

Hire Gulf Coast Youth

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EMPLOYER

TOOLKIT



Workforce Solutions
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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS TOOLKIT

Hire Gulf Coast Youth (HGCY) is the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's youth employment program, designed to connect employers across the region with motivated young people aged 16 to 24. This initiative provides opportunities for hands-on work experience, equipping youth with essential skills while helping businesses grow and thrive.

This toolkit provides everything you need to get started as an employer partner, including information about how youth can meet your talent needs, how to find and hire youth, and information about subsidized employment opportunities. Whether you're addressing immediate staffing challenges or creating pathways for young talent, Workforce solutions and, HGCY is here to support you.

Benefits Of Participation



Hire Gulf Coast Youth (HGCY) gives your business access to motivated, young talent ready to learn and contribute. These employees bring energy and a fresh outlook that can strengthen your team dynamics and help build a skilled workforce prepared to support your company's long-term goals.

It offers employers:

Access to Talent: Tap into a motivated and diverse pool of youth ready to contribute and make a positive impact.

Wage Subsidies: Reduce your hiring costs with subsidized wage programs like internships, on-the-job training, and work experience opportunities to offset hiring and training costs through WIOA.

Tailored Programs: Customize internships, apprenticeships, and work experience opportunities to align with your business needs.

Community Impact: A visible commitment to workforce development supports the local economy and showcases your dedication to corporate social responsibility.

Fresh Perspectives: Youth employees bring energy, creativity, and innovative ideas that enhance team morale and inspire growth.

Long-Term Workforce Growth: An investment in young talent fosters loyalty, reduces turnover, and prepares a workforce ready to meet future challenges.

Full Support: HGCY provides the tools and support to seamlessly integrate youth into your team, driving meaningful outcomes for your business and the community.



Program Overview

Hire Gulf Coast Youth (HGCY) is a comprehensive workforce development program designed to bridge the gap between young talent and employers across the region. Through tailored pathways such as internships, pre-apprenticeships, and on-the-job training, the program equips youth with hands-on learning opportunities while helping employers meet their workforce needs.

The program addresses critical workforce challenges by focusing on youth who may face barriers to employment. Participants gain essential skills, experience, and confidence, preparing them for future success while immediately contributing to the businesses they serve. Employers benefit from a simplified process that includes wage subsidies, dedicated staff support, and access to a motivated, diverse talent pool.

Whether you're looking to fill seasonal positions, support training initiatives, or build a long-term talent pipeline, ***HGCY offers a solution tailored to your organization's needs.***



FAQs: Timelines, Wages, and Employer Support

Program Dates?

HGCY employment opportunities are available year-round, although summer internships typically begin in June. To provide a meaningful experience, we ask for an 8 to 12-week commitment, though employers are welcome to extend it if they wish.

What Assignments can HGCY employees undertake?

Youth employees can be assigned tasks aligned with their abilities. With safety guidelines and supervision in place, you will be able to integrate youth workers smoothly into your team.

Who Handles Youth Compensation?

Employers can pay youth directly or participate in subsidized programs through WIOA, which covers part or all of the their wages. We suggest a starting wage of $10 per hour, with the flexibility to increase based on your company's pay scale. Our subsidized pay scale ranges between $10 and $15 per hour.

Simple Interview Process?

Through the HGCY portal, you will have easy access to candidate applications and profiles, allowing you to review and choose top talent and to schedule interviews. Employers also have the option of foregoing interviews and receiving pre-screened youth selected for the opportunity.



FAQs: Timelines, Wages, and Employer Support

Insurance Made Easy?

Youth participants will be covered as employees under either the company's workers' compensation or general liability insurance. Employers should consult with their insurance agents to ensure the HGCY youth is covered as an employee by the carrier. HGCY staff is also available to guide you on any insurance-related questions.

For subsidized programs, workers' compensation and general liability insurance are covered by Workforce Solutions/HGCY. Employers will enter into an agreement committing to a safe work environment and adequate supervision.

How will employer information be presented on the Hire Gulf Coast Youth application?

Our team partners closely with company liaisons to create polished employer profiles and engaging job descriptions that reflect your brand and opportunities, making it easy for youth to connect with your company.

What is On-the-Spot Hiring?

On-the-spot hiring events are held year-round. Special events will be held from March to May to support the Summer Jobs Initiative. HGCY staff will share dates with participating employers.

What kind of Support Can I expect?

HGCY provides wide-ranging support, from posting jobs and recruiting candidates to onboarding, training, and ongoing mentorship. We are committed to making your hiring experience smooth and successful every step of the way.

The Youth We Serve



2023 – 2024 Youth Snapshot

24,000+ youth impacted through various employment services

2,700 supported through WIOA Youth funding

1,500+ youth provided subsidized internships

HGCY serves youth from a broad range of backgrounds, each of whom brings unique talents, perspectives, and enthusiasm to the workplace.

Recent College Graduates: Young adults ready to apply their postsecondary learning in a professional environment and gain practical experience to launch their career.

Graduating High School Seniors: Students eager to explore career opportunities that align with their skills and interests and gain valuable industry experience before taking the next step in education and career development.

High School Students with Career Goals: Motivated, focused and ambitious students who have a clear vision of their future career path and are looking for hands-on experience.

Out-of-School Youth Reentering the Workforce: Determined young adults looking to regain their footing in the workforce. They are motivated to build skills, gain meaningful experience, and take a proactive step toward long-term career stability and growth.



Types of Youth Employment Opportunities

HGCY offers several pathways for employers to engage with young talent:

Work Experience Interships: (Ages 16-24)

- *8-12 week subsidized internships.*
- Youth gain hands-on experience *while developing critical skills* relevant to your business needs.
- Flexible workforce solutions.
- Ongoing support from HGCY staff to *ensure a successful experience.*

Summer Earn & Learn (Youth with Disabilities, ages 16-21)

- 5-8 week subsidized internships.
- Disability awareness training provided for employers.
- Structured work experience to build *confidence and develop essential skills.*

Pre-Apprenticeships:

- Short-term (less than 3 months). *Structured, industry-specific opportunities lasting up to three months,* introducing youth to critical workplace skills.
- Subsidized stipends paid to you.
- *Employers have flexibility to customize the program* to meet their business needs while receiving a stipend for the youth's participation.

Types of Youth Employment Opportunities



HGCY offers several pathways for employers to engage with young talent:

On-the-Job Training (OJT):

- Earn & Learn: *Provide paid, on-the-job training* with employers.
- Customized training options
- Minimal paperwork and full support throughout the process.

Summer Jobs and Year-Round Employment:

- Flexible employment options that can meet seasonal or long-term workforce needs.
- *Competitive wage, starting at $10/hour.*
- Use the HGCY portal to post positions and connect with candidates or participate in our on-the-spot hiring events.

Registered Apprenticeships:

- *Offer youth a formal, paid apprenticeship* that combines classroom instruction with on-the-job learning, tailored to the employer's industry.
- Employers are involved in *shaping the program* to meet their long-term talent needs.

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Getting Started: How to Partner with HGCY

Partnering with HGCY is simple and can be tailored to fit your organization's goals.

Sign up on the HGCY portal or contact us at https://www.wrksolutions.com/ to get started.

Identify Your Needs: Determine the types of roles and skill gaps within your team that youth participants can fill.

Post Jobs: Use the HGCY portal to create job postings or participate in on-the-spot hiring events.

Select Candidates: Review applications and conduct interviews, or accept pre-screened candidates matched to your needs.

Onboard and Support: Introduce youth to your workplace with guidance from HGCY staff.

Provide Feedback: Regular check-ins and mentorship help ensure a successful experience from both youth and employers.

Guidance for Interviews and Hiring



Hiring youth workers is an opportunity to invest in their potential, enthusiasm, and growth. Since many young candidates may have limited work experience, focus on their interests, goals, and transferable skills during the interview process.

Interview Tips:

- Create a welcoming environment, as this may be their first formal interview
- Avoid overly technical or experience-based questions andinstead focus on how they cancontribute to your team.

Ask open-ended questions to explore their strengths, such as:

- "What excites you about this opportunity?"
- "Can you share a project or activity you enjoyed working on?"
- "What skills are you hoping to develop in this role?"

Onboarding Tips:

- Provide a clear orientation covering workplace policies, expectations, and their role in the organization.
- Introduce them to team members and assign a supervisor or mentor to guide them.
- Offer regular feedback, check-ins, and recognition to support their growth and confidence.

HGCY staff are available to provide tools and advice to ensure a smooth hiring experience and help youth succeed in your workplace.



Career Exploration Events and Industry Tours

Employers can participate in career exploration events, such as industry tours and job shadowing, providing youth with a firsthand look at various career paths. These immersive experiences help young people discover potential career interests while offering employers the chance to promote their company and industry.

Career Exploration & Awareness



How to Showcase Your Partnership

Share your organization's commitment to youth development and inspire other employers to get involved by sharing your success stories. Consider the following:

- *Featuring testimonials or photos of youth participants on your website or social media.*
- *Highlighting your partnership in press releases or community newsletters.*
- *Showcasing your involvement during events or through awards programs.*

These efforts not only promote your business but also emphasize your role as a leader in workforce development.

Resources









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