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MAYOR EMANUEL INTRODUCES EX-OFFENDER UTILIZATION PROCUREMENT BID INCENTIVE

New program would create job opportunities, training for ex-offenders seeking a second chance

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, the Chicago Department of Procurement Services (DPS) and the Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) today introduced an ordinance designed to incentivize City construction contractors to hire apprentices who are ex-offenders for their contracts, providing job training and employment opportunities to individuals looking to positively contribute to Chicago's economy.

"This new bid incentive will provide a second chance for those willing to work hard but facing challenges re-entering the workforce," said Mayor Emanuel. "This new initiative will complement our existing programs that support and encourage the hiring of historically underutilized and underprivileged groups."

By offering a bid incentive to City contractors, this ordinance will support individuals who were previously incarcerated but are re-entering the workforce and making efforts to obtain ongoing education and training.

"As the contracting authority for the City of Chicago, it is our commitment to ensure that people from communities from across our City benefit from the jobs created by construction projects and infrastructure improvements," said Chief Procurement Officer Jamie L. Rhee.

The incentive is available to any locally-funded construction project with an estimated contract value of at least \$100,000; contractors who employ ex-offender apprentices will be awarded a bid incentive on future bids, based on the total labor hours performed by the individuals under the contract. The bid incentive will be applied on a sliding scale: if five to 10 percent of the total labor hours are performed by ex-offender apprentices, the bid incentive will be 0.5 percent of the contract base bid; and if 11 to 15 percent of the labor hours are performed by ex-offender apprentices, the bid incentive will be one percent of the contract base bid.

As part of the new program, DFSS will work with delegate agencies with workforce development programs to recruit, screen and refer potential qualified candidates for these opportunities. This initiative builds on the City's work to provide more opportunities for ex-offenders, following the expansion of the Chicago Transit Authority's successful Second Chance program last year.

“At the Department of Family and Support Services, we are committed to programs and initiatives that allow all Chicago residents access to resources that empower them to thrive,” said Commissioner Lisa Morrison Butler. “The ex-offender program is a prime example of our City’s commitment to ensuring that residents from all walks of life have the tools they need to gain meaningful employment, as well as the success and stability that comes with it.”

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