

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA



Workforce *Development* Board
City of *Los Angeles*

Workforce Development Board
CHARLES WOO
CHAIR



KAREN BASS
MAYOR



**Economic and Workforce
Development Department**
CAROLYN M. HULL.
GENERAL MANAGER

January 29, 2025

Council File Number:
Council Districts: All
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The Honorable Karen Bass
Mayor, City of Los Angeles
Room 303, City Hall

City Council
c/o City Clerk
Room 395, City Hall

Attention: Legislative Coordinator

APPROVAL FOR THE ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TO ACCEPT AND ALLOCATE UP TO \$4,500,000 OF U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR 2025 JANUARY WILDFIRES DISASTER RECOVERY NATIONAL DISLOCATED WORKER GRANT FUNDING TO PROVIDE TEMPORARY JOBS FOR CLEAN-UP AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, ACCEPT AND ALLOCATE UP TO \$4,500,000 OF STATE OF CALIFORNIA EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT LA COUNTY FIRE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT DISLOCATED WORKER ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING TO PROVIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, AND AUTHORIZATION TO REPROGRAM THE BALANCE OF FUNDING FOR THE MODIFIED STATE OF CALIFORNIA EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT FARMER JOHN WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT DISLOCATED WORKER ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE GRANT FUNDING TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL WORKSOURCE CENTER / AMERICA'S JOB CENTERS OF CALIFORNIA SERVICE PROVIDERS IN RESPONSE TO WILDFIRE DISASTER RECOVERY

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of the Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD) respectfully requests that the City Council:

1. APPROVE the EWDD to accept up to \$4.5 million 2025 January Wildfires Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG), listed in Table 1 – including any EWDD Administrative Costs;
2. APPROVE the EWDD to accept up to \$4.5 million in funding for the State of California Employment Development Department (EDD) LA County Fire Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Dislocated Worker Additional Assistance Grant (AAG), listed in Table 1 - including any EWDD Administrative Costs;
3. AUTHORIZE the EWDD to reprogram the balance of the EDD Farmer John WIOA Dislocated Worker AAG funds and to include additional WorkSource Center (WSC) service providers listed in Table 1;
4. AUTHORIZE the EWDD to reprogram funding, up to the \$250,000 WDB threshold, for any Wildfire related grants to expedite funding to higher performing WSCs listed in Table 1, with a requirement to report back within sixty (60)-days; and
5. AUTHORIZE the General Manager of the EWDD, or designee, to execute contracts with the service providers as listed in Table 1.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendations contained herein will have no impact on the City General Fund.

BACKGROUND

A historic series of wildfires, driven by powerful winds and low humidity since January 7, 2025, has become one of the most devastating fire events on record for the City of Los Angeles (City). On the morning of January 7, 2025, residents reported smoke and the beginnings of a fire in the Pacific Palisades, which prompted evacuation warnings and subsequent mandatory evacuation orders by the afternoon. Over the next several days, the Palisades, Hurst, Sunset, Eaton, and Kenneth Fires burned thousands of structures, homes, businesses, landmarks, and vehicles/equipment causing widespread damage, destruction, and dislocation across the region.

On January 7, 2025, Mayor Karen Bass (Mayor Bass) moved to issue a declaration of a local emergency in coordination with the City Council, which now includes additional updates to account for the firestorm's devastation. Additionally, Mayor Bass issued Emergency Executive Order No. 1 to help streamline processes for residents rebuilding the homes and businesses that were lost or damaged as a result of the wildfires.

On January 8, 2025, soon after the start of these fires, President Biden moved to approve Governor Gavin Newsom's (Governor Newsom) request for a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration (Declaration) to support ongoing response efforts to the wildfires. The Declaration allows for the availability of federal assistance funding to help state, tribal, and local governments cover emergency response costs to help individuals and businesses.

The Los Angeles Times has put the damage and total economic loss of these windstorm and wildfire events at a preliminary estimate of between \$52 billion and \$57 billion; these figures are likely to increase.

Funding for Recovery

Under the leadership of Governor Newsom and the EDD, state and federal resources to aid in the recovery effort have already been identified and secured. The EDD, in coordination with the EWDD and the Los Angeles County (County) Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), has secured AAG and NDWG funding.

The EWDD coordinated with the County DEO to create a joint strategy to help those impacted across the entire region secure resources to immediately aid in recovery. Additionally, the EDD committed to matching federal funding up to a total of \$20 million to aid the Los Angeles area in recovery. Funding up to \$10 million will support clean-up activities and humanitarian aid through temporary jobs with an additional \$10 million to enable displaced workers to access transitional jobs, on-the-job training, and other essential workforce career services. The final total funding amounts will be contingent on the region's performance progress and expenditure figures.

Additionally, the EWDD worked with the EDD to modify the existing Farmer John WIOA AAG, expiring in May 2025, to expand participant eligibility to include workforce development services to dislocated workers impacted by these most recent wildfires. The EDD Farmer John AAG, approved originally by the WDB Executive Committee on March 23, 2023, provides workforce development and supportive services to dislocated workers impacted by the Farmer John meat processing plant closure.

DISCUSSION

2025 January Wildfires Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant

In response to the widespread damage and displacement, the State of California, under the leadership of Governor Newsom's Office, has acknowledged the urgent need for immediate clean-up efforts, long-term repairs, and comprehensive humanitarian assistance. This NDWG project offers dislocated workers a temporary job assignment to aid wildfire recovery efforts. 'Laborer' and 'Crew Supervisor' positions will cover much of the clean-up and repair activities under the grant. The participants will contribute to making fire and wind-damaged areas safe, hospitable, and operational. The grant will also offer a variety of humanitarian assistance positions to help residents access fundamental supports including, but not limited to, food, clothing, shelter, mental health support, and medical aid. Participants' hourly wages will be at least \$25 or \$27 for supervisory positions to support their return to the workforce. The EWDD anticipates serving up to 150 participants through this grant project, contingent on the final allocation awarded by the EDD.

Per EDD's January 16, 2025 press release, the anticipated award amount for this NDWG project is \$10 million, of which the City is expected to receive up to \$4.5 million.

Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant Activities

Per the Department of Labor (DOL), the NDWG projects fund temporary employment to support clean-up and recovery in areas impacted by emergencies or declared disasters. These grants help communities recover while providing job opportunities for dislocated workers.

Participants in this program will assist with site restoration to functional status and repair across the region and take on humanitarian roles to support those affected and displaced by the disaster.

The Temporary Job positions being requested by the EWDD include the following:

- Laborer
- Crew Supervisor
- Disaster Recovery Processor
- Child Care Worker
- Shelter Worker
- Humanitarian Aid Worker
- Case Worker
- AJCC Administrative Support
- Intake Specialist
- Call Center Representative
- Animal Shelter Support Staff
- Community Health Support Worker

The EDD will determine which of these roles are allowable under the grant. As the EWDD continues to gauge the needs of those impacted by this disaster, additional positions may be requested.

Temporary Jobs

Upon designation as a service provider, the selected WorkSource Center (WSC) will conduct outreach and recruitment to identify eligible individuals to participate in grant activities. An orientation session will be delivered to participants to provide an overview of the scope of work and physical expectations of available temporary job assignments.

For 'Laborer' and 'Crew Supervisor' positions, individuals will be expected to bend, lift, stoop, and remain on one's feet for more than half of the workday. If an initial assessment determines that an individual is unable to meet the physical demands of the position, the WSC will try to provide an alternative course of action. Individuals may also be provided with accommodations upon request to ensure all who are interested have a chance to participate in workforce services.

Participants with previous experience in construction, wildfire, or environmental work, supervisory experience, wilderness experience (or familiarity), and a strong work ethic will be selected for 'Crew Supervisor' positions.

The WSC will ensure that all certification training is provided before crew placement, with additional training provided on the job. Examples of certifications include industry OSHA 10 certification, heat safety training, American Red Cross Heartsaver First Aid CPR, and AED certification. Additional training specific to an approved worksite may be provided based on the nature of clean-up and repair activities. The WSC system has qualified

partners to provide extra hazard training including OSHA 30, HAZWOPER, and HAZMAT certifications.

Los Angeles County Fire WIOA Additional Assistance Grant

The EDD coordinated with local Workforce Development Boards to approve the County Fire AAG to address workforce needs and support individuals and businesses in the region impacted by the recent wildfires. The EWDD is working side-by-side with the County DEO on a regional approach, which includes multiple workforce boards as partners. Under the grant, participants may receive assistance with supportive services, job search, employment training, and transitional work experience. Through on-the-job training, both public and private businesses may benefit from reimbursement of up to fifty percent (50%) of the wage rate. The EWDD estimates serving 174 participants through this grant project.

Per EDD's January 16, 2025 press release, the anticipated award amount for the region for this AAG is \$10 million, of which the City is expected to receive up to \$4.5 million.

Farmer John WIOA Additional Assistance Grant

In response to the wildfires, the EWDD submitted a modification to the EDD to expand the Farmer John AA Grant scope of work to include individuals and businesses impacted by the 2025 January Wildfires that have burned throughout the Los Angeles region. The City anticipates most of the spending to cover supportive services, including emergency-related needs of the dislocated workers. Needs related to housing assistance, transportation, and utility payments will be covered by grant funds with job search, training, and career services also available to enrolled participants.

The grant will continue to serve the dislocated workers impacted by the Farmer John meat processing plant in Vernon that closed permanently after more than 90 years in the community. Additionally, dislocated workers from the 99 Cent Only Stores, Cargill plant, and Golden West Food Group will be eligible to receive services under this grant.

The EWDD continues to work in partnership with the County DEO, Cal Labor Federation, and the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 770 to coordinate workforce, career, and support services under the grant.

The EWDD can serve up to 288 participants through this \$1,650,000 grant project and has an estimated \$1 million balance remaining.

WIOA Additional Assistance Grant Activities

Under the WIOA, Governor Newsom is authorized to set aside twenty-five percent (25%) of the state's Dislocated Worker funds for Rapid Response and AA projects. AAG funds are made available exclusively to Local Workforce Development Areas (Local Areas) that experience sudden and large increases in unemployment due to natural disasters, mass layoffs, or other events.

In response to the disaster, the AAG funds will be used to provide direct services to individuals impacted by the wildfires. The needs of those impacted go above and beyond WIOA funds currently available to our system.

Allowable workforce services under the AAG will include, but not be limited to:

- Transitional Jobs
- On-the-Job Training
- Occupational Skills Training
- Job Search Assistance
- Resume Preparation Assistance
- Career Guidance/Planning

Supportive services being requested to support this emergency include, but are not limited to:

- Transportation Assistance
- Child Care
- Utility Payments
- Work Uniform/Equipment
- Housing Assistance

The EDD will determine which supports are allowable under the grant.

RECOMMENDATION

To fully maximize all grant funds in immediate support of this disaster, EWDD requests approval to contract and allocate the County Fire AAG and 2025 January Wildfires NDWG funds among service providers. With this authority, the EWDD can immediately assist in the recovery of the region, help place individuals into the workforce, and support business operations.

For the Farmer John AAG, the EWDD also requests authority to expand grant service providers and allocate funding to currently contracted WSCs listed in Table 1 below. Please note this will supersede the Program Year (PY) 2024-25 Carry-In report, which allocated the remaining grant funds to the Downtown/Pico Union and South Valley WSCs.

EWDD is recommending funding for the agencies as outlined in the table below.

TABLE 1: Grant Allocations to Currently Contracted WorkSource Center Providers

Agency (WorkSource Center)		2025 January Wildfire NDWG	LA County Fire AA Grant	Farmer John AA Grant	TOTAL NDWG + AA Grants
1	Arbor E&T, LLC (South Valley WSC)	\$290,000	\$290,000	\$400,000	\$980,000
2	Managed Career Solutions, SPC (Boyle Heights WSC)	\$290,000	\$290,000	\$75,000	\$655,000
3	Asian American Drug Abuse Program, Inc. (West Adams WSC)	\$289,000	\$289,000	\$48,125	\$626,125

TABLE 1: Grant Allocations to Currently Contracted WorkSource Center Providers (continued)

Agency (WorkSource Center)		2025 January Wildfire NDWG	LA County Fire AA Grant	Farmer John AA Grant	TOTAL NDWG + AA Grants
4	Managed Career Solutions, SPC (Harbor Gateway WSC)	\$289,000	\$289,000	\$48,125	\$626,125
5	Coalition for Responsible Community Development (Vernon Central / LATTC WSC)	\$289,000	\$289,000	\$48,125	\$626,125
6	El Proyecto del Barrio, Inc. (Sun Valley WSC)	\$289,000	\$289,000	\$75,000	\$653,000
7	Goodwill Industries of SoCal (Northeast LA WSC)	\$290,000	\$290,000	\$75,000	\$655,000
8	Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (Watts LA WSC)	\$289,000	\$289,000	\$48,125	\$626,125
9	JVS SoCal (West Los Angeles WSC)	\$290,000	\$290,000	\$75,000	\$655,000
10	Managed Career Solutions, SPC (Hollywood WSC)	\$289,000	\$289,000	\$48,125	\$626,125
11	Pacific Asian Consortium in Employment (Downtown/Pico Union WSC)	\$289,000	\$289,000	\$400,000	\$978,000
12	UAW – Labor Employment and Training Corporation (South LA WSC)	\$289,000	\$289,000	\$48,125	\$626,125
13	Watts Labor Community Action Committee (Southeast LA WSC)	\$289,000	\$289,000	\$48,125	\$626,125
14	Goodwill Industries of SoCal (Northeast San Fernando Valley WSC)	\$289,000	\$289,000	\$48,125	\$626,125
15	EWDD – Admin	\$450,000	\$450,000	\$165,000	\$1,065,000
TOTAL		\$4,500,000	\$4,500,000	\$1,650,000	\$10,650,000

PROPOSED TERM OF CONTRACTS

All new contracts will be retroactive to the date of board approval and remain active through June 30, 2025, with the possibility of extension.

WDB ACTION

In accordance with the WDB–Local Elected Officials (WDB-LEO) Agreement, the WDB Executive Committee approved the items on January 23, 2025.



CAROLYN M. HULL
General Manager



CHARLES WOO, Chair
Workforce Development Board