

\$495K grant will help laid-off workers find new opportunities

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After being laid off from work, the first question many people usually ask themselves is, “What now?” But for 90 Mid-Valley workers, the process of finding a new job may now be a lot less stressful.

Thanks to a \$495,000 grant from the Employment Development Department, 90 laid off workers in Colusa, Glenn, Sutter and Yuba counties will have access to job training programs to help them prepare for new careers. It comes at no additional cost to job-seekers.

"These workers were impacted by industry changes," said Patrick W. Henning, director of EDD, in a press release. "And this grant will help them gain new job skills and obtain new careers in growing industries."

The grant was awarded to the North Central Counties Consortium – the manager of four county One Stops – to ensure the funds were distributed properly.

Counties were awarded the grant because there were massive layoffs at four businesses in the health and law enforcement sectors. Grant funding will help former employees of Rideout Health, Sutter County Health and Human Services Department, Peach Tree Health, and the Willows Police Department.

“We are a local workforce development area for four counties,” said Cindy Newton, director of NCCC. “We receive federal employment training services. They (One Stop) are subcontractors to our office. The money will be used for retraining, or upgrading skills.”

Qualifying job-seekers can access the grant to receive job training at local community colleges or tech schools, Newton said. Funding will cover training for many different occupations; some of the most popular are nursing, physical therapy, medical assistants, office administration, welding and truck driving.

“The grant will cover programs that fit clients and abilities,” Newton said. “We met with the employees to distribute the information.”

The grant money can also provide on-the-job training, and even help the laid off workers find employment. Employers are given special incentives to hire industry first-timers by the NCCC, Newton said.

“We reimburse the employer 50 percent of the employee’s wages during their first few months on the job,” Newton said. “That way we can provide on-the-job training to people who don’t have the right skills.”

Employees who qualify for the grant have already been notified, but local One Stops can still put job-seekers in touch with re-training opportunities in desired fields.