

TIFWorks 50/50

Frequently Asked Questions

What is TIF?

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a special funding tool used by the City of Chicago to promote public and private investment across the City. An incremental portion of the property taxes generated within these “TIF districts” is allocated for economic development and public works projects and initiatives. A portion of those funds has been reserved for the TIFWorks Training program for businesses located within authorized TIF districts through an act of the City Council of Chicago. If a business is not located in an authorized TIF district, then it is not eligible to apply for a TIFWorks grant.

What is TIFWorks 50/50?

TIFWorks 50/50 is a small training grant available to eligible businesses located in authorized TIF districts. It is a matching grant in which the business pays for at least half of the eligible training costs. The grant does not have to be paid back.

There is a short 3-page application with a quick review process. The maximum grant award is \$10,000 per company to train existing employees or \$15,000 to train new hires who are also Chicago residents (maximum \$5,000 each). It can also be used to pay for the wages (half) for up to three months of on-the-job or internal training for new hire Chicago residents.

The grant is administered by approved Local Industrial Retention Initiatives (LIRI) organizations that will help with the application process.

What Businesses Are Eligible to Apply?

- Applicants must be in an authorized 50/50 Tax Increment Finance (TIF) district.
- The 50/50 program targets manufacturing or industrial businesses. Other types of businesses will be considered on a case-by-case basis. *Service, retail and construction companies are not eligible for 50/50.*
- Employees to be trained must be in full-time, permanent positions, and they must be paid the minimum wage or above.
- Applicants must have no existing TIFWorks grants outstanding.

Am I in a TIFWorks 50/50 district?

The following is a list of TIF districts in the City of Chicago where the TIFWorks 50/50 has been authorized and the corresponding Local Industrial Retention Initiative (LIRI) organization administering the program.

TIF Districts with the TIFWorks 50/50 Program:

Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council

Midway Industrial Corridor TIF
Stockyards Annex TIF

Calumet Area Industrial Commission

Lake Calumet Industrial Corridor TIF
South Chicago TIF

Eighteenth Street Development Corp

Pilsen Industrial Corridor TIF

Greater Northwest Chicago Development Corp

Galewood-Armitage TIF
Pulaski Industrial Corridor TIF

Greater Southwest Development Corporation

Greater Southwest Industrial Corridor (West) TIF
Greater Southwest Industrial Corridor (East) TIF

Industrial Council of Nearwest Chicago

Kinzie Industrial Corridor TIF

Lawndale Business Renaissance

Roosevelt Cicero Industrial Corridor TIF
Western Ogden TIF

North Branch Works

Addison South TIF
North Branch South TIF

Peterson Pulaski Business & Industrial Council

Elston-Armstrong TIF
Peterson-Pulaski TIF

[What about training part-time, seasonal, or temp-to-permanent employees?](#)

Only permanent and full-time employees can be trained using TIFWorks 50/50, and their pay must be at minimum wage or above.

[May I apply for a new employee who is a Chicago resident after their hire date?](#)

There is a retroactive application grace period of up to two weeks for a company hiring a new employee who is a Chicago resident. This means that if a company submits a complete application within 10 business days after hiring a new employee/Chicago resident, the application will be accepted as eligible (not necessarily approved).

In addition, a company may submit an otherwise complete application in advance of hiring a new employee. This means that a company may receive conditional approval prior to verifying the new hire is a Chicago resident. However, for a company to be reimbursed for the training, they will need to include residency verification with the other required voucher documents.

[What training is eligible?](#)

The goal for eligibility is to have at least 70% mid- to high-level training. An application may include low skills training if it also includes mostly mid- to high-level training. Priority will be given to mid- and high-level training in which skills, certifications, and experience are transferable to other positions. The training should result in improving one or more aspects of the business operations. Following are examples of the levels of training.

Examples of Mid- to High-Skills Level Training:

Training Category	Eligible Examples
Manufacturing Processes	Welding, Machining, Maintenance, Forklift Training
Quality Systems	Lean, ISO, Six Sigma, SQF, Customer Service
Supply Chain	Enterprise Resource Management (ERP)
Engineering	Product Development
Marketing & Sales	Marketing Diversification
Exporting	Export Market Development
Management	Leadership, Operations

Examples of Low-Skills Level Training:

- Safety/OSHA required training (excluding forklift training)
- Outlook/email
- Beginner Office training (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- Remedial Education
- English as a second language (ESL)

Ineligible Training:

- Human Resource administration practices, including but not limited to compensation systems, administration and benefits, employee discipline procedures, interviewing or diversity training.
- Educational degrees/for credit courses including General Equivalency Degree (GED) programs.
- Stand-alone basic and/or remedial skills training (i.e., without a vocational training/occupational focus).
- Apprenticeship training

How do I apply?

- Contact the designated Local Industrial Retention Initiative (LIRI).
- Confirm that you are in an eligible TIFWorks 50/50 TIF district.
- Give your completed application, the requested training documentation and supplemental information to the LIRI.
- After your application is approved, you may proceed with training.
- Once your training is completed, provide requested training and payment documentation to the LIRI. The LIRI will then submit a voucher to the City for reimbursement.

What is the maximum grant amount allowed under TIFWorks 50/50?

The maximum grant (match) for a company training existing employees is \$10,000 per company. The maximum grant (match) for a company hiring new employees (Chicago residents) is \$15,000 per company and \$5,000 per new hire. A business may apply for one or more grants up to the maximum program assistance.

[Will there be enough TIFWorks 50/50 funds for all applicants?](#)

Each Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district authorized to have the 50/50 program has limited funds reserved for the program. If demand for the funds is greater than the available funding supply, then a lottery will be conducted to determine the order in which each grant application may be accommodated. If any surplus funds become available, they will be allocated to waitlisted applicants.

[What is scofflaw?](#)

As part of the application process, the City requires business owners (more than 7.5%) to provide Drivers' License, License Plate and Social Security numbers. With this information, the City performs a review to see if the owners have any unpaid parking tickets, water bills, past due license fees, or other indebtedness owed to the City of Chicago. All unpaid debts to the City must be paid and documented to receive grant payment. Additionally, all such individuals must complete an Economic Disclosure Statement (EDS) to certify their compliance with various laws and ordinances. They must also attest to being current on all child support payments (if applicable).

[How does 50/50 reimbursement work?](#)

After the application is approved and the training is completed, the business provides the required training and payment documentation to the LIRI. The LIRI submits a voucher to the City for reimbursement. In 3-5 weeks after submitting a complete voucher to the City, the LIRI should receive an electronic payment from the City. The LIRI reimburses the business directly.

[Who do I contact to get additional information or to help me apply?](#)

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