



## Branches to Chances<sup>(R)</sup>: A Return-To-Work Program

**Branches to Chances<sup>(R)</sup>** is a horticultural job training program for unemployed, underemployed, and/or previously incarcerated individuals. Training is aimed at connecting participants with entry-level positions in the horticulture industry, such as landscaping, tree maintenance, and park maintenance. Activities include hands-on training with daily tasks such as weeding, planting, mulching, staking plants, watering, pruning, harvesting, and trash collection, and are reinforced with a basis of knowledge in plant/weed identification, basic botany, equipment use and safety. The program also provides general skills in financial and computer literacy, preparing for a job interview, and workplace skills. Upon completion of this program, participants will have the opportunity to gain full-time employment. Multiple contingency plans and safety precautions are in place for COVID-related disruptions.

### Program Details

**Interviewing:** Complete a mandatory 3 1/2-hour, unpaid work shadow day on Thursday, February 17th, 2022 from 8 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., or 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Snow date to be determined). Individual interviews will be conducted the following week by appointment.

**Program Dates:** Tuesday, March 1, to Friday, April 29, 2022 (Graduation ceremony)

**Position Title:** Branches to Chances Trainee

**Positions Available:** 8

### **Timing:**

- Trainees are hired as part-time (non-exempt), seasonal employees of the Delaware Center for Horticulture.
- The training is 3 days/week, 7.5 hours/day for the first 7 weeks.
- During Week 8, trainees work 35-40 hours through an externship, getting experience working with a potential employer.
- Week 9 is program wrap-up and graduation. Program graduates will begin working with their potential employer on or before May 2, 2022.

**Compensation:** Trainees are paid biweekly with the opportunity to receive up to \$500 as a performance bonus for successful program completion.

### **Eligibility Requirements:**

1. Be 18 years of age or older.
2. Be available to work or be in class 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday through Friday (will meet 3 of those days).
3. Be able to attend work and class every day on time. **Tardiness and absences are not tolerated.**
4. Be interested in and have a desire to work in landscaping, landscape contracting and maintenance, tree maintenance, and/or urban agriculture.
5. Be able to lift 50 pounds and be capable of rigorous work in all weather conditions.
6. Not have a violent or sexual criminal history.
7. Be able to provide proof of Covid-19 vaccination or written request for reasonable medical and/or religious accommodation.

A valid driver's license is desirable but not required. DCH is a drug- and smoke-free workplace.

**For more information or to register for the work shadow day,** contact Nora Melley (nmelley@thedch.org or (302) 658-6262 ext. 117) or Bob Harris ([rharris@thedch.org](mailto:rharris@thedch.org) or (302) 507-1345).