



Frequently Asked Questions On-the-Job Training Program

Are registration of trainees outside the target group (minorities, females or economically disadvantages individuals) allowed?

Yes. The emphasis is the target group. A good faith effort should be made to fill a trainee requirement from the target group.

What if the training program graduation hour requirement is less than 500 hours? Does another trainee need to be hired to fulfill the 500 hours?

500 hours is strictly for bidding purposes. If there is a 500 hour bid requirement that equals one trainee. The only requirement is to hire one trainee. For example, if the trainee is enrolled as a concrete batch plant trainee (300 hours) and completes the program. The contractor has fulfilled the training requirement. There is no requirement to hire an additional trainee for the additional 200 hours.

Can more than 1 trainee be registered when there is only 1 required? Is compensation available for additional trainees?

Yes, if meaningful training opportunities are available for more than one trainee.

Yes, if the training requirement is on the project, all trainees working on the project hours are compensated equally.

On required slots is payment limited to the bid item hours?

No. Reimbursement is based on actual hours worked. If that's more hours than bid, then all hours are compensated. If fewer hours are achieved through a good faith effort, the extra hours are CCO'd off the project. Compensation for required OJT trainees is based on actual hours worked including some off-site hours (up to 100 hrs). No off-site hours worked out of South Dakota are eligible for compensation. All training hours are counted towards graduation from training program regardless of location.

What happens if a good faith has been made to fill the required trainee slot but unable to fill it by someone in the target group? Or someone outside the target group?

Notify the SDDOT Civil Rights program and explain the situation and attempts made to fill the position. If there is a non-target person eligible for training, may go ahead and hire but keep documentation on efforts made to hire in the target group. That may be requested before approval or at a later date.

If there is no one from the target group or outside the target group willing to be the trainee on the project, notify the SDDOT Civil Rights office. In this case, the training requirement may be waived off the project. Be prepared to explain the attempts made to fill the position and keep good documentation of efforts.

If there are no vacancies on the crew, do I have to fire another employee to make room for a trainee?

No. There is no benefit in hiring one employee at the expense of another employee. If this is the case, which happens from time to time especially at the end of the construction season – contact the SDDOT Civil Rights office. In this case, the training requirement may be waived off the project. Be prepared to explain the situation and why there are no training opportunities. Be sure to keep good documentation.

What's the difference between required trainee and non-required trainee?

A required trainee is when the OJT special provision is placed in the bid proposal and the training bid item contains the number of hours required.

A non-required trainee is a trainee working on any project where there is no requirement by special provision. This trainee may be working on projects for other governmental entities, private businesses, etc. Any hours worked in the training program are credited towards graduation. There is no compensation for the trainee by bid item for the trainee.

Is there compensation for working on non-SDDOT projects as a trainee?

There can be up to 100 off-site hours credited for trainees who continue their training on a non-DOT project or a DOT project that doesn't have an OJT Special Provision requirement. The hours must be continuous. The work performed must be consistent with the training program and within the state of South Dakota.

Does there have to be a required slot on a project to enroll at trainee?

No. The training program is open to those that meet the requirements.

When is payment made for the trainee?

An OJT pay letter is sent to the Area Engineer when the trainee has completed work on the project, graduated from the training program or some other personnel action that terminates the employee working as a trainee on the project.

If off-site hours are being accumulated on a subsequent project, the trainee hours again will be reimbursed when the 100 hours threshold is reached or the trainee graduates or leaves the training program.

After the OJT pay letter is issued the DOT Area office will process payment for the trainee.

If a trainee quits after only a few days or weeks, does the trainee requirement have to be re-filled?

It depends on a number of circumstances. The best thing to do is to contact the SDDOT Civil Rights Office and explain the circumstances. In some cases, it may be necessary to try to find a new trainee to fill the requirement and in other cases it may not be necessary.

Typically if the project is near conclusion and there aren't meaningful training opportunities, there will be no requirement to re-fill the trainee slot. But if the project is near the beginning and there are opportunities for trainees to benefit from the program, the contractor will be encouraged to fill the position.

If a contractor has repeatedly filled the position only to lose trainees after a short period, typically no matter what the stage of work, the contractor will not be required to fill the trainee slot again.