

~~(H) SHALL BE LOCATED IN A PRIORITY FUNDING AREA AS DEFINED IN § 5-7B-02 OF THE STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT ARTICLE;~~

~~{(ii)}~~~~(HH)~~ Shall request training assistance for job specific skills;

~~{(iii)}~~~~(IV)~~ Shall request training assistance for Maryland-based employees who are covered under the provisions of Title 8 of the Labor and Employment Article; and

~~{(iv)}~~~~(V)~~ Shall request training assistance to upgrade or retrain existing employees.

(3) (I) Not less than 60 percent of all funds available shall be reserved for Maryland employers with ~~[100]~~ ~~250~~ 150 or fewer Maryland-based employees.

(II) NOT MORE THAN 20 PERCENT OF ALL FUNDS AVAILABLE MAY BE PROVIDED TO MARYLAND EMPLOYERS WITH MORE THAN 500 MARYLAND-BASED EMPLOYEES, PROVIDED THAT THE EMPLOYERS:

1. ARE PRIMARILY ENGAGED IN MANUFACTURING OR IN A TECHNOLOGY-BASED BUSINESS;

2. AGREE TO INCREASE THEIR PURCHASES OF GOODS PRODUCED IN MARYLAND AND SERVICES FROM MARYLAND-BASED SUPPLIERS; AND

3. AGREE TO PROVIDE THE WORKFORCE TRAINING TO A CERTAIN NUMBER, AS DETERMINED BY THE PROGRAM, OF EMPLOYEES OF SMALLER EMPLOYERS THAT SHALL SUPPLY GOODS OR SERVICES TO THE EMPLOYER RECEIVING THE GRANT.

(4) No single Maryland employer shall receive more than [the greater of \$25,000 or 5 percent of total funds available to the Program] \$200,000 within a year.

(5) Priority shall be given to Maryland employers who are:

(i) Manufacturers; or

(ii) Threatened by the pressures of increased foreign or domestic competition.

(d) (1) The Secretary shall utilize local advisory groups such as private industry councils, and joint apprenticeship committees; to identify employers in need of assistance.

(2) Business assistance services provided by the Program shall:

(i) Determine whether the employer's specific needs are best met by training, by other types of assistance, or by a combination of services;

(ii) Identify the availability of existing training programs which could be adapted to meet the employer's needs;

(iii) Identify the resources the business can provide to support the training, including facilities, materials, and equipment;