



Frequently Asked Questions

WorkAdvance Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. What are the basic eligibility criteria?** In Northeast Ohio, WorkAdvance will serve under- and unemployed individuals looking to pursue a career in manufacturing or healthcare. Participants must:
 - Pass a drug screen
 - Be at least 18 years of age
 - Be able to legally work in the U.S.
 - Be proficient in basic math and reading
 - Meet income guidelines
 - Meet healthcare industry standards for criminal history (healthcare only)
- 2. I am working and making minimum wage—could I qualify?** If you currently have a job, income limits apply. Also, your total family income must still be within 200% of poverty. This is based upon the number of people in your family and the total of your income plus the income of your spouse/partner living in the same home.
- 3. I have a criminal record—can I participate in WorkAdvance?** You may apply to WorkAdvance even if you have a criminal history. However, we want you to be aware that some employers have restrictions related to criminal history.
- 4. I'm not 18, can I come back when I am?** YES! Please keep us in mind and call us when you turn 18.
- 5. I have worked in manufacturing/healthcare, but I have been laid off—do I qualify?** WorkAdvance will welcome applicants who have previously worked in manufacturing or healthcare.
- 6. I just finished a program at Towards Employment/Compass Family and Community Services, is this different?** WorkAdvance is a new career pathway program. Applicants who have participated in programming at Towards Employment or Compass Family and Community Services should call for more information about eligibility for WorkAdvance.
- 7. I just need a job — is WorkAdvance for me?** WorkAdvance is not about just getting a job, but is specifically designed to focus on helping participants move along a career-pathway in a specific industry. All eligibility criteria and training contents are industry driven and have been reviewed by partner employers. WorkAdvance is designed to serve individuals looking for a long-term career in manufacturing or healthcare. While job-placement is a component of the program, participants should be interested in advancement along a career pathway.
- 8. I can't pass a drug screen — will you reconsider?** All WorkAdvance applicants will be required to undergo a drug screen. If the screen is positive, applicants must wait between 3-6 months before they are eligible to reapply to the program. Applicants will only be permitted to reapply once if they are ineligible due to a failed drug screen.
- 9. How long does WorkAdvance last?** Because WorkAdvance is a part of a research project, participants will be asked to stay connected to the program for up to 3 years. This may include meetings with a Career Coach to work on advancement plans or participation in surveys by the researchers.

Referral Partner FAQs Continued

10. **What is the WorkAdvance study and how does it work?** The WorkAdvance Study is a national research project to learn what helps unemployed and low-wage working adults to increase their earnings and advance in the workplace. The results from the study measure the effectiveness of WorkAdvance services, and these results will be used to shape programs in your community and around the country to help individuals reach their career goals. Individuals who are eligible and who agree to be in the study will be placed at random into one of two groups: The WorkAdvance group will be offered WorkAdvance services. The other group, called the Control group, will not receive WorkAdvance services but will have access to other employment services in the community.
11. **Can I decide which group I want to be in?** No. In order for us to be able to learn whether WorkAdvance services are making a difference, the group to which you will be assigned has to be chosen at random. The decision is made by a computer and is not based on your personal characteristics or background. About half of individuals in the study will be placed in the WorkAdvance group and the other half will be placed in the Control group. The computer uses a program that is sort of like a coin toss, or picking numbers out of a hat. This way everyone has an equal chance to be in one group or another.
12. **I don't want to participate in the research project. Is WorkAdvance still open to me?** WorkAdvance is made possible specifically by research-focused funding. Only participants who agree to be part of the study will have the opportunity to participate in WorkAdvance.
13. **What if I am eligible but get assigned to the Control Group?** The WorkAdvance Control Group is critical to the research study. Control Group members will have access to other community resources otherwise available to them, but they will not be able to reapply to WorkAdvance and they may be limited in the services they can receive from Towards Employment and Compass Family and Community Services. Control Group members will be asked to share information with the research team about their employment results over time. Many Control Group members will also be invited to participate in research interviews, in which case they will be compensated for their participation.
14. **Who can I talk to for more information about the WorkAdvance study?** If you have additional questions about the WorkAdvance program, please contact Towards Employment at 216-696-5750, ext. 258. If you have further questions on the research, you will be given contact information for the research organization that is coordinating the study.