

# NCDOT

On-the-Job Training Program

Training and Education Supportive Services

**HCTA Operational Guide** 

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# This document has been approved for use and dissemination.

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## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the NCDOT/On-the-Job Training (OJT) Unit's new Highway Construction Trades Academy (HCTA) Operational Guide (OG)!

# <u>NEED</u>

All HCTA partners should recognize the need for consistency, quality, and uniformity in the operation of Highway Construction Trades Academies. When done completely and correctly, all parties – participants, completers, providers, and hiring contractors, plus NC DOT/OJT – will benefit. The principal objective of this guide then is to provide key information to various agencies that are opening and operating HCTAs under the auspices of the NC DOT Office of Civil Rights OJT program. Not only will this enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of respective responses and programs, but it will also establish a functional baseline by providing critical information to participating HCTA provider agencies/entities across the state.

# **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this guide is to ensure your HCTA team carries out the HCTA model the way OJT staff – and all involved parties should - want them done. The idea of this OG is to share with your team in detail how to carry out certain tasks, activities, and procedures needed for a mutually rewarding and successful Academy. Consider it a blueprint, game playbook, franchise SOP, or even cookbook if you like, that will benefit everyone.

Having standard operating guidelines, procedures, and forms, and requiring everyone to follow them, has several advantages leading to greater efficiency, consistency, and ease for providers and their staff members. If everyone follows the same operational guidelines, then we will have more uniformity and quality across HCTAs. Regardless of whether the Academy is operated by a CBO or FBO, they should be able to graduate completers with the same basic skills and level expected by hiring contractors.

Scope: The overall purpose of this Operational Guide is to help all agencies/entities including community-based organizations, as well as faith-based organizations, education entities, and other public agencies such as local government units, plus other private and/or for-profit firms, that wish to operate high-performing, effective, uniform, and results-oriented HCTAs. With this OG, your organization and team members do not have to guess at how OJT or you want them to function and operate.

#### **OBJECTIVE**

The main objective of this Operational Guide (OG) is to delineate the roles, activities, procedures, and performance measures, among others, so that HCTA agency personnel can use it to better plan and operate these critical Academies. This guide also provides additional information to entities developing proposals to potentially operate said HCTAs. This guide is required reading as it gives comprehensive guidance to those wishing to operate an approved/funded HCTA, or who are already doing so. In these pages, readers will find detailed written instructions to achieve uniformity of the performance of an HCTA and its various functions and required activities. It will help prevent and solve problems around the consistency and quality of programs and graduates and will help achieve better outcomes and results for all parties. Providers, participants, completers, and hiring contractors will all be more successful.

## **SECTION 2: NCDOT OJT SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**

The purpose of the North Carolina Department of Transportation On-The-Job Training Program is to implement and serve as administrator of the OJT and OJT/Supportive Services (OJT/SS). The funds received by NCDOT for OJT/SS grow the highway construction workforce pipeline by providing minorities, women, and disadvantaged individuals with activities and resources to offset barriers to becoming gainfully employed in the industry.

For this program, disadvantaged individuals are defined as women, Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific Americans, Subcontinent Asian-Pacific Americans, or other minorities found to be disadvantaged by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Persons who are not members of one of those groups may also be considered **disadvantaged** if they can establish their "social" and "economic" disadvantage. For example, people with disabilities have disproportionately low incomes and high rates of unemployment and may be considered socially and economically disadvantaged, as are residents of any North Carolina Tier 1 County.

Note: A disadvantaged person is defined as a resident of a North Carolina Tier 1 County or a part of another documented disadvantaged/underrepresented group.

#### **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FUNDING**

Supportive Services dollars are requested from the Federal Highway Administration as a part of the annual OJT Statement of Work. The annual SOW is a comprehensive plan of supportive services activities, activity budgets, and annual program objectives.

All supportive services funds should be used to support disadvantaged individuals participating in NCDOT OJT sponsored training activities and trainees enrolled in the OJT Program.

Supportive Service funds are available for the following activities and resources:

- 1. Education and training activities
- 2. Supplies related to employment or training
- 3. Transportation needs related to employment or training
- 4. Housing needs related to employment or training
- 5. Child care needs related to employment or training
- 6. Allowances/stipends (as approved by FHWA) related to employment or training
- 7. Other assistance that is approved by the OJT Manager

#### **SECTION 3: TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

A major supportive service activity of the NCDOT OJT/SS is Adult Education and Training. The purpose of Adult Education and Training is to prepare disadvantaged individuals over the age of 18 for work in the highway construction industry. Adult Education and Training falls into one of two categories that have been written into the previous SOW—basic highway construction trades academies or advanced skill training (AdT).

# BASIC ACADEMIES (HCTA)

Academies are established by NCDOT at host sites throughout the state. The curriculum for each academy follows the FHWA approved curriculum; a specific, detailed curriculum may be provided by NCDOT. The academy models are as follows: Community-Based Highway Construction Trades Academy, Pre-Release Highway Construction Trades Academy, Specialized Highway Construction Trades Academy, and Advanced Highway Skill Training. Each is described below:

Community-Based Highway Construction Trades Academy: The CBHCTA is for adult students who are at least 18 years old and are a part of minority ethnicity, a woman, and/or a disadvantaged person. The HCTA introduces the industry that includes hands-on experience. Completers are provided case management, training allowances, hiring fairs, and guided pathways to employment with prime contractors. Completers can also gain access to Advanced Highway Construction Training and supportive services.

**Pre-Release Highway Construction Trades Academy**: The PHCTA is a concept trades academy that will potentially be in partnership with the N.C. Department of Public Safety. This academy will attempt to provide inmates eligible for work release an opportunity to be trained and employed with a partnering contractor during the 12 months before release. The purpose is to decrease recidivism through steady employment before release.

**Specialized Highway Construction Academies**: Specialized Highway Construction Academies for adult students who are at least 18—years old who is a part of the target recruitment population. Examples include, but are not limited to Native Americans, minority college students for professional service careers related to highway construction, Hispanic communities, and veterans. Participants of the SHCTAs must meet the demographics required by HCTAs—ethnic minority, woman, or socio-economic disadvantaged person.

#### ADVANCED HIGHWAY SKILL TRAINING

Advanced Highway Skill Training will focus on advanced skills. Participants who have attended an HCTA will have the opportunity to receive additional skill training in one of seven critical need areas. Advanced Highway Skill Training will not be in an academy, but a partnership with contractors to assist with upskilling OJT Trainees and other workers. Areas of training focus are:

- Demolition/Hauling, Disaster Recovery
- Guardrail, Bridgework
- Asphalt/Paving
- Landscaping/Erosion, Trenches/Piping
- Traffic Maintenance

# **SECTION 4: HCTA MONITORING AND REPORTING**

Contractual monitoring will be included in each contract to ensure the HCTA is meeting performance-based expectations as outlined in the agreement. The Education and Training Program coordinator will maintain active and on-going communication with selected HCTAs to identify issues and concerns throughout the contract period. The academy performance measures and deliverables will be monitored by the Education and Training Program coordinator, who will report to the OJT manager and the deputy director. This will determine the continuance of the contract term.

# **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Role	Responsibilities
Partner	
Required Proposal Documents	
Oversight/Funding Agency	> Award contract
NCDOT OJT	Reimburse all allowable activities and expenses
• Program Deliverables	Evaluate program deliverables
• Final Contract	
Notice to Proceed	
Project Oversight	<ul><li>Billing Funding Agency</li></ul>
Administrator/Community Sponsor	Compensating program staff and training providers
OJT HCTA Host Site	Approve all project calendars
Cover Letter of Interest	Approve all expenses
• Proposal	Hire project staff
- Budget	Contract vocational training staff
- Partnership Agreements	Coordination of recruitment efforts: Recruitment
- Staffing Assignments	efforts will include interest sessions in project service
- Plan of program delivery	area; print media marketing campaigns; radio time;
	participating in community events; providing
	information to community partners; seeking out
	populations and opportunities to share training
	information and schedule
	Selection of program participants: Creation of
	participant application; interviewing participants,
	selecting participants from a waiting list when
	appropriate
	Negotiating all contracts related to facility use and
	hiring of staff, training providers
	<ul><li>Finalizing training calendar</li></ul>
	Project administrator/host invoices NCDOT for all
	allowable services, activities, and expenses
Industry Partners	Participate in job fairs
Prime and Subcontractor with	Participate in career exploration activities
Employment Opportunities in Highway	Facilitate worksite visits and job shadow
Construction	<ul><li>Serve on Advisor Committee</li></ul>

	<ul> <li>Provide job placement for training completers</li> <li>Give input into training design</li> </ul>
Workforce Partners (MOU/MOA of Support)  Workforce Development Board  WIOA Funds  NC Works Career Centers  Vocational Rehabilitation	<ul> <li>Providing blended funds and services to help offset barriers to training and employment</li> <li>May also assist with recruitment</li> </ul>
Vocational Partners/Trainers	Various vocational training partners will be used to provide evidence-based training with measurable outcomes and industry-recognized credentials as available.
Community Partners  > Local Reentry Council  > City Community Development Manager  > County Community Development Manger  > Various Self Sufficiency Agencies  > Grassroots Nonprofits  > Local Educational Agencies  > DSS	<ul> <li>Refer Participants</li> <li>Serve on Advisory Committee</li> </ul>
Area Staffing agencies NCDOT Consultants	<ul> <li>Contractor Engagement</li> <li>Recruitment Activities</li> <li>Case Management</li> </ul>

# **TECHNOLOGY**

Agencies providing contract deliverables using technology will be responsible for the rental/lease of laptops (if applicable).

# **FACILITIES**

The facilities chosen to accommodate the training must provide full access to program staff, participants, and trainees. At a minimum, the facility will have the ability to provide:

- Wi-Fi
- Multiple classrooms
- Tables/chairs/desk
- Computers (with all associated components) and printer
- Restroom
- Common area
- Staff/instructor office space

#### **PARTICIPANT ENROLLMENT**

For this document, the following definitions apply for reporting and reimbursement:

- 1. An enrolled participant is anyone who has completed all the necessary paperwork and documentation and attended at least one day of class.
- 2. An actively enrolled participant is anyone with continuous attendance.
- 3. A graduate is a participant who completes all the requirements of the program as laid out.

#### REPORTING /EVALUATIONS OVERVIEW

For this contract, the following forms will be used for reporting purposes. These forms and evaluations must be completed for reimbursement. Each OJT Host Site will be provided with both a hard copy and digital links to the approved documents during the Kickoff/Onboarding Meeting.

Type of	Purpose	Who	When
Report/Form			
Enrollment	Serve as official HCTA registration	OJT HCTA Host Site	First day of
Form/SharePoint	Gather demographics and	NCDOT Consultant	class
	information		
	Trigger training supportive		
	service to each participant		
	<ul> <li>Boots (shoe size)</li> </ul>		
	• Vest (size)		
	<ul> <li>Hard Hat (size)</li> </ul>		
	• Work gloves (s/m/l)		
	<ul> <li>Safety Goggles</li> </ul>		
	• Earplugs		
	Face Mask		
Weekly Report	Enrollment updates and case	OJT HCTA Host Site	End of each
J	management needs		training week
	➤ Weekly Status Report		
	attendance upload into SharePoint		
	(instructions will be provided)		
Close Out	Collect data related to outcomes	OJT HCTA Host Site	With the final
Report/Fillable	Final course evaluation		billing packet
PDF	Final documentation reporting		0.1
	Proof of delivery of training and		
	credentials earned		
Participant	Collect participant feedback	NCDOT OJT	End of each
Evaluation/Form	<ul><li>Each participant will be</li></ul>	NCDOT Consultant	training week
Link	responsible for submitting a		_
	weekly training evaluation:		
	HCTA Evaluation		
Site Evaluation	Collect program host feedback	NCDOT OJT	End of each
/Form Link			training week

#### FINAL REPORT

The NCDOT OJT Program Final Report reflects the summary of an academy after completing their 12-month contract. A final report template will be provided. This final report from your organization must include:

- Participants Enrolled
- Participants Actively Enrolled
- Participants Graduation
- Participants Employed
- Names of Contractor Participation
- Outreach Events
- Participant Evaluation and Surveys
- Documentation of Credentials

#### MARKETING AND BRANDING

Only pre-approved academy templates, brochures, and flyers may be used. The organization's logos can be added. Each OJT Host Site will be provided with both a hard copy and digital version of the approved documents during the Kickoff/Onboarding Meeting.

- Flyer template
- Brochure
- One-pager

# **PARTICIPANT FORMS**

Participant forms will be included in the HCTA Welcome Packet and must be completed before participants are considered officially enrolled in the training. The forms should be returned to and maintained by NCDOT. Each OJT Host Site will be provided with both a hard copy and digital version of the approved documents during the Kickoff/Onboarding Meeting.

- Welcome and Informational Documents
- Commitment/ Disclosure Form
- Computer Usage Policy
- Media Release

#### **BILLING AND INVOICE**

This is a reimbursement funded program. All expenses should have documented payment history attached to billing. Only expenses on the approved budget can be reimbursed by NCDOT. Invoices need to be submitted via email to the OJT program by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. Each OJT Host Site will be provided with both a hard copy and digital version of a sample billing packet and invoicing template during the Kickoff/Onboarding Meeting. Items needed for the billing packet:

- Invoice cover sheet with contract manager signature
- Invoice should include
  - a. A distinguishing invoicing numbers
  - b. The address associated with the NCDOT vendor number

- c. The NCDOT vendor number
- d. The project contract number
- Running balance sheets
- Timesheets of each employee with signature
- Roster with participant each day of class
- Vocational training roster with the signature of participants
- Receipts for each item that is requested for reimbursement

# **RECRUITMENT**

- There must be a minimum of two (2) information sessions before the start of the training academy.
- Recruitment should include collaborations with local workforce partners, prime contractors, and community agencies.
- Suggested recruitment partners include:
  - o NC Works Career Center
  - o Local Reentry Council
  - Vocational Rehabilitation
  - Local Staffing Agencies
  - o Identified Prime and DBE Contractors
  - Churches and other FBOs
  - Housing Authority
  - Community Organizations

## SUGGESTED RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES

- Creation of an advisory committee to serve as a roundtable for ideas, marketing, and program support. An advisory committee will consist of representatives from all collaborative sectors related to training, workforce development, employment services, and employment opportunities
- Flyers, webpage, Facebook
- Radio announcement
- Development of relationships with local contractors
  - o Identify NCDOT projects in the training area
  - o Provide contractors with information and opportunities to recommend employees

# **Section 5: Supportive Services**

Supportive Services are a major component of the HCTA model, designed to help training participants complete the vocational training and maintain gainful employment by removing barriers that impede the application of life and social skills required for training and employment success. The definition of training and employment success for this project is the completion of all aspects of the training program and becoming gainfully employed. Case management will include, but not be limited to:

# PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Personal protective equipment is required on all NCDOT highway construction sites. HCTA participants will need to wear the issued PPE when visiting sites. The standard PPE that is provided by the NCDOT OJT Unit as a part of HCTA participant enrollment includes:

- Steel-toe boots
- Hard hat
- Safety goggles
- Earplugs
- Safety shirt vest

# JOB READINESS SUPPORT

Job Readiness Supports are those supportive services that impact HCTA participants becoming gainfully employed or participating in hands-on /operator pieces of training. Examples of JRS are:

**Drug screenings:** Required to perform hands-on training or as a part of new hire onboarding.

**a.** Each HCTA Host Site has the option to include a drug screen as an overall program requirement.

**b.** An HCTA Host Site conducting hands-on training is required to conduct a urine-based drug screening the day of the hands-on activity.

Background checks: As needed for new hire employment

**Driving records:** As needed for some training opportunities and new hire onboarding

**Transportation:** As needed to get to and from training or work

**Housing:** As needed to support training or an employment opportunity for up to 30

nights

**Childcare:** As needed to support training or employment opportunities

#### CASE MANAGEMENT SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Case management is provided by NCDOT OJT Consultants. A consultant will be assigned to each HCTA site to assist with case management that includes, but not be limited to:

- a. Working with workforce partner to secure resources to eliminate training and employment barriers
- b. Community resource referrals
- c. Assistance with job placement
- d. Creation of success plan
- e. Creation of a training portfolio
- f. Evaluations
- g. Employer engagements

#### APPROVED WRAP AROUND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Drug screenings: Limit to two per HCTA participant
 Background checks: Limit to two per HCTA participant
 Driving records: Limit to two per HCTA participant
 Transportation: At state rate of \$.575 per mile

• Housing: At state rate of \$75.10 per night for a maximum of 30 nights

• Childcare: At approved rate

# REQUESTING WRAP AROUND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

In most cases, the expenses associated with providing Wrap Around Supportive Services are not included in the HCTA Site Operational Budget. The NCDOT OJT Unit has wrap-around supportive services funds available, and these funds must be requested. There is an annual maximum dollar amount allocated per HCTA participant that is pre-determined. The NCDOT OJT POC for each contract will make the site is aware of the allocated participant amount associated with each contract. Steps to receive allocated supportive services funds are as follows:

- 1. Immediately after receiving the official Notice to Proceed, the HCTA Host Site is to create a Supportive Services Request that identifies three vendors that will be used to provide reimbursable wrap-around supportive services in each approved service. Each OJT Host Site will be provided with both a hard copy and digital version of the approved documents during the Kickoff/Onboarding Meeting.
- 2. Provide the following supportive vendor documentation:
  - a. A letter of collaboration on company letterhead listing
    - Point of contact
    - Service rate
  - b. Secretary of State Notice of Good Standing
  - c. Brochure/marketing materials
- 3. The NCDOT OJT POC will provide written approval for the use of the vendors.
- 4. Only the vendors that have been preapproved for services will be reimbursed.

#### **SECTION 6: CONSULTANT SUPPORT**

NCDOT OJT program contracts consultants to assist with supportive services. The involvement of the consultants varies based on the contract. Generally, the support given by consultants to an HCTA will fall into one of the areas identified in this section.

#### **RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

- All HCTA site coordinators will be expected to establish strong and positive working relationships
  with all NCDOT OJT contracted consultants assigned to their academy/region/participants for the
  seamless provision of various supportive services for participants.
- All consultant contact information will be provided to HCTA POCs, and vice versa, early on and
  initial introductions made via the OJT HCTA program coordinator to help initiate this critical
  relationship.
- It is expected that regular and periodic (at least weekly) communication and coordination be conducted between the two entities.

# **RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES**

The HCTA host will work with the OJT consulting firm to document outreach activities before the start of each HCTA cohort that touches at least 100 people. Activities include program screening, and community events (establish relationships with workforce development programs in the HCTA community).

\*There may be limits to recruitment efforts based on the structure of the academy host. Some community-based organizations have target populations they must serve and recruit.

#### CASE MANAGEMENT

Required HCTA participant case management activities to be conducted by consultants are:

- a. Scheduling time and visiting the first day of class to drop off welcome bags and conduct an onboarding assessment that consists of:
- b. Completing SharePoint enrollment
- c. Collecting and loading signed forms (commitment, media release, and computer usage) into SharePoint
- d. Conducting weekly participant check-in
  - All weeks: Participants completing a weekly evaluation
  - Assist all participants in creating a professional/career development plan by end of the four-week training (this can be done virtually).

# **CONTRACTOR ENGAGEMENT**

The academy host with the assistance of the assigned consulting firm will be responsible for creating an employer engagement plan. The plan must consist of:

- 1. A communication plan (emails and phone call schedule)
- 2. A marketing plan (to send out promotional information)
- 3. Job Fair to be held at the end of each training cycle

- 4. Visits to the training
- 5. A participant profile guide for hiring
  - i. To be presented to employers who attend the job fair
- 6. Finding opportunities for work experience
- 7. Facilitating an employer advisory committee
- 8. Working with host sites to coordinate worksite visits based on the training calendar
- 9. Coordinate contractor visits to host site during training
- 10. Assist with coordinating hiring events

<sup>\*</sup> NCDOT OJT Unit will provide the HCTA Site host the contact information of the prime contractors with active projects in the site area. The active projects should serve as opportunities for site visits and potential employment.

# **SECTION 7: GETTING STARTED**

# **PROGRAM PLAN**

Each OJT HCTA Host Site is required to develop a comprehensive program plan. The plan is due and must be approved by NCDOT OJT before beginning training activities. The OJT HCTA Site Program Plan must contain:

- 1. Recruitment Plan
- 2. Employer/Contractor Engagement Plan
- 3. Training Calendar
- 4. Customized Marketing Material
- 5. Supportive Services Vendor Request
- 6. Consultant Coordinated Site Case Management Plan/Activities

# **CHECKLIST**

Impleme	ent	ation Checklist	
	1.	Receive a Notice to Proceed (NTP)	
	2.	Attend Onboarding/Kick-Off Meeting	
		Meet with Consultants within 2 weeks to discuss	
		- Implementation of required case management activities	
		- Recruitment efforts	
		- Employer Engagement Plan	
	4.	Develop Program Plan within the first 4 weeks of receiving NTP	
		- Recruitment Plan	
		- Employer/Contractor Engagement Plan	
		- Training Calendar	
		- Customized Marketing Material	
		- Supportive Services Vendor Request	
		- Consultant Coordinated Site Case Management Plan/Activities	
	5.	Submit Final Program plan to NCDOT OJT for approval	
	6.	Receive approval of Program Plan	
	7.	Start Activities	
		aining Checklist	
Week 1	Ch	ecklist	
	1.	Are there 8 enrolled participants on the first day of class?	
	2.	1 0 7	
	3.		
		first day?	
	4.	<u> </u>	
	5.	Did the site coordinator complete the week 1 report?	
Week 2	Ch	erklist	
WCCK 2	1.	Did participants complete the week 2 evaluation?	
	2.	Did the site coordinator complete the week 2 report?	
	3.		
	J.	as the tase management provided by constitution	
Week 3	Ch	ecklist	
	1.	Did participants complete the week 3 evaluation?	
	2.	Did the site coordinator complete the week 3 report?	
	3.	Was the case management provided by consultants?	
***	C!		
Week 4			T
	1.	Did participants complete the week 4 evaluation?	
	2.	Did the site coordinator complete the week 4 report?	
	3.	Was the case management provided by consultants?	
Closeout Checklist			
Closcoul		Was the final report included in the billing packet?	
		Was the final evaluation completed?	
	۷٠	The the final evaluation completed.	l