

WORC Newsletter

4859 S. Wabash Chicago, IL 60615 | <https://thecha.org/WORC> | 773-342-WORC (9672) | worc@thecha.org

A Message from Lizzie M. Harrington, Director of Workforce Development & WORC



Dear Residents and Valued Stakeholders,

I am honored to introduce myself as the new Director of Workforce Development & Workforce Opportunity Resource Center (WORC) at the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA). Being a Chicago native, it is both a privilege and a personal passion to join an organization committed to empowering its residents and advancing pathways to self-sufficiency, economic mobility, and lasting change.

As I begin this new role, my focus will be to ensure that CHA's workforce programs continue to open doors to careers that lead to stability and growth. This includes strengthening collaborations with employers, training providers, and community organizations; advancing Section 3 initiatives; and expanding the Resident-Owned Business marketplace, creating more opportunities for CHA residents and local entrepreneurs to thrive.

Our success depends on collaboration, communication, and shared purpose. I look forward to connecting with residents, community partners, employers, and stakeholders to listen, learn, and continue building a workforce ecosystem that reflects the talent and potential of CHA residents.

Thank you for your continued partnership and together, we will ensure that the CHA Workforce Development and WORC programs continue to make a positive and lasting impact across the City of Chicago.

Yours in service,

Lizzie M. Harrington

WORC 2025 Fall Hiring Event Recap

The Workforce Opportunity Resource Center (WORC) hosted a successful Fall Hiring Event on October 2, 2025, drawing 218 job seekers including 125 CHA residents eager to take the next step in their careers. Support from leading employers like Northwestern Medicine, the Chicago Police Department, and Waste Management, participants explored career pathways in healthcare, public service, transportation, and more.

The event resulted in 10 attendees receiving job offers and 22 others being scheduled for interviews. Many left with a renewed sense of motivation and clear next steps. Feedback from 79 participants and 24 employer surveys reflected overwhelmingly positive responses, praising the event's strong organization, employer engagement, and welcoming atmosphere. WORC remains committed to empowering CHA residents with access to meaningful employment and training opportunities that build stronger, more resilient communities.



UPCOMING WORC EVENTS

Please join us on Thursday, November 6th, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. via Zoom

Register Here: <https://tinyurl.com/WORCINFOSESSIONNOVEMBER>

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

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WORC Business Academy Resource Fair Recap

The very first WORC Business Academy Resource Fair, held on September 24, 2025, was a resounding success, drawing 175 registered attendees, 30 participating vendors, and featuring three expert panels on Procurement Opportunities, Access to Capital, Insurance & Intellectual Property, and Succession Planning.

Vendors included organizations such as BMO Bank, DSB Solutions, TBM Group, Chicago Transit Authority, McCormick Place, LegalShield, and South Side Community Federal Credit Union.

Attendees especially appreciated insights from Brad McConnell of Allies for Community Business, Adrienne McFarland of the Illinois SBDC at the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, Patrice Perkins of Creative Genius Law, Mary Beth Velzy of New York Life Insurance & NYLIFE Securities, and James Luster of Benefit Management Associates. Exhibitors, panelists, and attendees alike praised the event as well-organized, resource-rich, and an excellent opportunity to network and build meaningful connections.

For more information on the WORC Business Academy or upcoming opportunities, please contact worc@thecha.org.



WORC TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WORKSHOPS

Responding to a Small Purchase Quote
-11/3/25

<https://tinyurl.com/y8jzbvpw>

Navigating the WORC Portal for Businesses
- 11/5/25

<https://forms.office.com/g/riQzvnsW7>

Registering in the City of Chicago Portal -
11/10/25

<https://tinyurl.com/y8jzbvpw>

How to Apply for M/WBE Certification with the
City of Chicago - 11/12/25

<https://forms.office.com/g/yD05WfVyhw>

Registering in the Cook County Supplier Portal -
11/17/25

<https://tinyurl.com/y8jzbvpw>

How to Apply for DBE Certification with the
Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) - 11/19/25

<https://forms.office.com/g/anqKpZTDez>

Registering as a Vendor with the Chicago Public
Schools/Euna-11/24/25

<https://tinyurl.com/y8jzbvpw>

How to Apply for BEP certification with the
ILUCP - 11/26/25

<https://forms.office.com/g/sef2Vbd2jB>