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## **Hiring Guide**

*This guide provides a roadmap for any company, no matter the size of the business or the industry – whether you are just getting started or already have a hiring program that you want to expand for opportunity youth.*

### **The Business Benefits of a Hiring Pathway**

Hiring opportunity youth gives employers greater access to a large talent pool that competitors may overlook. Additional benefits include:

1. Cost-effective Talent Development
  - Build your pipeline with more qualified and motivated workers
2. Increased Retention
  - Increase retention among newly hired and existing employees by developing loyal, more fulfilled workers
3. More Diversity
  - Connect to a talent pool with diversity of experience, background and fresh thinking
4. Stronger Community Impact
  - Boost visibility with your community, your consumers, future leaders, and potential talent
  - Get your products and work in front of young, in-touch consumers

### **Step 1: Define Your Open Positions**

*The first step to developing a hiring pathway for opportunity youth is to carefully-define the requirements of your open positions. It is a good idea to identify the skills and competencies that are necessary up front, as well as those that can be developed on the job.*

*You should also define an ideal candidate's professional skills, attitude and personality traits. The key is to think about all of the required skills – not just the more traditional ones. There are many valuable traits for workplace success that opportunity youth can contribute, many of which have little to do with a diploma or degree, such as the following:*

## **Professional Skills**

Technical or applied skills might be easier to quantify and confirm by degrees, but it is vital to recognize the importance of other skills required for workplace success that opportunity youth can bring to the table. These include critical thinking, reliability and conflict resolution.

## **Values and Mindset Towards Work**

Attitudes such as personal initiative and drive are revealed through interactions and behaviors and are relatively difficult to teach. The most successful opportunity youth in training-to-hire programs have a strong work ethic. They're loyal, punctual, good communicators and motivated to be in the workplace.

### **Step 2: Outreach and Recruitment**

*Now that you have defined your open positions, you are ready to identify potential candidates and gauge their skills level and work history. A community based partner organization can significantly help your efforts in this phase. Partners play varying roles, including recruiting participants, providing life and work skills training and securing wraparound supports. A local partner organization, such as a vocational or technical school, can help you create a strong hiring pathway.*

## **Set Up Your Company's Recruiting Process**

Together with your partner align on answers to questions such as:

- What assessments will be administered?
- Who will interview candidates?
- What are good interview questions?
- How many references will be checked?
- Do existing barriers exclude opportunity youth? How could they be changed?

## **Keep An Open Mind When Evaluating Youth**

If given the chance, opportunity youth can rise to the challenge. Your partner organization can help by providing a valuable reference for the opportunity youth candidates you are considering.

## **Maximize Your Outreach**

Once you start hiring opportunity youth, your best source of additional candidates will likely come from the same pool of talent. You can also leverage social media, referrals from existing employees and local advertising.

### **Step 3: Onboarding & Management**

*When onboarding opportunity youth, keep in mind that they might need some additional support in the early days.*

## **Clearly Spell Out Expectations**

Work with your hiring managers and partner to provide the best orientation program for young-entry-level workers. Decide how new opportunity youth employees will be supported to optimize their time-to-productivity and ensure retention.

## **NYS Federal Bonding Program**

### ***What is the NYS Federal Bonding Program?***

It is a unique tool to help a “high risk” job applicant get and keep a job. The program issues Fidelity Bonds, and is sponsored by the NYS Department of Labor.

#### **Pros for Employees to be Bonded:**

- Unique tool for high risk job applicants to become employed – (ideal for employees with poor credit history, ex-offenders, at risk youth, etc.)
- No cost to employer for employee to be bonded
- Bonding covers employer from any theft, forgery, embezzlement, larceny, etc.

### ***What is a Fidelity Bond and what does it cover?***

It is a business insurance policy that protects the employer in case of any loss of money or property due to employee dishonesty.

### ***How does the bond help someone get a job who is eligible?***

The bond is given to the employer for six months free-of-charge and serves as an incentive to the company to hire a job applicant from one of several target groups, such as:

- People with poor credit
- People who declared bankruptcy
- Welfare recipients
- Ex-offenders

- Recovering substance abusers
- Youth who have participated in any state or local operated youth program
- People who lack a work history
- People with a dishonorable military discharge

***What restrictions exist in the program's bond coverage?***

The worker must meet the legal age for working in NYS and be paid wages with Federal taxes automatically deducted. Any full or part time job is covered, as well as long time temporary and temporary-to-permanent positions.

***Since employers buy Fidelity Bond insurance to protect against employee dishonesty, why is the program's bond needed?***

Fidelity Bonds that employers purchase do not cover anyone who has a poor credit history or has committed a "fraudulent or dishonest act".

***Can bonding be issued to cover an already employed worker?***

Yes. A bond can be issued to cover a current employee who is not bondable under the employer's insurance, and needs the program's bonding in order to secure a promotion to a new job requiring bonding or to prevent being laid off or terminated.

***Who must request issuance of the Fidelity Bond?***

Either the employer or the job applicant may ask that a bond be issued. This request should be made to the nearest Local Bonding Coordinator.

***How much bond insurance coverage will be issued?***

A total of \$5,000 bond coverage is usually issued, with no deductible amount of liability for the employer. Bonds come in amounts of \$5,000, \$10,000, \$15,000, \$20,000 or \$25,000. Bonds above \$5,000 must have both justification and approval by the State Bonding Coordinator.

***How much paperwork is involved?***

None. Once the date is set for the applicant to start work, the bond can be issued instantly. The employer signs no papers, and keeps no special records since the bond is self-terminating.

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*To apply, contact your nearest Local Bonding Coordinator.*

*The complete list of Local Bonding Coordinators in New York with contact information is available at: <https://www.labor.ny.gov/businessservices/services/fbp.shtm>*