

PRESS RELEASE. Dated Material. For questions, contact Amy Dowell, 864-941-8050.

The Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWT) provides funding for training needed in current businesses due to: expansion, new technology, retooling, new services/products lines and new organizational structuring or as a part of layoff aversion strategy.

Funds are available through the Workforce Investment Act to train currently employed workers. The Upper Savannah Area, which consists of Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry and Saluda Counties, was awarded funds to contract with area businesses. Businesses applying for funding must have at least one full-time employee and must be current on all state tax obligations.

Third party brokers may enter into IWT agreements on behalf of employers. Third party brokers may include: business associations, industry councils, chambers of commerce, downtown development corporations, etc. Brokers cannot be involved in the training of the employees and cannot be reimbursed for administrative costs. *City, county and state government agencies are ineligible for Incumbent Worker Training Funds.*

Because funding is limited, a panel from the Upper Savannah Workforce Development Board will rate applications based on the cost-effectiveness of the investment. Priority for funding will be given to 1) Businesses whose applications represent a significant upgrade in employee skills and/or employee wage increases as a result of training, 2) Businesses whose training applications reflect a significant layoff avoidance strategy and provide retention opportunities, 3) Businesses/Business Sites who have not received an Incumbent Worker Training Program award during the prior or current program year and 4) Businesses with less than 50 employees.

Businesses should note that this year funding will be limited to \$10,000 per business. Approved training will be reimbursed 100%. **Training agreements will begin July 1, 2011 and training must start no later than September 15, 2011, and end no later than December 31, 2011.**

Upper Savannah Council of Governments will contract with the selected business (es) to write an agreement for incumbent worker training. Costs will be reimbursed after the business provides the training services specified in the contract. Reimbursable training expenses include instructors'/trainers' salaries, textbooks/manuals, and materials/supplies. *Periodic and refresher courses cannot be funded. Safety training that is required for a business to meet OSHA (federal) safety standards cannot be funded.*

*Upper Savannah Council of Governments **must** receive applications by **noon, Friday May 13, 2011.** Applications received after noon, Friday May 13, 2011, will be placed on a waiting list and considered for funding as additional funds are available. A question and answer session regarding the Incumbent Worker Training Program grant application process will be held at 9:00 am **on Friday, April 15, 2011** in the Upper Savannah Council of Governments conference room, 222 Phoenix Street, Suite 200, Greenwood, SC.*

To request a copy of the application, contact Upper Savannah workforce staff at (864) 941-8050 or Amy Dowell, adowell@uppersavannah.com. The application is also available for download at <http://www.us1stops.com/funding.html>.