitate in-house curriculum aligned with the interests of local EARN participants and the job market of Central Pennsylvania. EARN staff will actively support participation in other credentialing programs, including high school equivalency prep with the PA

CareerLink® WIOA Title II adult education providers and post-secondary training providers. This requires true collaboration, advocacy, and adept service delivery to meet needs as they arise. Best practices employed in the local area that are expected to be provided include the following.

- Training exploration in alignment with interests and career pathway planning
- Collaborative case management strategies in coordination with Title II partners
- Responsive service delivery designed to help a participant begin and persist in training
- Peer-to-peer networking allowing participants working toward a credential to study together, learn best practices for balancing life and schooling, and understanding they are not alone and have a support network that wants them to succeed

## **Wellness Services**

Certified social service and/or licensed counseling staff will provide proactive opportunities for wellness, promote and facilitate workshops and peer groups based on relevant topics of interest to the EARN participants and their wellbeing, including their mental health. They will also support case management staff in serving participants who experience crisis and need intensive assistance. The wellness staff must have a demonstrated ability to build relationships with other providers and make referrals and advocate for participants in need of specialized care by a medical professional/facility, etc.

## **Incentive Services**

Supportive services are not allowable expenditures; however, the CAO has funds to provide special allowances (SPALs) to meet some of the key support service needs of participants. EARN providers are required to assist participants with requesting SPALs from the CAO.

The proposed EARN budget should include funding to support incentives. These allow for provision of needed items and/or gift cards based on meeting defined milestones, participation, and compliance goals while incentivizing continued compliance and participation toward successful completion of EARN, that is placement and retention.

## **Placement**

The EARN provider will work collaboratively with each participant to provide the wrap around services, job readiness training, and access to credentialing they need to gain successful unsubsidized employment. Advance Central PA strongly encourages program models that lead to employment aligned with the career goals that were developed. The EARN provider must work with the PA CareerLink® Business Solutions Team for support in assisting individual participants in connecting with hiring employers or interest. The PA CareerLink® holds “match meetings” which EARN staff will participate in to present EARN participants who have the job readiness skills they need, have stabilized their barriers, have a polished resume, and are ready for placement and need support and advocacy to that end.

Placements should be linked to IEP goals, and those aligned with the high priority occupations in Advance Central PA’s workforce development area are strongly encouraged.

A placement performance outcome is achieved when a participant is working in unsubsidized employment at least 80 hours in a four-consecutive week period making at least \$2.00 per hour more than minimum wage.

## **Retention and Increased Earnings**

EARN program services must be designed to support persistence and success in employment.

EARN staff is required to obtain documentation proving an individual was working at the defined benchmarks, therefore, ongoing rapport and provision of guidance and services of value to the participant will vastly increase performance.

Placement in a clearly defined career pathway combined with EARN services throughout retention should lead to increased earnings over time and therefore increased economic stability for the individual and their children.

### **TANF EARN**

Once a TANF EARN participant achieves the placement measure, retention begins when the TANF/ETANF case closes due to earned income. Retention performance is reviewed at six and twelve month benchmarks and validating documentation must be collected.

### **SNAP EARN**

Once a SNAP EARN participant achieves the placement measure, retention immediately begins. Retention is met if the participant is still employed 90 days after starting the retention activity as proven on collected validating documentation.

## **Expert Data Management and Case File Management**

Complex tracking and data entry requirements- Attendance, Placement, Retention (employment verification and timesheets, etc.), Activity Codes, Case Notes

The Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) is the system of record for all EARN funded programs in Pennsylvania. The selected provider will be required to track all information and collect validating documentation such as attendance sheets and paystubs. The provider will be required to record and track all data including goals, barriers, activities, attendance, case notes, and outcomes for EARN participants in CWDS. It is the provider's responsibility to ensure on-going staff expertise and cooperation. Data entry is directly related to performance. Additionally, hard copy case files are required in Pennsylvania. Confidentiality policies must be strictly adhered to. HIPAA will be strictly adhered to at all times.

In addition, providers will be asked to provide documentation or information not accessible through CWDS in order to evaluate performance outcomes as well as program strengths and weaknesses. Specifically, providers will be required to input data into Excel spreadsheets Advance Central PA will develop and house on a Microsoft SharePoint website. SharePoint allows users to upload information onto secure websites and will allow real-time data to be collected and available for all EARN participants.

Proposers are responsible for maintaining and securing participant case files at all times. Included in the files are regular maintenance of forms and documentation of activities. The case files will include identification and contact information, the AMR, assessment information, needs, documentation of customer contacts, incentive services documentation, and other forms required by Advance Central PA and the PA Department of Human Services. Case files are the property of Advance Central PA and must always be available for review. Files must be retained for three years after Advance Central PA reports final expenditures. Advance Central PA's policy regarding personal identifiable information will be strictly adhered to at all times.

## **Collaboration with the County Assistance Office (CAO)**

The provider must be able to forge and maintain effective positive working relationships with staff from the nine CAOs in Central PA. Communication is formalized at DST meetings, but the provider is expected to develop rapport that will allow for timely communication of all issues and cause for concern more immediately and collaborate with the CAO to solve problems.

### Direct Service Teams Meetings

The provider will organize and facilitate DST Meetings providing an opportunity for CAOs and case managers from contracted employment and training programs to meet, at least monthly, to problem solve for individual clients and reconcile records.

### **Local Management Committees**

The Local Management Committee (LMC) is an integral part of providing meaningful services to participants. The LMC provides a forum for the provider, community partners, charities, non-profit organizations, and other E&T stakeholders to connect and discuss how to best leverage and combine local resources to serve our most vulnerable citizens on their journey to self-sufficiency. By focusing on collaborative efforts to address the needs of participants, the LMC can maximize community resources to find solutions to the significant barriers participants face such as domestic violence, substance use, childcare, criminal history, disability, behavioral health, transportation, food insecurity, education/training, language accessibility, and housing.

Advance Central PA utilizes an LMC model that leverages the power of existing county coalitions and collaborations. Providers shall attend the “LMC” for each appropriate county, actively participate, share information about EARN and the PA CareerLink® as appropriate to the group, and advocate for EARN participant and family needs, etc.

### **Collaboration as an Integrated Partner in the PA CareerLink®**

The selected provider will work within the collaborative, integrated PA CareerLink® model and connect individuals to other programs, services, and offerings in their best interests. Proposers are expected to demonstrate ability to collaborate with partners to provide resources and services to EARN participants to meet their comprehensive needs and ultimately support attainment of their goals and performance outcomes, including co-enrollments in other PA CareerLink® programs as appropriate.

The selected provider will work closely with all partners in the PA CareerLink® in delivering job readiness, job search, job placement assistance, and basic or academic skills instruction, without duplication.

For example, providers are required to intentionally connect EARN participants to the WIOA Title II Adult Basic Education providers for services including high school equivalency preparation and English as a second language classes. These referrals must avoid duplication of services and include ongoing EARN staff support to ensure participants persist in their classes.

In another example, collaboration with the PA CareerLink® Business Services Team (BST) is essential in order to connect EARN participants to meaningful work and to be sure they are receiving services to help them become highly skilled and employable according to local industry demands. For example, when the BST is hosting a recruitment event, or a large job fair, the selected provider is required to connect EARN participants to those opportunities. These connections should lead to placements in employment as well as meaningful exposure to the world of work with resulting measurable performance.

Similarly, EARN is a resource important to the PA CareerLink® network in Central PA. As a valued partner, PA CareerLink® staff working in other programs will make referrals to COMPASS, which could result in a family accessing benefits that results in referral to EARN. Additionally, EARN staff may offer workshops and learning opportunities with open seats available to other partner program participants, for example.

### **Performance**

Meeting and exceeding performance is required. See Section 2.2 for more information.



## Capacity for Related Projects

Advance Central PA regularly seeks funding to supplement grant monies. While the funders and projects change over time, Advance Central PA partners with the competitively procured EARN program provider(s) to facilitate delivery of services associated with current related projects.

Therefore, in addition to flexibility and adaptability related to program management, the successful respondent will be one willing to take on new challenges and projects working collaboratively with Advance Central PA when and if new funds are available to serve EARN participants.

## 2.2 Performance Metrics and Contract Management

### DHS Performance Outcomes

The selected provider agrees to meet all required measures and will begin to immediately incorporate service delivery that would result in positive outcomes for each of the DHS Performance Measures. The chart below shows the required performance measures with targets for TANF EARN and SNAP EARN as applicable. For full detail, refer to the attached **EARN Program Manual and SNAP EARN Program Manual**.

Metric	Definition	Target
Secondary Equivalent and Credentialing	The percentage of participants in a relevant credentialing activity that obtain a diploma or certification and marketable skills directly related to their documented employment goals.	TANF 50%
		SNAP 50%
Employment with Hourly Wage	Percentage of participants who are employed who work for an average of 20 hours in a consecutive four-week period with a wage at least \$2.00 per hour above minimum wage.	TANF 65%
		SNAP 50%
Retention - 90 Days	Percentage of participants who are employed 90 days after the start of retention.	SNAP 50%
Retention - Six Months	Percent of participants whose TANF closes due to employment income who are working an average of 20 hours in a consecutive four-week period with a wage at least \$2.00 per hour above minimum wage 6 months after the TANF closed.	TANF 70%
Retention - 12 Months	Percent of participants whose TANF closes due to employment income who are working an average of 20 hours in a consecutive four-week period with a wage at least \$2.00 per hour above minimum wage 12 months after the TANF closed.	TANF 50%
Successful Referral to Educational Programming	The percentage of program participants who are termed from EARN to participate in other DHS programming, including ELECT and KEYS, who do successfully enroll in those programs.	TANF 90%
		SNAP 90%

### DHS Defined Reporting Measures (Key Outcomes)

In addition to the above, the selected provider must focus on the following key metrics which lead into and add a layer of quality to the above defined DHS Performance Measures. Specific targets are not mandated by DHS, however, Advance Central PA expects EARN providers to offer programming that results in these outcomes; notes are provided. For full detail, refer to the attached **EARN Program Manual and SNAP EARN Program Manual**.

Outcome	Definition
Employment/Placement	The provider must place participants in unsubsidized employment averaging at least 20 hours per week in a 4-consecutive week period.  Advance Central PA Note: This is the minimum and providers should strive for employment in a career pathway of interest that betters the life of the individual and their family.
Employment Related to High Priority Occupations (HPO)	In addition to averaging at least 20 hours per week in a 4-consecutive week period, the placement should be related to a High Priority Occupation.
Employment Related to IEP/Goals	In addition to averaging at least 20 hours per week in a 4-consecutive week period, the provider must place participants in unsubsidized employment related to a marketable skill consistent with their employment goals as developed and documented in their AMR and EARN IEP.
Employment Related to Education/Training	In addition to averaging at least 20 hours per week in a 4-consecutive week period, the provider must place participants in unsubsidized employment aligned with their completed credential, certification, or vocational education studies.
Retention IEP Services	Provider will continue to update the IEP throughout the retention period.  Advance Central PA Note: This will require consistent communication, case management, and delivery of relevant services to be impactful.
Earned Income	Participants that achieved employment who, at the conclusion of the 12-month retention period, have increased their hourly wage.  Advance Central PA Note: This is not applicable to SNAP as they have a shorter retention period.

## DHS Service Delivery Standards

The below Service Delivery Standards apply to both TANF EARN and SNAP EARN. For full detail, refer to the attached **EARN Program Manual** and **SNAP EARN Program Manual**.

Metric	Definition	Target
Assessment and IEP	The percentage of participants who complete a comprehensive household assessment and a detailed IEP within 14 days of enrollment.	90%
Referrals to External Support Services	Percentage of participants who are appropriately referred to a community based organization within 14 days of discovering the need.	90%
Social Service Professional	Percentage of participants who receive a one on one introductory meeting with the social services professional within 28 days of enrollment.	80%

## Additional Local Performance Measures and Goals

In addition to the metrics defined by DHS, the selected applicant must meet or exceed locally valued performance measures and goals as shown below. Final metrics will be negotiated with the successful respondent prior to contract execution.

Metric	Data Source	Frequency of Review	Entity Responsible for Data Progress Reporting
<b>Improvement to Social Indicators of Health</b> <i>Percentage of participants who report improvement in social indicators of health based on a family needs assessment</i>	Family Needs Assessment Tracking Sheet	Quarterly	Provider
<b>Positive Program Exits</b> <i>Percentage of participants who exit programming with positive employment outcomes.</i>	CWDS	Quarterly	Advance Central PA and Provider
<b>Program Satisfaction</b> <i>Satisfaction rated as “satisfied” or “highly satisfied” by at least 75% of participants</i>	Survey	Quarterly	Advance Central PA and Provider
<b>Onsite Engagement</b> <i>Number of unique participants arriving for onsite participation each week</i>	Foot Traffic Log	Quarterly	Provider

## Other Local Indicators of Success

Other indicators of success that Advance Central PA expects the selected provider to maintain include the following, non-exhaustive list.

- Improved career readiness such as via demonstrated skills attainment in digital literacy or soft skills; tools such as **SkillUp™ PA** can and should be utilized
- High quality, compliant EARN case files with all necessary documentation
- Evidence of responsive effective services within CWDS case notes and services as well as the EARN case file documents
- Error-free, strength based, career portfolio information, including effective participant resumes in CWDS
- Innovation and adaptability as evidenced by creative and innovative strategies which result in solid job placement rates and retention rates
- Commitment to execution of the approved program design as demonstrated by the information in the IEP and the case file as well as CWDS and other required reports
- Participant satisfaction

## Contract Performance Monitoring

Advance Central PA is committed to working closely with the selected provider to ensure successful implementation of both DHS and locally defined goals. This will be achieved through consistent communication, progress tracking, and proactive collaboration to address challenges and course correct

as needed. Reliable and relevant data is necessary to drive service improvements, facilitate compliance, inform trends to be monitored, and evaluate results and performance.

Intentional communication is critical to success. Following are specific reporting and communication expectations with additional information to be determined. Advance Central PA is committed to providing technical assistance on an as-needed basis. Scheduled formal reporting as listed below does not replace necessary real time touch points.

### Collaborative Grant Management Meetings

Advance Central PA staff will hold a formal grant management meeting each month to review an agenda that includes performance data, challenges, successes, customer service, and other pertinent information to service delivery and the contract. The provider will collaboratively and actively participate with enthusiasm for continuous improvement.

### Performance Analysis

Each quarter, the selected provider will review performance. The provider is responsible for reviewing individual cases and providing clear report/discussion regarding trends, best practices, underlying issues, and corrective actions.

### Self-Monitoring

On a quarterly schedule, the provider will submit a formal self-monitoring report to Advance Central PA using a template provided, outlining summaries of the following items completed during the quarter:

- Professional development activities completed by program staff
- Internal monitoring activities, including but not limited to routine file/ desk reviews, risk response activities, performance monitoring, and follow up to local monitoring performed by Advance Central PA or DHS
- Corrective actions taken to resolve concerns identified in self-monitoring and to continuously improve
- Participant-focused, group-activity program events delivered to foster the formation of peer networks and family-focused group activities
- Progress toward program goals
- Best practices and program highlights

## **Section 3: RFP Process and Submittal Instructions**

### **3.1 Eligible Applicants**

Proposals will be accepted from any private for-profit entity, public or private non-profit entity, government agency, local educational agency, community-based organization, or labor organization that demonstrates the experience and/or capacity to deliver programs to the identified eligible adult population. The following entities are encouraged to apply: (not limited to)

Eligible organizations with or without previous experience as a contractor with Advance Central PA are encouraged to submit proposals. Proposals from consortia, partnerships or other combinations of organizations are allowable, but proposals must identify one organization as the lead agency with which Advance Central PA will contract directly.

Proposers must agree to a provision of services and demonstrate an ability to fulfill all federal, state, and local requirements, regulations, and policies.

For the purposes of this procurement, Advance Central PA has determined profit will not be funded.

## 3.2 Timeline

Please see **RFP Summary and Timeline** on page 3.

## 3.3 Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance will be provided through a written question and answer format. Applicants will be given an opportunity to identify specific questions and submit them in writing to Advance Central PA via email only. Questions must be emailed. See **RFP Summary and Timeline** on page 3 for more information.

Answers to submitted questions will be posted on [Public Notices | AdvanceCentralPA](#) within 4 business days of receipt. Consistent with strict procurement policies, Advance Central PA will provide no technical or program assistance to individual proposers.

## 3.4 Proposal Content

Responses must be submitted using the provided templates. Do not submit attachments that are not specifically requested. Do not include links to external information. Definitions that must be used for completing the requested budget narrative and Excel sheet are included in the **RFP Appendix- Budget Definitions**.

### Checklist

A checklist is provided within the **RFP Response Template- Cover Sheet- EARN**. Complete it to be sure you are submitting all required materials.

Do not submit materials or attachments that are not requested.

## 3.5 Submission Instructions

Proposals **saved as a PDF** (not scanned) or Microsoft Word document along with the **Budget Template** in the Excel format provided (do not save as PDF) must be submitted electronically to: [ponconnor@advancecentralpa.org](mailto:ponconnor@advancecentralpa.org) with the following subject line: **RE: EARN Proposal**.

Late submissions will not be considered.

## Section 4: Selection and Award Process

Advance Central PA procurement processes are compliant with all federal and state regulations.

### 4.1 Review Process

The review process includes the following steps.

Stage 1: Advance Central PA staff will initially evaluate each proposal for acceptability, with emphasis placed on completeness and responsiveness to requisite program criteria.

Stage 2: Proposals that have met the minimum criteria will then be reviewed and ranked by an Evaluation Committee comprised of members who have no fiduciary interest in competing for the contract being procured.

Stage 3: The recommendations of the Evaluation Committee will be presented to the Advance Central PA Workforce Development Board for ratification.

Contracts will be issued directly to the selected provider by Advance Central PA. It is anticipated that a cost reimbursement contract will be awarded as a result of this RFP solicitation; provider will be reimbursed actual, allowable and allocable costs not to exceed the maximums stated in the contract.

## 4.2 Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criterion	Points	The Highest Scoring Proposals will Reflect the Following
Organizational Qualifications, Relevant Experience, and Capacity	20 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization is uniquely qualified to take on this scope of work</li> <li>• Demonstrates substantive knowledge and understanding or clear capacity to understand the complex requirements of EARN.</li> <li>• Demonstrated experience conducting similar services to help individuals identify and overcome barriers, discover their potential, increase skills, and find stable employment all while maintaining compliance. Clear explanation correlating experience to this scope of work.</li> <li>• References are those who can attest to ability to perform the work and meet deliverables similar in scope to this RFP.</li> <li>• There is sufficient response showing the organization has the capacity to operate the EARN program/scope of work.</li> </ul>
Staffing and Oversight Plan	25 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed leadership structure and qualifications are sufficient. There is demonstrated commitment to high-quality service in the Central Region. Bios support the strength of the leadership team aligned with the scope of work.</li> <li>• Proposed staff roles are sufficient to implement the scope of work; qualifications of key staff positions are clearly explained and are sufficient, there is sufficient coverage and dedicated time to EARN. Bios support the strength of the known team aligned with the scope of work.</li> <li>• A breakdown for all each PA CareerLink® site/staff is realistic and sufficient. The efficiency of the staffing model and how the caseloads will be manageable is clearly described and realistic.</li> <li>• Employee recruitment and retention plans are adequate and there are adequate plans to resolve anticipated challenges.</li> </ul>
Service Delivery/Program Design	75 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The narrative and attached visual description of the proposed program flow/model is clear, compliant, and demonstrates understanding of EARN services within an integrated PA CareerLink® model. Services are clearly available both in-person and remotely. Indication of components unique to either TANF or SNAP EARN is sufficient and aligns with the scope of work.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key components of initial outreach contacts to welcome an individual referred from the CAO are adequate and clearly aligned with the required 65% enrollment rate. EARN orientation is sufficiently described, including how it will continue to set the stage for a positive experience for an EARN participant while covering required information.</li> <li>• There is demonstrated ability to provide relevant, meaningful services to EARN participants in a flexible manner in their best interests, both within the PA CareerLink® office and via remote technology. The example of how services will be experienced by EARN participants with transportation barriers, including to assist them as needed with participating in-person at least once per week is sufficient.</li> <li>• A clear and adequate plan is provided a case management approach grounded in best practices to result in high quality, intensive, people-centric case management and overall delivery of the scope of work, and achievement of outcomes.</li> <li>• There is an adequate plan to implement assessment to accurately identify barriers at enrollment and continuously thereafter, how needs will be prioritized, and how staff will provide services leading to successful barrier remediation. There are adequate plans to use local connections to assist with barrier remediation.</li> <li>• There is a sufficient plan for comprehensive wellness and social services. Plans to staff the role, have high participant engagement, and provide immediate supports are clearly explained and adequate.</li> <li>• There is a clear plan to increase enrollment in credentials. There are acceptable coaching and retention strategies to support completion. Peer-to-peer networking is prioritized. There is a plan to use “in-house” credentials; they are clearly explained.</li> <li>• Demonstrated plan to utilize the full scope of allowable activities to provide individualized services. Approach to increasing career awareness and job readiness skills is sufficient and the overview of the participant experience is aligned with expectations.</li> <li>• Group activities will be offered at an adequate rate. Example activity demonstrates understanding of compliance and quality expectations.</li> <li>• Clear strategies to achieve high placement and retention outcomes are provided.</li> <li>• Four key services to be provided by wellness staff are clearly explained, allowable, and align with the scope of work.</li> <li>• Plans to partner/coordinate with other entities to best accomplish the goals of this program and work within an integrated PA CareerLink® as well as with community organizations are clear and adequate.</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan provided for ensuring staff spend adequate time with participants and performing their other job duties such as data entry demonstrates a sufficient understanding of the program requirements.</li> <li>• There is a reasonable plan to maximize both the TANF EARN funding and limited SNAP EARN funding to support continuous enrollments and service delivery of the highest quality.</li> <li>• Response to case study 1 is aligned with the scope of work, outstanding people-centric service delivery, and outcomes. It addresses: activity codes and plans for service delivery that are aligned with the issues presented in the case study.</li> <li>• Response to case study 2 is aligned with the scope of work, outstanding people-centric service delivery, utilization of tools such as SkillUp™ PA and outcomes. It addresses: career awareness, credentialing, and placement strategies.</li> </ul>
Project Management and Performance	40 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed approach to program management demonstrates alignment with the goals in the RFP and is intentionally focused on continuous improvement.</li> <li>• There is a clear outline of <u>how</u> services and strategies will ensure positive outcomes for DHS Performance Outcomes.</li> <li>• There is evidence of ability to meet positive DHS Performance Outcomes in a compliant people-centric manner. Explanation for measures not met are reasonable and adequate strategies to overcome challenges are described.</li> <li>• There is evidence of ability to meet positive DHS Service Delivery Standards. Explanation for measures not met are reasonable and adequate strategies to overcome challenges are described.</li> <li>• Plans to meet DHS Key Outcomes are clearly detailed with reasonable anticipated performance indicated.</li> <li>• Adequate plans to meet other local performance measures and indicators of success as outlined in the RFP are provided.</li> <li>• Two anticipated challenges to meeting performance are provided along with adequate plans to overcome them.</li> <li>• There are clear internal controls and training protocols ensure 100% accurate and timely data entry into the CWDS system and ensure quality with plans to audit files, data entry, and adherence to the people-centric program design.</li> </ul>
Budget	65 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed budget/budget narrative includes allowable costs that support the stated objectives and activities and is reasonable and compliant with the maximum amount available per the RFP for services in all counties.</li> </ul>
Total Points Possible = 225		



## Section 5: Disclaimer

Advance Central PA reserves the right to cancel or modify this request for proposal or the scope or funding of an approved program to any extent necessary to ensure compliance with state and/or federal guidelines or if available funding is impacted due to the federal and/or state budget appropriations. All successful proposers must demonstrate the capability to modify the program design in order to comply with new regulations and/or changes to available funds, and by submitting a proposal, agree to do so.

Advance Central PA may, at its discretion, request presentations by, or meetings with, any or all respondents, to clarify or negotiate modifications to the respondent's proposal. However, Advance Central PA reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposals submitted.

Advance Central PA may decide not to fund part or all of a proposal even though it is found to be in the competitive range if, in the opinion of Advance Central PA, the services proposed are not needed, or the costs are higher than Advance Central PA finds reasonable in relation to the overall funds available, or if past management concerns lead Advance Central PA to believe that the respondent has undertaken more services than it can reasonably provide.

Advance Central PA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, received as a result of this request or to negotiate separately with respondents. A contract for the accepted proposal will be based upon the factors described in this RFP.

Advance Central PA has the right to fund a lower ranked proposal over a high ranked proposal because of valid policy considerations, including but not limited to, organizational experience, geographical considerations, leveraging of outside resources and target populations.

Providers will allow local, state and federal representatives access to all program records, program materials, staff and participants. In addition, providers are required to maintain all program records for three years after Advance Central PA submits the final expenditure report.

Advance Central PA reserves the right to determine both the number and funding levels of contracts financially awarded. Such determination will depend upon overall fund availability and other factors arising during the review process. Proposals submitted which are over the maximum amount of funds specified for this RFP will be rejected.

Advance Central PA is not responsible for any costs incurred by respondents prior to the selection. The cost to develop and submit a proposal in response to this RFP is not reimbursable.

This RFP is being solicited based on available funds.

Materials submitted with the proposal, and the proposal itself, become the property of the Advance Central PA and will not be returned.

Advance Central PA must comply with Pennsylvania's Right-To-Know Law, Act 3 of 2008, effective January 1, 2009, and may be requested and required to release information from proposals received in response to this RFP.

All proposals submitted will receive a response to the action taken by the Advance Central PA. Respondents may request a briefing on the action taken on the proposal.

The submission of a proposal to the Advance Central PA does not assure or imply an award of a contract to the firm submitting the proposal. Advance Central PA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, to negotiate any offer made, and/or to cancel or amend any part of this application package for whatever reason.