



MEMORANDUM

TO: Workforce Development Board Executive Committee

FROM: Christopher Donnelly

SUBJECT: Approval to Extend Equus Youth Agreement

DATE: June 24, 2026

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Executive Committee approves extending the existing agreement with Arbor E&T, LLC, dba Equus Workforce Solutions, to provide Youth case management services with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and non-WIOA funds in an amount not to exceed \$350,000 to serve 49 youth in the northern portion of Monterey County, for an agreement term of July 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026.

BACKGROUND:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) enacted a comprehensive youth employment program to serve eligible youth, ages 14 through 24, who face barriers to education, training, and employment. The Monterey County Workforce Development Board (MCWDB) WIOA youth program provides counseling, training, work experience, and placement services, and focuses primarily on out-of-school youth ages 18 through 24.

Equus was selected to provide WIOA Youth services following an RFP process in early 2022 in which only one proposal was received, and based on a sole-source recommendation, Equus was approved to provide WIOA services to youth in the northern portion of Monterey County from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. The 2022-23 agreement executed with Equus was amended in 2023-24 to provide \$750,000 for WIOA case management services for 97 youth. Last year, the agreement was again amended to provide \$650,000 to serve a total of 90 participants.

In 2025-26, Equus and Turning Point case managers worked collaboratively to advance several MCWDB initiatives. The Youth Programs partnered to provide the Green Cadre program using CaliforniansForAll funding for ongoing cohorts that continue serving Monterey County residents by addressing critical community needs related to food insecurity and climate resilience.

Additionally, WIOA funding was used to expand workforce development opportunities through a variety of internships and training programs. These initiatives included aerospace manufacturing internships with Joby Aviation, Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training through Central Coast College, and specialized cohorts focused on hospitality and social media. These opportunities provided participants with valuable career pathways, industry-recognized skills, and hands-on work experience aligned with local workforce needs.

DISCUSSION:

In accordance with U.S Department of Labor procurement requirements, which require service providers to be competitively procured every four to five years, and to align procurement timelines for

both the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and the Youth programs, staff recommends approval of a six-month amendment to the Youth services agreement with Equus in the amount of \$350,000. The amendment will support the provision of case management and workforce development services to 49 youth participants in North Monterey County during Fiscal Year 2026-27.

A key focus of the extension will be expanding employer engagement efforts to increase the availability of Work Experience (WEX) opportunities and direct employment placements, thereby strengthening career pathways and employment outcomes for youth participants. MCWDB expects to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Youth services in late July or early August. It is anticipated that the results of the 2026 Youth Services RFP process will be announced in October 2026.

NEXT STEPS:

If the recommendation to extend the Youth services agreement with Equus is approved by the Executive Committee, it will be forwarded to the full board for consideration at its June 25, 2026, meeting.