



# ILLINOIS WORKS Bid Credit Program

The Illinois Works (ILW) Jobs Program is an innovative workforce development model designed to create demand for building trade apprentices through the Apprenticeship Initiative, develop a talent pipeline through the Pre-apprenticeship Program, and provide incentives for employers to hire and retain talent. The Bid Credit Program provides incentives to contractors who hire and retain graduates of the ILW Pre-apprenticeship Program.

## What is the Illinois Works Bid Credit Program?

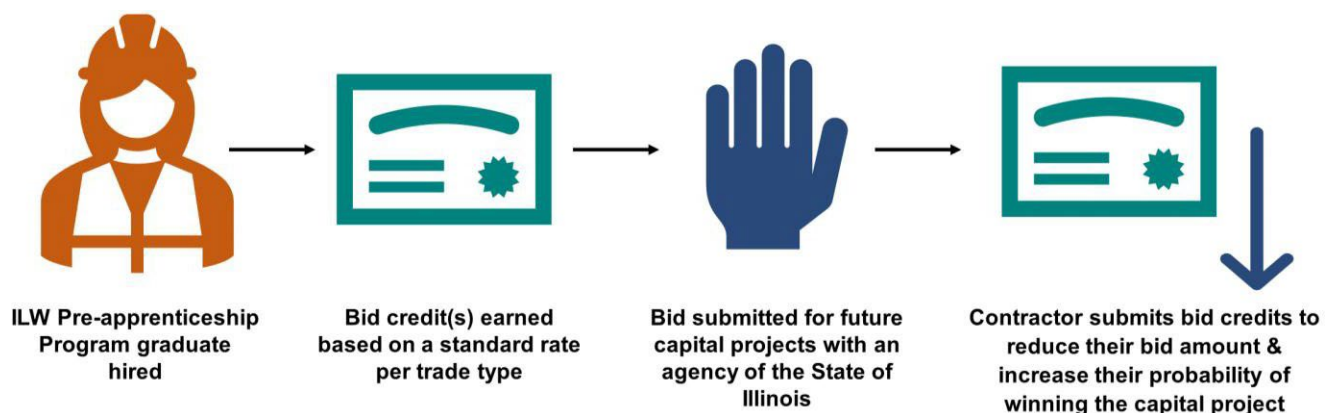
The ILW Bid Credit Program is designed specifically for contractors working on or interested in working on **State of Illinois-funded** capital projects. The program offers the **opportunity for contractors to earn bid credits by hiring and retaining Illinois Works Pre-apprenticeship Program graduates**. Once earned, contractors can submit bid credits as part of their bids for future state-funded public works projects, making them more competitive while giving them a higher probability of winning the projects.

## What is a bid credit?

**A bid credit is a virtual dollar earned by contractors when they hire and retain an ILW Pre-apprenticeship Program graduate who is enrolled in a U.S. Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship Program (DOL RAP) and works on state-funded capital projects.** Each graduate carries the ability to generate bid credits for their employer. Graduates working in higher-paying trades earn more bid credits for their employers than those working in lower-paying trades.

**These virtual dollars are used to reduce a competitive bid amount, thus increasing a contractor's probability of winning State capital projects.**

Think of bid credits like reward points on a credit card. Reward points are not themselves money, but they can be traded to reduce a credit card balance. Similarly, bid credits can be submitted with a competitive bid to reduce a contractor's bid amount, but they are not themselves currency. Bid credits are used only to calculate the lowest bid and will not influence the actual contract price ultimately awarded by the State.



## How are bid credits earned?

Bid credits are earned by hiring and retaining Illinois Works Pre-apprenticeship Program graduates who are enrolled in DOL RAPs. Graduates may be enrolled prior to employment or be sponsored into a DOL RAP. Bid credits are earned at a rate set by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) based on the graduate's trade.

## How do contractors locate ILW Pre-apprenticeship Program graduates?

Each year hundreds of individuals successfully complete the ILW Pre-apprenticeship Program across Illinois. These graduates have been vetted for interest in construction, earned nationally-recognized construction certifications including NCCER, MC3 or ICCB, OSHA-10, and First Aid/CPR, and are ready and willing to work. Graduates are accessible through ILW Pre-apprenticeship Program designated grantees ([dceo.illinois.gov/illinoisworks/preapprenticeship](http://dceo.illinois.gov/illinoisworks/preapprenticeship)) or through the Illinois Works Applicant Tracking System (ATS).

ATS provides contact information, resumes, trades interests and experience, and availability status along with earned certifications for each graduate. **Contractors can use this system to identify and directly contact graduates available for employment and sponsorship into a DOL registered apprenticeship program.**

## What benefits do contractors get by joining the ILW Bid Credit Program?

- Ability to earn a generous amount of bid credits for up to six years on each hired and retained ILW Pre-apprenticeship Program graduate
- Become more competitive when submitting bids for state capital projects by using earned bid credits
- Pool bid credits with other contractors to strengthen competitive bids
- Access to a skilled and certified workforce, located throughout the state, through the Illinois Works Pre-apprenticeship Program
- Maintain compliance with state and federal apprenticeship requirements, including the 10% apprenticeship goal of the ILW Apprenticeship Initiative

## How can a contractor join the ILW Bid Credit Program?

**Contractors can apply to join the Bid Credit Program through a simple electronic application** on the Office of Illinois Works Bid Credit Program website. Applications will be reviewed, and the contractor will be contacted by a member of the ILW Bid Credit Program regarding next steps within five business days. The first step is to complete the ILW Bid Credit Program Interest Form.

### Want more information?

#### Contact the office of Illinois Works:

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[dceo.illinois.gov/illinoisworks/bidcredit](http://dceo.illinois.gov/illinoisworks/bidcredit)

### Become a Bid Credit Contractor today!

**Complete the ILW Bid Credit Interest Form by visiting the site below:**

[bit.ly/BidCreditInterest](http://bit.ly/BidCreditInterest)



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor