



NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: John Carpenter, Public Information Officer ♦ Office: (405) 557-5469 ♦ Fax: (405) 525-0139
E-mail: john.carpenter@oesc.state.ok.us ♦ Website: oesc.state.ok.us

FOR RELEASE: July 23, 2004

\$1 MILLION NOW AVAILABLE TO TRAIN OKLAHOMA WORKERS *Incumbent Worker Training Funds Let Businesses Focus on Their Individual Training Needs*

OKLAHOMA CITY – The Oklahoma Employment Security Commission announced today that \$1 million in training funds are now available to Oklahoma businesses through the state's **Incumbent Worker Training (IWT)** program. For the fourth year, the IWT program is providing training money to businesses small and large, rural and urban across the state and letting them decide how to spend it. This freedom allows participating businesses to provide their employees with customized training that fits their particular needs.

From the beginning, the idea behind the Incumbent Worker Training program has been that Oklahoma businesses know more about their own needs than government does. In order to best meet these needs, IWT provides employers with the funds to upgrade worker skills and lets them decide where and how they spend it. For this year, \$1 million in IWT funds are being made available with businesses each receiving up to \$50,000 in funding.

All incumbent worker training must lead to improved job skills so workers can earn a living wage in today's Oklahoma economy. All funds must be used within one year and can only be spent on the company's current workforce. This training can take the form of traditional classroom training, on-the-job training, distance learning, workshops, seminars, in-house training, computer-based training or other methods. Businesses must also work closely on incumbent worker training with their local Workforce Investment Boards, groups of area business leaders representing the local labor market.

Businesses interested in applying for the Incumbent Worker Training program must do so by completing Request for Proposal (RFP) #2900000020 available on the Oklahoma Department of Central Services website (www.dcs.state.ok.us). All instructions and submission requirements are listed on the RFP. For more information, please contact Irene Bowman with DCS at (405) 521-4058.

###