

NEWS RELEASE

Oakland County Michigan Works! Launches Business Resources Network Providing Valuable Services to Workers and Strengthen Employee Retention

WATERFORD, Mich. – Jan. 29, 2019 – Oakland County Michigan Works! has partnered with the Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency (OLHSA) to launch the Business Resource Network employee retention assistance program to help county businesses keep their workers, a challenge given today's record-low unemployment and competitive job market across the region.

The program is patterned after similar ones in Michigan and other parts of the country, giving employers access to an OLHSA "success coach" who will connect employees with resources to help them address a broad range of issues outside of work.

"Our goal is for Oakland County employers to be as successful as possible and this includes helping them build strong, productive work forces," County Executive L. Brooks Patterson said. "The Business Resource Network and its success coaches will help them retain valuable employees who may be wrestling with personal issues."

Employers interested in participating in the BRN are invited to a special meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 5, from 1-2:30 p.m., at the L. Brooks Patterson Executive Office Building, 41 West, 2100 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford. For more information or to register, contact Liz Rivard-Weston, Retention Services Coordinator, Oakland County Michigan Works! at rivardwestone@oakgov.com.

The strategies and resources provided by the success coaches in similar programs can increase employee retention to 90 percent or higher, according to the Employee Resource Network - USA. This saves employers about \$3,500 or more in training costs per employee, based on data from a sample of state businesses.

The BRN model matches 5-10 businesses with a dedicated success coach who commits several hours each week to visit each employer. The success coach meets with employees individually on a confidential basis. The BRN meets as a group monthly to receive an aggregate report from the success coach, as well as troubleshoot work barriers on a higher level, developing solutions to common problems across the network's workforce.

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Typical employee issues addressed by the BRN include:

- Stress Management
- Affordable Childcare
- Public Benefits
- Relationship Management
- Caring for Aging Parents
- Substance Abuse
- Transportation Concerns
- Housing/Foreclosure Assistance
- Hardship Loan and Saving Programs
- Childcare Needs
- Budgeting and Financial Literacy
- Workplace Stability

Participation in the Business Resource Network is voluntary. To become a member, an employer pays an annual membership fee. Oakland County Michigan Works! is providing the facilitation, as well as success coach services, at no charge to employers for the first six months of the program, thanks to a state grant. Companies will then have the option of continuing their membership. Details of the renewal process and pricing are under development.

“We want to help companies keep their employees happy and, on the job,” said Jennifer Llewellyn, director of the Oakland County Michigan Works! agency. “The Business Resource Network not only connects employees to company, public and nonprofit resources, but also provides financial literacy lessons and other essential training.”

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