**THE NATIONAL EXTERNAL DIPLOMA PROGRAM® (NEDP)**

**FY 24 Competitive Grant Application**

**FY 24 National External Diploma Program® (NEDP)**

The Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor) will award federal and State NEDP funds to eligible applicants as part of the multi-year competitive FY 24 – FY 27, Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Services grant, to facilitate the implementation of NEDP services across the state. NEDP funds will be awarded in accordance with WIOA Title II guidelines.

The NEDP is owned by CASAS – Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems. The NEDP must be administered in accordance with MD Labor NEDP Assurances, in addition to other guidelines and written directives provided by CASAS and MD Labor. Maryland Labor policy may place additional requirements above and beyond those required by CASAS.

NEDP Application Checklist includes:

* Narrative Criteria and Documentation
* NEDP Budget
* NEDP Schedule (Projections)
* NEDP Assurances/ NEDP Roles and Responsibilities

Each section must be completed accurately and fully, as indicated. The NEDP application submission must follow the guidelines indicated on the FY 24 MD Labor Adult Instructional Services (AIS) Competitive Grant Application.

**The Maryland NEDP Program Overview**

The National External Diploma Program**®**(NEDP) in Maryland is a performance and competency-based assessment program that awards a high school diploma to adults who have acquired many high school level abilities through life experiences. The NEDP provides an alternative option for adults 18 years and above to earn a high school diploma by demonstrating their abilities through a series of simulations equivalent to job and life situations, rather than through high-stakes tests. The program consists of two phases: the Diagnostic Phase and the Generalized Assessment Phase. NEDP clients are evaluated against a criterion of excellence instead of through comparison to others. The web-based program is non-instructional; clients take responsibility for their learning by using existing community resources and achieve mastery of all required competencies as well as an occupational or specialized skill. With consistent participation, most clients are able to complete the program in six to twelve months.

The NEDP offers scheduling flexibility and confidentiality. It assesses three (3) foundational competency areas and seven (7) functional life and work context areas:

**NEDP Foundation Competencies**

* Communication and Media Literacy
* Applied Math/Numeracy
* Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

**NEDP Life and Work Contexts**

* Civic Literacy and Community Participation
* Consumer Awareness and Financial Literacy
* Cultural Literacy
* Geography and History
* Health Literacy
* Science
* Twenty-First Century Workplace

The NEDP is aligned to the College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards.

**Two Phases of the NEDP**

1. **Diagnostic-** Clients demonstrate that they possess high school level skills through standardized assessments in writing, reading, and math. They also self-assess their familiarity with the skills measured in the Generalized Assessment portion of the program and their ability to use technology, identify a college and career competency, and complete the Occupational Information Network (O\*Net) Interest Profiler (IP).
2. **Generalized Assessment-** Clients demonstrate their high school level abilities by applying them in simulated, academic, workplace, and life contexts. They must demonstrate 100% mastery of 70 competencies in three foundational content areas and seven functional life skill content areas, all of which are aligned to the College and Career Readiness Standards. The client must also demonstrate an employment or advanced academic skill, as outlined in the College and Career Competency Manual (CCC).

**Client Eligibility for the NEDP**

Maryland adults without a high school diploma who upon entry to the program:

* Are 18 years of age and older
* Are Maryland residents with documentation as outlined in the NEDP Assurances (2. Maryland Residency Requirements)
* Meet cut scores on the prerequisite CASAS Diagnostic Assessment

**Prerequisites for Enrollment into the NEDP**

An information session, conducted by intake staff or an NEDP Advisor, describing the requirements of the program prior to beginning the NEDP is required of all clients in the program. The NEDP website (<https://www.casas.org/nedp>) contains resources for information sessions.

**Enrollment in the NEDP Diagnostic Phase**

To begin this level, the program should determine that the client is at the CASAS C/D level in Math and the D level in Reading. There are several ways to do this:

* CASAS Appraisal (paper/pencil) or Locator (eTests), **OR**
* TABE 7th grade or higher, **OR**
* Administer NRS-approved CASAS Reading- D level and Math- C/D level. Clients who are near or meeting CASAS cut scores of 236 on the D level Reading, 226 on the C/D level GOALS Math will be eligible to begin Diagnostics.

**Enrollment in the NEDP Generalized Assessment Phase**

To complete the Diagnostic Phase and move into Generalized Assessment, clients must demonstrate that their basic skills in Reading, Writing, and Math are high enough to successfully complete the work in Generalized Assessment. They do this by earning the following cut scores, which may only be determined using the specific NRS-approved CASAS testing forms and levels listed below:

* CASAS Reading GOALS level D 236 or higher
* CASAS Math GOALS level C/D 226 or higher
* CASAS Written Prompt writing sample score 3 or higher
* Additionally, clients complete four “open” diagnostics in this phase to assess their college and career goals, and self-assessment of the competences they will need to demonstrate in Generalized Assessment.

**FY 24 NEDP BUDGET**

Use the NEDP state and federal budget forms for proposed NEDP activities, including the local match.

Refer to the Budget Instructions contained in the FY 24 MD Labor AIS Competitive Grant Application to complete this section.

**NEDP FUND USE AND LIMITATIONS**

Local programs receiving NEDP funds must comply with WIOA Title II local administrative cost limits, fund use, and limitations as described in the FY 24 Competitive Application. Federal and State NEDP budget funding lines must only be used for NEDP related activities, and to support the NEDP program implementation and activities in all phases of the program, including:

* NEDP Advisor/Assessor salaries/benefits
* Facilitation of intake and assessment of prospective NEDP clients
* Professional development for NEDP staff
* Procurement of NEDP program materials
* Participation in state coordinated NEDP meetings, including NEDP Community of Practice.

**NEDP SERVICE AREA**

Each applicant should consider the geographic region within Maryland where they intend to provide NEDP services. An applicant may propose to serve a geographic region that is larger than the proposed region served in the Overall FY24 Competitive Application, but this is not a requirement. Labor reserves the right to restrict an NEDP award to a provider's local jurisdiction if there are other successful applicants that are local to the extended jurisdiction proposed.

**FY 24 NEDP PROJECTIONS**

Use the FY 24 MD Labor-AELS NEDP Schedule to complete projections for your NEDP program for the FY 24 program year. This document must be completed accurately and fully, including all appropriate budget funding lines.

**FY 24 NEDP Competitive Grant Application**

**Check the box next to the jurisdiction(s) for which you are applying:**

Allegany County

Anne Arundel County

Baltimore City

Baltimore County

Calvert County

Caroline County

Carroll County

Cecil County

Charles County

Dorchester County

Frederick County

Garrett County

Harford County

Howard County

Kent County

Montgomery County

Prince George's County

Queen Anne's County

Somerset County

St. Mary's County

Talbot County

Washington County

Wicomico County

Worcester County

**NEDP NARRATIVE**

**NEDP Outreach, Recruitment, and Enrollment**

|  |
| --- |
| **Narrative Criteria:** |
| Describe your outreach plan to identify eligible clients in the area(s) you intend to serve. The plan should include specific steps and the expected outcomes. |
| Describe your NEDP intake and assessment process, including standardized assessments that will be used to determine eligibility for the Diagnostic phase. |
| How will your local program assist individuals who are unable to meet CASAS cut scores to transition to Generalized Assessment, including English language learners? |

**NEDP Implementation**

|  |
| --- |
| **Narrative Criteria:** |
| Describe your implementation plan to utilize remote and in-person modalities for program delivery in order to reach underserved populations. The plan should include specific steps and the expected outcomes. |

**NEDP Client Retention and Completion**

|  |
| --- |
| **Narrative Criteria:** |
| Outline your action plan for promoting strong retention and completion rates and for assisting clients needing remediation at different phases of the program. List specific resources available to NEDP clients. |

**NEDP Staff Professional Development**

A minimum of two (2) NEDP advisor/assessor staff, including a lead assessor who devotes time to operating and growing the NEDP is vital to successful program implementation. The NEDP staff are required to obtain a minimum of 10 hours of professional development hours in FY 24.

|  |
| --- |
| **Narrative Criteria:** |
| Describe your NEDP staffing level, staffing needs, and your plan for meeting professional development needs. |

**NEDP PERSONNEL**

List the primary and (one) secondary contacts for your NEDP program, as required by CASAS and MD Labor.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Primary contact | Secondary contact |
| Name |  |  |
| Title |  |  |
| Phone |  |  |
| Email |  |  |

**NEDP Staff Responsibilities**

**NEDP Advisor**

**Primary Purpose of Position:**

*The Advisor works with NEDP clients through the initial stages of the NEDP program, the Diagnostic phase. The advisor is responsible for intake, initial assessment, and goal development of NEDP clients and serves as a resource for all staff.*

**Job Competencies:**

* Knowledge of learning theories relevant to adults
* Knowledge of adult NEDP intake and assessment requirements
* Knowledge of CASAS and TABE assessments
* Knowledge of professional development and training procedures for the administration and interpretation of approved assessments
* Knowledge of community resources to assist prospective clients in need of remediation

**State Duties Include:**

* Attend NEDP statewide professional development meetings

**Local Program Duties Include:**

* Work as a team member with the local Program Administrator, the MIS Specialist, the IAS, and the IS to meet NEDP program goals and performance measures
* Introduce NEDP to prospective clients through NEDP information session
* Administer all Appraisal and Diagnostic instruments
* Score (or oversee the scoring) and evaluate the CASAS Reading and Math Diagnostic Instruments
* Interpret writing diagnostic test results and provide learning recommendations according to NEDP Policies and Procedures
* Complete remediation forms as required, and provide learning recommendations.
* Promote NEDP client retention strategies
* Refer NEDP applicant learners to support services and/or community resources
* Assist clients in identifying a College and Career Competency (CCC) option
* Facilitate client entry into the Generalized Assessment phase

**Qualifications:**

* Bachelor’s degree; Master’s degree preferred
* Strong organizational and interpersonal skills
* Previous experience administering standardized tests
* Experience advising learners

**Employment Terms:**

* + - Complete NEDP Advisor/Assessor certification requirements as required by CASAS and MD Labor
    - Work with at least one client in Diagnostic and Generalized Assessment annually to remain certified

**NEDP Assessor**

**Primary Purpose of Position:**

*This position works with a client in Generalized Assessment through completion of portfolio and graduation.*

**Job Competencies:**

* Knowledge of learning theories relevant to adults
* Knowledge of generalized assessment requirements
* Knowledge of community resources to assist prospective clients in need of remediation.

**State Duties Include:**

* Attend NEDP statewide professional development meetings
* Communicate and train local program staff on assessment administration and other pertinent information, if serving as lead NEDP Specialist

**Local Program Duties Include:**

* Collaborate with other NEDP staff and the local program administrator to meet NEDP program goals and performance measures
* Promote awareness of NEDP within the local adult education program, among program staff and in the community
* Provide procedural information to assist client in navigating the Web-based assessment system
* Activate NEDP competency areas
* Conduct In-Office Checks after Generalized Assessment activities have been submitted
* Evaluate activities and In-Office Checks completed by clients using the assessment manual and guidance pop-ups
* Provide evaluation results to the client along with instructions on how the Post-Task Assessment will be conducted
* Conduct and evaluate Post-Task Assessment
* Organize and implement the Individualized Assessment process, resulting in the demonstration of the Individualized Assessment
* Review and approve portfolios completed by other Assessors, following portfolio review procedures and guidelines

**Qualifications:**

* Bachelor’s degree; Master’s degree preferred
* Strong organizational and interpersonal skills
* Previous experience administering standardized tests

**Employment Terms:**

* + - Complete NEDP Advisor/Assessor certification requirements as required by CASAS and MD Labor
    - Work with at least one client each in Diagnostics and Generalized Assessment annually to remain certified