



# GROW SMARTER JOB CREATION AND TALENT ATTRACTION PROGRAM

## Background

Companies that have high growth potential and create high wage jobs are of critical importance to the City's economic vitality. These companies (which include any kind of business entity) generate positive multiplier effects or spin-off economic inputs. The City has focused resources geared to attracting and retaining companies in the City's defined target industry business clusters through its investment in the St. Petersburg Area Economic Development Corporation ("EDC") and in other ways.

One of the major issues facing these high growth companies is talent attraction. Companies need to recruit employees with the required skill levels and expertise to sustain their growth. This Program is designed to provide an incentive for companies to increase employment by creating jobs within the City's Target Industry Clusters, which are Marine and Life Sciences, Specialized Manufacturing, Financial Services, Data Analytics, and Creative Arts and Design. The creation of high-wage jobs in Target Industry Clusters has been declared a public purpose by the Florida Legislature in Chapter 288.106, Florida Statutes.

The RIMS II economic modeling software used by the City shows that for every 1 job created in the Data Processing, Hosting, & Related Services category - NAICS Code 5182 (used here for illustrative purposes) there is a total of 1.2073 jobs created including the original job.

-For a job paying \$56,236 (115% of the average wage of Pinellas County) in the same NAICS Code, there would be a direct and indirect economic impact of \$92,125.

-For a job paying \$73,352 (150% of the average wage of Pinellas County) there would be a direct and indirect economic impact of \$120,165.

-For a job paying \$97,802 (200% of the average wage of Pinellas County) there would be a direct and indirect economic impact of \$160,219.

The incentive will be paid to the company after a qualifying job has been created and filled by a qualified employee, as outlined below. Once the incentive has been paid to the company, it may use the funds as it deems fit.

## Program Requirements

- Companies must be physically located within the municipal boundaries of the City of St. Petersburg and the job location must be at those facilities.
- Eligible companies for this incentive must be in one of the Grow Smarter Target Industry Clusters (Marine and Life Sciences, Financial Services, Data Analytics, Specialized Manufacturing, and Creative Art and Design).
- Companies must have less than 50 full-time employees when the application is made.
- Companies must create new, high wage jobs for permanent employees and maintain a consistent or growing number of employees in St. Petersburg. The number of employees employed by the company will be established when the application is made, and the number of St. Petersburg-based employees hired during the time frame in which the company is participating in the Program shall not decrease. This incentive can only be used for companies that are not participating or in the process of applying for the State's Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund (QTI) Program, however, the base wage of newly hired employees must meet the (QTI) Tax Credit Refund wage criteria to qualify for this grant, annually adjusted. Current Pinellas County wage requirements are:

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| ○ 115% of Pinellas County Average Wage | \$56,236 |
| ○ 150% of Pinellas County Average Wage | \$73,352 |
| ○ 200% of Pinellas County Average Wage | \$97,802 |

- A bonus will be paid if the qualifying employee is a resident of St. Petersburg and an additional bonus is available if the qualifying employee is a resident of the South St. Petersburg Community Redevelopment Area.

Applications for the Program will be processed on a first-come-first served basis based on when the application is complete. The POD will notify the applicant within 10 days of receiving the application if it is not complete and identify all required information.

### **Incentive Schedule**

- For each new job created at 115% or more of the average county wage, the incentive amount is \$3,000 per new job.
- For each new job created at 150% or more of the average county wage, the incentive amount is \$4,000 per new job.
- For each new job created at 200% or more of the average county wage, the incentive amount is \$5,000 per new job.
- For each new job created and filled by the City resident, there will be a bonus \$2,000 incentive paid.
- For each new job created and filled by a resident of the South St. Petersburg Community Redevelopment Area, there will be a bonus \$3,000 incentive paid.
- The residential bonus incentives are not cumulative.

### **Program Administration**

- The City will accept applications for this Program with a three month look-back period, meaning a company that hires a qualifying employee will have three months from the qualifying employee's first day of work to submit an application to the City with all required documentation. To be eligible for this Program, all hires must be made after this Program is approved by City Council. To ensure that funding is available, companies must submit an application for each newly hired position that meets the Program's requirements.
- After consideration of the application and information provided, the City will determine whether the application/hire meets the Program requirements and, if so, will provide a grant agreement to the company for the specific employee. The company shall provide all required documentation; however, information which is exempt from disclosure pursuant to the Public Records Law, such as social security numbers, may be redacted. All applications and documentation are public records.
- The company's baseline employment numbers will be established at the time an application is submitted. If total employment falls below the established baseline during the time frame in which the company is participating in the Program, no incentive will be paid.
- Employees hired under this Program must remain employed by the company for at least twelve months in order for the company to claim the incentive. The incentive will be paid at the end of the twelve-month period.
- If for any reason an employee hired under this Program does not complete the twelve (12) month employment period, then the grant agreement for that employee shall terminate and no incentive will be paid. If the company hires another qualifying employee, the company may make another application, if funding is available, but the twelve (12) month period would begin anew for that employee.
- The City will provide incentives for up to ten employees per company per in each City fiscal year (i.e., October 1 through September 30). If the Program is undersubscribed, the City may increase the employee cap for companies that create more than ten qualifying jobs within a fiscal year.
- No applications will be approved after the amount in the committed grant agreements matches the funding available for the Program.