New Hamilton County program will pay participants to train for new jobs

A new CARES-funded program led by the Hamilton County Community Action Agency will help 300 struggling Hamilton County residents re-enter the workforce.

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CINCINNATI — A new CARES-funded program led by the Hamilton County Community Action Agency will help 300 struggling Hamilton County residents re-enter the workforce.

It’s called the Rapid Re-Employment Initiative, and its leaders hope to boost people affected by the COVID-19 pandemic back into financial stability. Participants will have individualized training and career coaches on their side.

“The idea is to identify folks that have skills and lost their jobs, but can maybe get re-marketed and rethink the skills they have in an industry that’s actually hiring,” said Hamilton County Community Action Agency CEO Mark Lawson on Friday.

But it’s not just for people who have lost their jobs outright. The program is also open to people who have had their hours cut, been furloughed or been forced to work less because of child care demands.

Community Action Agency staff will evaluate applicants and connect them with Easter Seals, Cincinnati Works or the Urban League to help place them on new tracks.

The program will include career readiness sessions with a coach who can help participants develop resume, technology and interviewing skills; financial coaching; and stipends for car maintenance and child care, if necessary.

Participants will be paid, according to a news release from the Hamilton County Community Action Agency, $12 an hour while training, plus 50% of their wages for three months if they are successfully placed in a nonprofit-affiliated job.
“The program is about breaking down barriers for employment,” Lawson said. “We have a lot of flexibility. So if people have trouble with transportation, we can support them with gas cards or down payments on vehicles. Or if they need uniforms and boots, if that’s what your job requires and you don’t have it, we can help with that.”

Anyone interested in participating can contact Hamilton County Community Action Agency employment coach Beverly Schurig at 513-924-2045 or BSchurig@cincy-caa.org.