



FL VETS Business Training Grants Standard Operating Procedures

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FLORIDA VETS BUSINESS
TRAINING GRANTS PROGRAM

*A state-funded program for
qualifying businesses*



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Veterans Florida Business Training Grant program is designed to increase the competitiveness of Florida businesses in the global economy by providing a trained, skilled workforce from the pool of Florida’s military veteran population. The business benefits of hiring military veterans are well documented, and the economic impact of the veteran workforce continues to rise.

The Veterans Florida Business Training Grant program provides grant funding for customized, skills-based curriculum development and training, through partial reimbursement, to businesses in Florida’s targeted, high-growth and high-wage industries (qualified targeted industries). These are high-skill industries producing goods or services and wages generally 125 percent above state or local wages.

The Veterans Florida Business Training Grant application process is designed as a collaborative effort between the business requesting training, Veterans Florida, high-skilled training providers, and the local economic development organization.

The program is a state-funded grant program that provides funding to qualifying businesses to train their new, full-time employees. Funding is provided in the form of a performance-based reimbursable grant, for a 12-month maximum term per new employee. A business pays for pre-approved, direct training-related costs and is reimbursed by Veterans Florida upon submission of required documentation.

A business may apply for and receive funds concurrently with the Quick Response Training Program administered by CareerSource Florida. **Note:** A business does not need to be new, expanding, or creating net new jobs to apply for and receive funds from the Veterans Florida Business Training Grant Program. Such situations are requirements under the Quick Response Training Program.

All eligible applications for businesses creating new high-quality jobs will be given equal consideration and are processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

BENEFITS

<u>For Employers</u>	<u>For Employees</u>
- Increased Competitiveness	- Advancement Opportunities
- Skilled Workforce	- Increased Job Opportunities
- Increased Productivity	- Job Retention
- Increased Profits	- Transportable/Transferrable Skills
- Company Growth	- Specialized and General Training

AVAILABLE FUNDING

The total amount of funding available for the Veterans Florida Business Training Grant program in 2016-2017 is \$1 million. Applications for certifications and for funding are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis until available funding has been awarded. Funding is provided on a per veteran employee hired and trained basis, with a maximum of \$8,000.00 per employee trained.

Certified businesses will receive reimbursement not to exceed \$100,000.00 during a fiscal year. Businesses that are able to demonstrate the ability to hire additional veterans during that time frame will be eligible for additional funding. A notification will be posted on veteransflorida.org when funds are no longer available.

Businesses Applying for Certification and Funding:

- Must be “for profit” (or a not for profit in certain fields) and providing permanent, full-time (35+ hours per week) jobs for Florida military veterans workers requiring customized high-level skills training.
- Must produce a good or service.
- Adequately demonstrate the need for training / education and impact on economy.
- Require non-degree, specialized skills based training of 12 months or less.
- Shall provide sufficient documentation for identification of all participants deemed pertinent to Veterans Florida.

Certification and Funding Priority Given to Businesses:

- Providing full-time, permanent, high-quality jobs in targeted industries or in the defense supply, cloud virtualization, or commercial aviation manufacturing industries.
- Whose applications have the greatest potential for economic impact.
- On a first-come, first served basis.

Ineligible Businesses:

- Not-for-profit agencies or organizations (excluding certain industries determined on a case-by-case basis).
- Retail establishments.
- Entities whose administrations are comprised only of volunteers.
- Workforce Development Boards and their administrative entities.
- Labor unions.
- Federal, state, county, or city governmental entities.

Definition of Military Veteran Employee:

- Eligible to legally work in the United States as verified by E-Verify.
- Florida resident working at a physical location in Florida.
- Verifiable military service with a DD-214; or a former member of the National Guard with a NGB-22; or a VA Benefits Statement; or a current member of the Florida National Guard with a letter from their commander.

REIMBURSABLE TRAINING EXPENSES

Veterans Florida staff will work with each business individually during the application process-ensuring the courses meet the training related needs of the business and that the costs are eligible for reimbursement.

<u>Allowable Costs</u>	<u>Unallowable Costs</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tuition and Fees - Instructors/Trainers Salaries - Curriculum Development - Textbooks, manuals, software, and other materials - Customized, skills based online training - Rental fees for facilities at public colleges and Universities, including virtual training labs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General Workplace Training, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPR and First Aid Safety Training New Hire Orientation Diversity and Sexual Harassment English as a Second Language Workplace literacy or soft skills Conferences

*Additional costs may be allowable upon approval of Veterans Florida staff based on program staff's statutory and institutional interpretation.

TRAINING SERVICES

One of the unique features of the Veterans Florida Business Training Grant program is that it provides flexibility regarding the type(s) of training and training provider(s). Based upon the needs of the company and its overall workforce development need, the company may choose who provides training as well as the type of training provided, as long as it meets the requirements of being customized and skills based.

<h3>Training can be:</h3>	<p>Provided by Florida's public or private educational institution, a private training company, a private instructor, a company employee who has the subject matter expertise, or a combination of training providers</p>
<p>Include occupational skills training designed to meet the special requirements of a business or industry</p>	<p>Delivered in-person or online</p>
<p>Technical / hard skills training such as computer software training</p>	<p>Degree or certificate seeking (If grant funds are used to provide a degree, certificate, or licensure, accreditation documentation is required with the application).</p>
<p>Professional development (i.e., leadership training) or in strategies to improve efficiency of business operations</p>	<p>At the company's facility, at the training provider's facility, or a combination of locations</p>

The following are examples of trainings that cannot be funded:

- CPR and first aid training
- OSHA and safety training
- New hire orientation
- Diversity and sexual harassment training
- English as a second language training
- Degree programs
- Workplace literacy or soft skills training
- Training that takes place as part of a conference event where food is included

APPLICATION & REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

The Veterans Florida Business Training Grant request for application may be found at veteransflorida.org/grant under the Employers tab. The application and reporting process is designed to be as simple as possible for the business applying for the grant, while providing Veterans Florida the necessary information to make decisions regarding eligibility, certification, and training reimbursement payments.

The basic application and reporting flow for an eligible business is:



Step 1: Request Application

A business seeking training cost reimbursement through this program will complete the online request for application form. Veterans Florida will use the answers provided to determine eligibility to receive application documents and further assistance with the application process. The request for application can be found at <http://www.veteransflorida.org/grant/>.

Step 2: Application for Certification

A business deemed eligible to receive application documents will be contacted by Veterans Florida and will receive document templates to assist the business in obtaining certification to receive grant funds for new, trained hires.

The document templates the business will receive:

- Request for Grant Funds Letter
- Budget and Application Spreadsheet
- Letter of Authorized Persons who may report towards the grant funds on behalf of the business

Veterans Florida will work closely with the business to complete the documents. At the discretion of the Veterans Florida Executive Director, a business may be approved to be certified as a Veterans Florida Business Training Grant recipient business. Veterans Florida and the business will sign an agreement of certification, and the business will receive a Letter of Certification.

Certification expires at the end of the current State of Florida Fiscal Year, June 30, and may be renewed upon extension of the program funding by the State. Businesses initially certified within the fourth quarter of a State Fiscal Year may be able to extend the term of certification through the end of the next Fiscal Year if approved by the Veterans Florida Executive Director and upon extension of the program funding by the State. Certification covers the approved job titles in the budget application spreadsheet, which will be used in future reports for new hires and trained employees.

Veterans Florida may cancel the application process or the approval for certification at anytime it is determined that inaccurate information that would otherwise cause the business to be ineligible was provided by the business seeking grant funds.

Step 3: Hiring Report

A certified business will complete an online Hiring Report form immediately upon hiring a new, Florida military veteran for which the business will seek training cost grant reimbursement. The business will need to work with the new hire to provide Veterans Florida the required documentation and job title to qualify the veteran for grant funds. Veterans Florida will store any personal information of the employee securely. Additionally, the business will need to provide an estimated end of training date plus grace period for the employee so Veterans Florida may ensure funds will be available at the time the veteran employee completes necessary training.

Step 4: Training Report

Once the reported new hire completes training, the business will complete an online Training Report form for the employee notifying Veterans Florida. The business will also provide any training certifications to Veterans Florida. Veterans Florida will review all information provided, documents, and reports related to the trained employee to make a final determination of cost reimbursement for the business.

Step 5: Reimbursement Payment

Upon a successful determination by Veterans Florida that all necessary information and documentation has been provided and is accurate regarding the trained employee, Veterans Florida will promptly process the grant payment and send to the business via certified mail.

CERTIFICATION CONTRACT

The certification contract, listing Veterans Florida and the business seeking the grant, will be prepared and sent electronically to the authorized company representatives for signature. The contract will then be returned via email to Veterans Florida for signature. The signed and

executed contract will then be emailed to all parties. No reimbursements will be made until the contract is fully executed and no hiring and training commenced before the contract is executed shall be reimbursed. The contract will set forth all processes and expectations for administering, implementing and completing the training set forth in the budget spreadsheet and application.

A certification contract may be extended if the business has reported hired employees still in training. All training must be completed for an employee within the estimated time limitations for a particular position plus a grace period, otherwise reimbursement may be forfeited for that employee.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Veterans Florida staff are available to provide technical assistance throughout the process, from the application request stage through contract execution, monitoring and fiscal closeout.

SUBSTITUTION REQUESTS & AMENDMENTS

A certification is approved based on the training and positions outlined in the budget spreadsheet and application and approved by Veterans Florida Executive Director. Understanding that training needs may change, additional training or positions can be added as long as they meet the approval requirements of customized, skills-based training. If additional training or positions are needed, the business shall contact Veterans Florida with a description of the revised training needs and collaborate to update the budget spreadsheet and seek approval from the Executive Director for any changes.

OTHER TRAINING RESOURCES

There are training programs at the local and state level designed to support Florida businesses by providing training grants. A business can apply for an Employed Worker Training grant or an On-the-Job Training grant through its local workforce development board. The Incumbent Worker Training grant is available through CareerSource Florida. Businesses can use any or all of these grants concurrently; however, the grants cannot subsidize the other's training and

cannot cover the same training costs. Receipt of other federal training funds, i.e., through the local workforce development board or Incumbent Worker Training must be disclosed in your Quick Response Training application.