

# **COLUMBUS DOWNTOWN OFFICE INCENTIVE PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

## **Purpose:**

This program is designed to increase employment opportunities and encourage the establishment of new jobs in the downtown as well as to stabilize and strengthen the office space market downtown.

## **Incentive Amount:**

The incentive is a yearly payment to the employer based on 50% of the income tax withholding from new job creation downtown for a period of up to eight (8) years.

## **Eligible Applicant:**

- Requires minimum of ten (10) new employees (net job creation)
- Jobs must be from outside Columbus city limits
- Downtown office space only  
*For the purpose of this program the boundaries of downtown are defined in Columbus City Code Title 33 Section 3359.03 downtown district boundary, (see attached map)*
- Private sector employers only
- Applicant must apply for the incentive prior to signing a lease or purchasing a building, and a signed lease or deed must be presented to the Downtown Development Office before the incentive can be awarded
- Incentive term will be two (2) years less than the new lease capped at five (5) years or five years for owner occupied property. A company may also qualify for the incentive up to eight (8) years by employing specific target employment levels.

## **Application Process:**

Prior to signing a lease or purchasing a building in the downtown an interested company must submit a completed Columbus Downtown Office Incentive Program application form with the Downtown Development Office.

The application will be reviewed by the Downtown Development Office and submitted to Council for approval through legislation. As a part of the application process the applicant will be required to provide current or base year information as to the number employed within the city and the application site if applicable as well as payroll figures for both.

Once the application is approved by Council, the applicant will need to sign a lease to validate the agreement. The amount of space leased should reflect the number to be employed at the site. No other approval is necessary once Council has approved the application.

**Verification:**

Required information accompanying the employer's application for the incentive at year-end is:

- An annual progress report documenting the number of employees at the incentive site and citywide
- The payroll and city income tax totals for both the site and citywide.

This information will be compared to base year figures and projected new employment and payroll from the original contract to verify performance and determine the incentive amount for that year.

The City reserves the right to require an independent audit of the employer's employment, payroll and tax records to verify reported figures at the employer's expense.

**Payment:**

Incentive payment request will be sent to the Downtown Development office for processing and verification at year-end.

Once the request has been processed a request for payment to the employer will be presented to the City Auditor.

**Retention and Expansion by Existing Company:**

Expansion projects may qualify for the incentive based on employing various target levels of employment outlined below:

- One-year term for 10 to 49 new employees
- Two-year term for 50 to 149 new employees
- Three-year term for 150 to 249 new employees
- Five-year term for 250 to 399 new employees
- Eight-year term for 400 or greater new employees

When an expanding company leases additional space or purchases a building, the net new employees are eligible for the incentive under either number of employees or lease term.

**Program Duration:**

After five years the program will be evaluated for possible extension.

**Program Oversight:**

A committee including representatives from Council, Mayor's Office, Department of Development, Auditor's Office and the Downtown Development Office will conduct oversight and review.

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT TOM HEAPHEY AT:  
Phone (614) 645-7067, Fax (614) 724-0276 or E-mail at [tcheaphey@columbus.gov](mailto:tcheaphey@columbus.gov)**

## COLUMBUS DOWNTOWN OFFICE INCENTIVE APPLICATION FORM

- 1.) Company name \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.) Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3.) Type of business \_\_\_\_\_
- 4.) Company contact person \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.) Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_
- 6.) Proposed location of new leased space \_\_\_\_\_
- 7.) Space requirement in square feet \_\_\_\_\_
- 8.) Number of employees to be employed at this site \_\_\_\_\_
- 9.) Estimated payroll for employees at proposed site \_\_\_\_\_
- 10.) Proposed lease term \_\_\_\_\_
- 11.) Current number of employees employed within Columbus city limits and address where employed \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 12.) Actual payroll for all employees currently employed in the Columbus city limits \_\_\_\_\_

### Application Acknowledgement

As an authorized agent of the applicant company, I hereby submit this application for consideration. I understand that any information on this application found to be false or misleading could result in the termination of this program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

When completed, submit this form by mail to City Downtown Development Office, 20 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215 or via fax at (614) 724-0276. Please contact Tom Heaphey at (614) 645-7067 or via e-mail at [tcheaphey@columbus.gov](mailto:tcheaphey@columbus.gov) with any questions regarding the program or completion of this form.