

North Carolina Receives Federal COVID-19 Employment and Training Grant:

\$6 million grant will help Department of Commerce set up job trainings and temporary employment opportunities

Raleigh
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Governor Roy Cooper has announced that North Carolina has received a \$6 million federal grant to support jobs and workforce training to help address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Getting more North Carolinians back to work in a safe way is a critical part of rebuilding our economy,” Governor Cooper said. “This grant will help workers and families that have been struggling financially due to COVID-19 get back on their feet.”

The North Carolina Department of Commerce’s Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) requested the funds, which were awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor. North Carolina is among a number of states and territories receiving these national Dislocated Worker Grants, which are funded under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

“While our state is focused on making sure North Carolinians are healthy and safe, we also want to enhance their economic security,” N.C. Commerce Secretary Anthony Copeland said. “To support our state’s recovery, we will use these resources to help people find new jobs that provide vital services and to pay for needed job training, so that both workers and employers can thrive.”

Through the grant, eligible North Carolina residents may receive certain employment services or workforce training for industries that are hiring workers. Opportunities funded by the grant will vary depending on local needs, but may include:

- On-the-Job Training (OJT), in which a wage reimbursement incentive may be provided to a business to help offset the cost of training a new employee with limited skills.
- Temporary Employment, in positions that either conduct humanitarian assistance and public health duties (such as contact tracing and delivery of food and medical supplies to those in need) or assist with disaster clean-up and sanitizing areas to prevent the spread of disease. Employers for these positions must be either nonprofit organizations or government agencies.
- Occupational Skills Training and Supportive Services, including short-term training to dislocated workers, allowing them to pivot into jobs that are in-demand and services that provide transitional support to ensure jobseekers have the tools they need to be successful entering a new career.

To administer this grant, DWS will partner with 14 participating local workforce development boards (WDBs) that, collectively, serve 59 counties. These boards include:

- Cape Fear WDB (Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover and Pender counties);
- Capital Area WDB (Wake and Johnston counties);
- Centralina WDB (Anson, Cabarrus, Iredell, Lincoln, Rowan, Stanly and Union counties);
- Charlotte Works WDB (Mecklenburg County);
- Cumberland WDB (Cumberland County);
- Eastern Carolina WDB (Carteret, Craven, Duplin, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Onslow, Pamlico and Wayne counties);
- Gaston WDB (Gaston County);
- Guilford WDB (Guilford County);
- High Country WDB (Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Watauga, Yancey, Mitchell and Wilkes counties);
- Kerr-Tar WDB (Franklin, Granville, Person, Vance and Warren counties);
- Lumber River WDB (Bladen, Hoke, Richmond, Robeson and Scotland counties);
- Mountain Area WDB (Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania counties);
- Piedmont Triad Regional WDB (Caswell, Davie, Forsyth, Rockingham, Stokes, Surry and Yadkin counties); and
- Regional Partnership WDB (Alamance, Montgomery, Moore, Orange and Randolph counties).

Workers may be eligible for participation in the grant by being temporarily or permanently laid off as a consequence of COVID-19, or by meeting certain other criteria.

Supported by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs) temporarily expand the service capacity of dislocated worker training and employment programs at the state and local levels by providing funding assistance in response to large, unexpected economic events that cause significant job losses. DWS has recent experience administering federal grants of this type, in partnership with local workforce development boards, including grants that came in the wake of Hurricanes Matthew and Florence.

For more information about participating in the grant, employers in counties served by a participating local Workforce Development Board should contact that board, which can be found at www.ncawdb.org/local-boards/.

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