

**ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ACTION AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

Meeting Date: May 19, 2009

**Action Agenda
Item No.** 4-g

SUBJECT: Space Allocation and Cost Reimbursements at Skills Development Center and Hillsborough Commons

DEPARTMENT: Social Services

PUBLIC HEARING: (Y/N)

ATTACHMENT(S):

INFORMATION CONTACT:

Nancy Coston, 245-2800

Pam Jones, 245-2650

PURPOSE: To consider increased space allocations for Employment Security Commission and Joint Orange Chatham Community Action (JOCCA) at the Orange County Skills Development Center and Hillsborough Commons and request reimbursement for facility costs.

BACKGROUND: The Orange County Skills Development Center, administered through the Department of Social Services, is a Level III chartered JobLink Center. This means the Center is a comprehensive site for persons seeking employment and training assistance in Orange County. To maintain this charter, several partners are required to be present at the Center including the Employment Security Commission and the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) operator, which in Orange County is the Joint Orange Chatham Community Action agency. Other partners at the Center include Durham Technical Community College, the Orange County Literacy Council, and the Department of Social Services' Work First and Veteran's Services programs. Most of the partners have been supplied free space for activities directly related to providing JobLink services and some agencies (Durham Technical Community College and the Literacy Council) have historically shared some of the costs at the Center in exchange for additional space. The current operational costs for the Center include the actual space, utilities, janitorial services, and support staff through one administrative position funded by Social Services.

In the past year, state budget reductions have caused the Employment Security Commission to reduce its time at the Skills Development Center to a level below the required amount for the charter. In addition, further reductions have resulted in a need for Employment Security Commission to end its lease and to close its Orange County office. As with other required partners, some space was offered at the Skills Development Center at no cost. The Employment Security Commission has now requested to lease some additional space at the

Skills Development Center as well as an office at the new Hillsborough Commons site so that Orange County residents can continue to receive essential services.

In addition to this request, the Joint Orange Chatham Community Action agency has asked to secure space for two employment counselors currently located at Northside. These needs have been evaluated in relation to the opening of the new Durham Technical Community College campus in Hillsborough. With some changes by the current occupants at Skills Development Center, a plan has been developed that incorporates these requests. Several offices would be made available for additional staff from the Employment Security Commission and from the Joint Orange Chatham Community Action agency. The various partners will also assist with the receptionist duties currently handled by Social Services.

Any additional space provided to partners at the Skills Development Center or Hillsborough Commons will be at a cost of \$15 per square foot.

The mission of the Skills Development Center is to assist Orange County residents to receive training and related services to assist them to achieve appropriate employment. The Employment Security Commission provides job placement, vocational counseling, and enrollment for unemployment insurance. JOCCA through the Workforce Investment Act funds and through the Community Services Block Grant provides training and support for unemployed or underemployed individuals. Related services are provided by other partners who are onsite at the Center at various times and who share space. This proposal will enhance the program by providing comprehensive services, including those of the Employment Security Commission, at a time when these services are needed by many residents. It will also provide some revenue to offset the costs of the Center.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: There will be no additional County costs related to this agreement. The County will receive additional revenue for this change at the Skills Development Center. There will also be additional revenue from the Employment Security Commission lease upon completion of Hillsborough Commons.

RECOMMENDATION(S): The Manager recommends the Board approve this proposal and authorize the Manager to sign leases with each agency.