

## **Uforia,**

### **Workforce Development, Job Creation, and Diversity Plans**

#### **Goals**

Uforia, LLC (the “Company”) Workforce Development Plan (WDP) goal is to increase employment in the community, develop job skills, and address employment inequality in Jersey City. The plan includes training, recruiting, and retention strategies to hire and retain employees from socio-economically disadvantaged communities, individuals with prior entanglements in the criminal justice or juvenile justice system, and people with disabilities.

#### **History of Job Creation**

Bashkim Spahi, the CEO of Uforia, LLC, has a history of improving company operations, efficiencies, increasing sales and hiring local Jersey City residents as the head of Operations and the Quality Control Manager at Moishe’s Moving Systems. Throughout his career, Bashkim implemented key performance indicators, analytical reports and communicated steps to minimize company overhead and increase sales. Over the years, the Company has expanded and increased employment, which is directly related to Bashkim’s management role. With increased operational efficiencies, strategic planning, and his management of over 100 employees, Moishe’s Moving has been able to grow organically, and has allowed Moishe’s to maintain its high-quality service and brand in the local community.

Specifically, when Bashkim was a sales Manager, he added 3 inside sales positions due to increased sales that were able to be pushed through from 2018-2020. These positions are permanent due to added growth, and training done by Bashkim. In late 2020, Bashkim became the Operations Manager, and Quality Control manager and he added 6 additional moving trucks with between 2-3 employees for each truck. Within a short time period, Bashkim and Moishe’s was able to add 15 employees. This increase in employment was due to the restructuring and management/employee team approach to decrease the impact of surges in business during the summer and efficient logistics. Also, Bashkim, added four moving truck owner operators as subcontractor to help the company scale and manage increased sales. These subcontractors added 8 more employees from 2021 on.

Halim Spaho, who is providing management services to Uforia, LLC, has increased employment in the community operating his General Residential and Commercial Construction Company. Using his skills as owner and the need to meet construction timelines, Halim has implemented protocols and milestones to streamline projects, create better employee led teams to handle smaller, and moderate sized projects. These changes and others allowed him to reduce work trucks in the field, and add more employees on site to complete projects within mandated timelines more efficiently Average employee crews increased from two person to four-man teams. At different times, added upwards of 2-8 employees on a project-by-project basis.

Additionally, Halim added additional employment by using niche subcontractors for specific construction projects. These subcontractors included specialty plumbers, scrap metal companies, and glazing companies. Some of the scrap companies have upwards of 8-30 employees, and they would be used exclusively throughout the project's duration. A large majority of Halim's subcontractors were his former employees who with his mentoring and communication of how to start and run a successful business started their own businesses. Using this model and former employee who are familiar with Halim's construction management manual and detailed milestones, helped Halim grow his business as the previous employees knew what to expect as far as deliverables and details. These subcontractors specialized in different trades and have employee payrolls consisting of 3-12 employees working daily. This easily allowed him to create more jobs, and increase revenue without sacrificing quality of the work delivered. From 2007-2010 Halim ran projects with about 40 employees, and then switched over to a team system in order to better manage the quality of work.

From 2013 on, projects were generally managed and completed with 4 employee teams or more based on the size of the project. By adding subcontractors on a project-by-project basis he is able to add more jobs at once. The total amount of jobs created ran the gamut per the construction contract executed and generally added anywhere from 3-30 employees either directly or through subcontractors. This structure enables Halim to stay competitive and successful in a highly regulated industry with much larger competitors. As a result, Halim has leveraged his mentoring and human resource skills to create an efficient and sustainable construction company that has consistently created jobs.

### **Planned Job Creation and Diversity**

The WDP calls for recruiting and developing a staff that is diverse, talented, community oriented, and from Jersey City. Our WDP is tailored, in part, to recruit and retain from our socio-economically disadvantaged community, individuals with prior entanglements and/or convictions in the criminal justice or juvenile justice system, and others who are underemployed.

Our business model anticipates starting salaries that meet the criteria for a living wage in the Hudson County and Jersey City metropolitan statistical area in which the Company's premises are located based on the [Living Wage Calculator](#) developed by Amy K. Glasmeier, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Uforia, LLC is committed to providing equal employment opportunities. The Company will not discriminate against employees or applicants on any legally recognized basis of a protected class, the perception of membership in a protected category, religious preference, or an individual's association with an actual or perceived member of a protected category.

Diversity and equity are priorities of the Company's recruitment and hiring strategies. Uforia, LLC will implement strategic outreach initiatives to recruit from a diverse, qualified group of potential applicants to secure a high-performing workforce drawn from all

segments of society and the Jersey City community by building relationships with local Jersey City officials, vendors, service providers, and charitable organizations that share in our diversity objectives.

The Company will follow these steps as its action plan for recruiting a diverse workforce:

- The Company will audit job ads to develop strategies to speak to a broader range of candidates.
- The Company will place advertisements in locations where diverse candidates will find them.
- When advertising a position, the Company will emphasize benefits that may be available f in the future from the Company such as health related activities/clubs,
- The Company will be flexible regarding time off and scheduling policies to include more religious holidays, community events, working parents, etc.
- The Company will use a system when evaluating candidates in which we remove all personal information on resumes (i.e., “blind resumes”) to reduce conscious or unconscious bias.
- The Company will participate in a cannabis industry apprenticeship program established by an academic medical center as defined in Section 18 of P.L.2021 C.24:6I-3 (page 7) if that program offers apprenticeships related to the Company's commercial activity and in the region in which the premises are located.
- The Company will work with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development to recruit and hire qualified applicants, including participation in The New Jersey Apprenticeship Network (NJAN) to the extent that the program is available to businesses in the cannabis marketplace.
- The Company will contact the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) regarding hiring opportunities for qualified job candidates with physical, mental, cognitive, or other forms of disability.
- The Company may enter into a partnership with the Hudson County re-entry program to identify and promote employment opportunities for individuals with prior entanglements/convictions in the criminal justice or juvenile justice system who are qualified for employment at a cannabis business. The Company will submit the information required per NJAC § 17:30-7.10(b)(22) (page 104) to the CRC.

## **Training**

Each owner, principal, employee, volunteer, and any management services contractor staff will complete at least eight (8) hours of ongoing training that meets or exceeds the requirements of NJAC § 17:30-9.8 (page 149) each calendar year. Unless expressly authorized in advance by the CRC, no person will begin working at the Company before completing training per NJAC § 17:30-8.1(b) (page 133) as discussed below.

Building worker skills is essential for the operation of the business and the long-term success of the employees. The WDP includes fundamental job skills evaluation and development strategies, including the use of technology and equipment, effective communication, time management, and more. In addition to fundamental skills training, the Company will provide all employees with basic workplace training related to safety, harassment, cannabis, regulations, and more:

- Workplace safety training is essential for all employees. The Company will provide job-specific safety training for all employees that meets the standards established by the New Jersey Department of Health and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Training will include preventing injuries, safe use of equipment, proper use of personal protective equipment, cleaning spills, safe use of chemicals, and more. The Company will implement training materials published by state and federal regulators, materials published by equipment and chemical manufacturers or vendors, material data safety sheets, credible online resources, and on-the-job training.
- All employees will receive anti-harassment training to help prevent all forms of harassment or oppression in the workplace, with a special focus on sexual harassment.
- The Company will train all employees in the topics required under NJAC § 17:30-9.8(b) (page 149) related to cannabis laws, privacy, developments in the cannabis industry, security measures and controls, and responding to emergencies.
- All employees will receive information regarding the Company's alcohol, drug, and smoke-free workplace policies per NJAC § 17:30-9.9 (page 150), which will include a written smoke-free workplace policy; a written policy prohibiting cannabis business personnel from possessing, consuming, or being under the influence of an illicit controlled dangerous substance or alcohol; and a written policy prohibiting cannabis business personnel from consuming or being under the influence of cannabis at the workplace, provided that no cannabis business shall infringe upon the rights of qualifying patients under P.L. 2019, C.153 (C.24:6I-5.1 et al.).

In addition to other training provided by the Company, each employee will be trained in the topics listed below per NJAC § 17:30-8.1(b)(2) (page 133) as part of their registration with the CRC to obtain a Cannabis Business Identification card (additional information follows). Training per NJAC § 17:30-8.1(b)(2) includes a history of cannabis use and law, [cultivation techniques], varieties of cannabis, packaging, labeling, advertising, [cultivation/manufacturing/retail] processes, health and safety information, dependency, medical cannabis use, and cannabis laws and regulations.

The Company also needs employees trained to do job-specific tasks. The skills and knowledge required for cannabis employees vary based on the job. The WDP calls for the Company to develop specific training procedures and materials for each position. Bashkim Spahi– CEO and the COO are responsible for ensuring that managers and designated other employees develop or collect and implement job-specific training procedures.

The Chief Compliance Officer and COO will create and maintain a training matrix and individual training records per the Company's staffing and training procedures outlined in the WDP. Per NJAC § 17:30-9.6(i)(8) (page 144), the sheet should include, at a minimum, documentation of all required training and the signed statement of the person indicating the date, time, and place that individual person received such training and the topics discussed, including the name and title of presenters. The training matrix will include each training topic to be covered and the date on which the training was completed. The records

related to individual training will be incorporated into the personnel files of each employee per NJAC § 17:30-9.7(i) (page 145) and other applicable state laws and regulations.

Uforia, LLC is responsible for ensuring that all training required by procedures and regulations is provided at no cost to employees. Additionally, the COO will evaluate and identify areas where specified training is lacking, create or advise on providing the new training as needed, and assist in modifying procedures to thereafter require new training.

Recordkeeping is an essential aspect of training provided under the WDP. In addition to the records specified above and in state regulations, the Company will maintain detailed personnel records for all owners, principals, management services contractors, employees, and volunteers that include all of the items listed in NJAC § 17:30-9.7 (page 145):

- An application for employment or to volunteer;
- Current Cannabis Business Identification Card;
- Driver's license or other state or federally issued photo identification;
- Certification confirming the person's or entity's submission to the jurisdiction of the courts of the State and agreeing to comply with all of the requirements of the laws of the State pertaining to the CRC;
- Documentation of verification of references;
- Documentation of submission of fingerprint impressions for compliance with a criminal history record background check;
- Job or role description or contract that includes the duties, authority, responsibilities, qualifications, and supervision of the job or role;
- Documentation of all required training and the signed statement of the person indicating the date, time, and place that individual person received they received such training and the topics discussed, including the name and title of presenters;
- Documentation of periodic performance evaluations; and
- Documentation of any disciplinary action taken.

### **Employee Retention**

The Company's employee retention strategy serves to preserve the benefit of hiring and training talented staff members. The goals are to decrease turnover of high-value staff, decrease training and recruitment costs, and prevent the loss of organizational knowledge. The Company's retention strategies include onboarding and orientation, on-the-job training and support, continuous constructive feedback, inclusivity, non-discrimination, and a harassment and oppression-free workplace.

### **Cannabis Business Identification Cards**

Each owner, principal, management services contractor, employee, or volunteer will obtain a Cannabis Business Identification Card (CBIC) per NJAC § 17:30-8.1 (page 133). The Company will retain copies of each unexpired CBIC as part of the personnel file or other documentation related to each individual required to have a CBIC. The process of obtaining a CBIC ensures that each person holding a card meets the criteria specified in NJAC § 17:30-8.1 (page 133):

- Each CBIC holder will be at least twenty-one (21) years old.

- Each CBIC holder will complete the training required under subsection NJAC § 17:30-8.1(b) (page 133), described above as basic workplace training.
- Each owner, principal, management services contractor, employee or volunteer will complete a criminal history background check pursuant to NJAC § 17:30-7.12(d) (page 114) demonstrating that they do not have any disqualifying convictions that have not been found to be rehabilitated.

## **Resources for Employees**

The Company will provide resources to help its employees succeed in the workplace:

- On-the-job Training and Support - Employees who need additional training or skills development will have access to time and training materials. The goal of ongoing on-the-job training is to reduce frustration, improve performance and relative efficiencies. Properly trained employees are more satisfied, confident, and effective.
- Employee Resource Group (ERG) - An ERG is a voluntary group of employees who join together in the workplace for the purposes of mutual support, problem solving, or innovation. The Company encourages participation in ERGs to promote inclusivity, wellness, and workplace development.
- Health Insurance – The Company will introduce a health benefits reimbursement plan and will evaluate and implement a Group Insurance Plan if warranted.

## **Continuing Education and Certifications**

The Company contracts with Patient Focused Certification (PFC) to provide initial and ongoing training for employees. The ISO-certified PFC program is a web-based training course hosted by Americans for Safe Access Foundation, the nation's leading medical cannabis patient advocacy organization and adult-use/recreational cannabis companies. PFC offers Company certification, consultation services, and industry training for cannabis businesses nationwide. The PFC course material is based on the Cannabis Monograph created with the American Herbal Products Association (AHPA) and the American Herbal Pharmacopeia (AHP) to establish business standards that have been directly adopted by nearly half the medical and recreational cannabis businesses in the United States.