

# Alameda County Social Services Agency Occupational Profiling Project

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## At A Glance

### The project

The Alameda County Social Services Agency has engaged the Bay Area Industry Education Council (IEC) to conduct a series of occupational profiles – job analysis – to help the agency better understand the skills and skill levels required for successful entry level employment in each of seven occupational groups: **Child Care, Clerical, Food Service, Housekeeping/Janitorial, Retail, Security, and Warehouse.** Data from the project will be used to update training curricula and improve the training and placement of Cal Works clients who are being prepared to transition from welfare to the world of work.



### Which skills are being analyzed?

IEC will be using a nationally-recognized occupational profile system developed by ACT (American College Testing) called *Work Keys*. The *Work Keys* system evaluates eight core competencies (also called soft skills, SCANS skills, and basic skills) to see how they are used in a job. They are: **Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, Listening, Writing, Teamwork, Applied Technology, Locating Information, and Observation.**

### How and when are the profile sessions conducted?

One or two employees from each participating company within an occupational group (see list above) attends a one-day focus group. The sessions are normally scheduled from 9AM to 5PM and require that the employee be excused from regular duties for the day. The focus group, held at the company site, and facilitated by a certified Work Keys Profiler, walks employees who actually perform the job that is being profiled, through the process of identifying the tasks, skills, and skill levels that are required to do their job successfully. When employees from two or more companies are participating in the same occupational group, a profile location will be selected that is convenient for the employees of both companies. We expect to begin profiling late September, and hope to conclude the process by late November.

### How will the information be used?



At the end of the profile process, a written document is produced which identifies the specific tasks, skills, and skill levels required in the job that has been profiled. The County of Alameda Social Services Agency will use the information to help its contracted training organizations update their training so that it includes the development of skills that industry requires. The County also may use the Work Keys individual assessment system to test individuals to see how their skill levels compare with those needed in industry (as demonstrated in the occupational profiles being conducted in this project), prior to job referral.

### Will the project pay for my employees' time to participate in the profile session?

The project will not pay for employee time to participate, however, the cost of the profiles, normally valued at \$2,500 each, are being underwritten by the Alameda County Social Services Agency during this special project.

### Benefits to participating employers

Participating employers will receive complimentary copies of the detailed occupational profiles. These can be used to update job descriptions, to measure the core competencies required in their jobs, and to guide in-house training and employee development. IEC staff will gladly speak with you about additional ways the data can be used by your company.

### Contact

For more information, and to schedule your occupational profiling session, please call: **Gerald Bartlett**, Vice President, Workforce Development at the Bay Area Industry Education Council, at **510/795-6171**.