

Workforce Development Department ConstructionWorks Project

ConstructionWorks Powered by the Illinois Tollway (“ConstructionWorks”) Background Information

The Illinois Tollway is launching a new construction workforce initiative with The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership ConstructionWorks to prepare job seekers from historically underrepresented populations to enter or reenter skilled trade apprenticeships and other employment in transportation-related construction occupations. The Tollway’s goal is to increase the number of candidates interested in construction careers in an effort to have the people working on Tollway projects to reflect the diversity of the communities it serves.

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership was awarded a 3-year grant in partnership with regional workforce areas and stakeholders across the Tollway areas of Chicago, Cook County South Suburbs, Waukegan, Aurora, and Rockford. The regional partners include the surrounding workforce areas of Lake, McHenry, DuPage and Will Counties and the Rockford area; along with training providers, trade associations, construction contractors and regional transportation agencies. The regional partners will work together to further develop and implement the components of the program, training, and employment opportunities.

Workforce Development and the Job Center are partners on this project serving the Waukegan area. Workforce Development will recruit, screen, deliver career services and enroll eligible individuals into pre-apprenticeship training programs leading to jobs as laborers, equipment operators, carpenters, electricians, iron workers and cement masons. The Job Center will have access to tools and programs and serve as a centralized access point where individuals can obtain information and guidance on entering building trades and construction jobs.

The Tollway defines targeted populations for ConstructionWorks services as follows:

- Women
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Individuals with incomes near or below Federal poverty standards
- Displaced workers in similar industries such as manufacturing, maintenance, etc.
- Lower-skilled individuals and those lacking a high school diploma
- Military veterans
- Underemployed construction industry workers seeking entry into construction trades utilized on Tollway projects
- Individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP)
- Individuals with childcare needs
- People with disabilities
- Ex-offenders
- Individuals with limited construction and transportation industry experience, such as pre-apprenticeship training, that did not result in apprenticeship or training program opportunities

ConstructionWorks Grant Powered by the Illinois Tollway Grant Information

Grant term: September 1, 2018 – August 31, 2021

Grant Budget:	Personnel:	\$ 56,235.00
	Transportation:	<u>\$ 7,504.00</u>
		\$ 63,739.00

Grant Performance: 14 eligible individuals enrolled
78% entered employment
60% retained in employment for 1 year