FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
9/10/2020

CONTACT
GovernorsOffice@illinois.gov (mailto:GovernorsOffice@illinois.gov)

Gov. Pritzker Announces $16 Million Investment to Connect Out of Work Illinoisans with 1,300 COVID-19 Response Jobs

Funding from the U.S. Department of Labor will Boost Training and Hiring for Roles Created by Ongoing Crisis; Residents Impacted by COVID-19 will be prioritized

ROCKFORD – Governor Pritzker announced a new $16.6 million investment to expand job opportunities for Illinoisans who have lost their jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through two new grants received from the U.S. Department of Labor, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity will distribute funding to place, train and hire nearly 1,300 residents for an array of jobs related to the ongoing pandemic response.

The funding includes an $8.3 million grant from the federal Disaster Recovery Grant Program and an $8.3 million grant from the federal Employment Recovery Grant – both part of the National Dislocated Worker Program. The grants will provide out of work Illinoisans with training and employment in jobs that assist local disaster relief programs and industries in high demand amidst the pandemic. Funded positions include COVID-19 recovery-related temporary jobs to help mitigate COVID-19 in communities, such as contact tracers, COVID-19 protocol workers, building sanitization workers, temperature screeners, and food preparation and distribution workers identified by local communities.

“Even when times are hard – especially when times are hard – we have to invest in the things that lift up our communities – and we gather today to celebrate another such effort. I’m proud to announce that a $16.6 million investment to expand job opportunities for Illinoisans who have become unemployed in the COVID-19 pandemic – to place, train and hire nearly 1,300 people for an array of jobs in Rockford and across the state,” **said Governor JB Pritzker.** “This federal funding – made possible by the Department of Labor’s Emergency Recovery and Disaster Recovery Grant programs – will help us address a goal for reinvigorating our economy that is two-fold — returning more of our residents to the job while simultaneously addressing new economic demands brought on by COVID-19.”

“The investments we’re making today will help grow jobs and bring more Illinoisans back to work while helping respond to key needs created by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic,” **said DCEO Director Erin Guthrie.** “As workers across the country continue to feel the impact of this pandemic, Governor Pritzker’s investments in workforce and continued focus on the public health response will help us start to make continued progress in bringing people back to work and regaining our state’s economy.”

The State will distribute funding to 12 Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs) spanning 7 regions across Illinois. State of Illinois LWIAs represent employers [illegible] ed organizations which partner with DCEO to p[illegible]ss the state.

The Workforce Connection in Rockford is o[illegible]se fun[illegible] expand education and training to serve an [illegible]inne[illegible] Counties. Every year the agency uses federal workforce funds to place over 1,000 residents in training programs

Welcome! I am the small business virtual assistant. Please click here to get started.

dedicated to helping participants gain meaningful employment in jobs in demand today.

“During a time when individuals find themselves unemployed through no fault of their own, we want to support them as they change careers,” **said Dr. Lisa M. Bly-Jones, Executive Director of the Workforce Connection in Rockford.** “With extensive experience serving dislocated workers, we know that they are eager to return to work. This grant will fund short-term training programs that are less than 12 months in length, on the job training and paid work experiences.”

DCEO will partner with local workforce agency partners to assist with filling roles in high need industry areas evolving as a result of COVID-19. The 1,300 positions represent a mix of new and existing roles – with Disaster Recovery grants supporting contact tracers, community health coordinators, food distribution and emergency pantry workers, and COVID-19 custodians. Employment Recovery grant funds will be leveraged to seek out low-wage dislocated workers and provide vocational training and work-based learning that provides skills and competencies in expanding occupations and industries connected to the COVID-19 response.

“The coronavirus pandemic is disrupting jobs and changing the skills employees need to do them,” **said State Senator Steve Stadelman (D-Rockford).** “To meet this challenge, state government and its partners need to step up to help ensure workers are equipped with the skills critical to our economic recovery.”

“These investments are a critical step to help Illinois residents and business owners impacted by COVID-19 in Rockford and across Illinois,” **said Tom McNamara, Mayor of Rockford.** “Every community has been affected by the pandemic, and these grants will help place job seekers in roles that are in high demand. I thank the Governor and his administration for his continued support and commitment to getting our residents back to work during these challenging times.”

Training and hiring for new workforce programs are expected to begin this fall, with the start time of each program varying by location. Participants will either undergo some form of training and/or receive supportive employment services, with many beginning jobs shortly after training is complete. Local workforce agencies will prioritize applicants impacted by layoff or termination during the COVID-19 crisis at the time of their application.

PRESS RELEASES (/DCEO/MEDIA/PRESSRELEASES)

2022 (/dceo/Media/PressReleases/Pages/PressReleasesByYear.aspx?ArticleYear=2022)

2021 (/dceo/Media/PressReleases/Pages/PressReleasesByYear.aspx?ArticleYear=2021)

2020 (/dceo/Media/PressReleases/Pages/PressReleasesByYear.aspx?ArticleYear=2020)

2019 (/dceo/Media/PressReleases/Pages/PressReleasesByYear.aspx?ArticleYear=2019)

2018 (/dceo/Media/PressReleases/P

Stay Connected (https://lp.constanto

Welcome! I am the small business virtual assistant. Please click here to get started.

Information

Illinois Economic Plan (/dceo/Pages/EconPlan2019.aspx)
Corporate Accountability (https://dceoapps.ildceo.net/ilcorpacct/)
Awarded Grants (http://granttracker.ildceo.net/)
EDGE Agreements (/dceo/ExpandRelocate/Incentives/Pages/EdgeAgreements.aspx)
Springboard (/sites/springboard/Pages/default.aspx)
Connect with a DCEO Representative (/dceo/Pages/DCEO-Program-Inquiry.aspx)

Quick Links

Coronavirus.Illinois.gov (https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/)
Locate Your Business In IL (/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/RegionSpecificAssistance/Pages/default.aspx)
Start Your Business in IL (/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/BeginHere/Pages/default.aspx)
Get Answers to Questions (/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/BeginHere/Pages/SearchForAnswers.aspx)
Contact Us (/dceo/Pages/ContactUs.aspx)
Illinois E-Pay (https://magic.collectorsolutions.com/magic-ui/Login/il-dceo)

(https://www.facebook.com/illinoisdceo)
(https://twitter.com/IllinoisDCEO)
(https://www.linkedin.com/company/illinoisdceo)
(https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/oBArKbV)

(/)
Web Accessibility (http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=32765)
Missing & Exploited Children (http://www.missingkids.com/)
Amber Alerts (http://www.amberillinois.org/)
Illinois Privacy Info (https://www.illinois.gov/about/privacy.html)

Governor JB Pritzker (/sites/gov)
© 2022 State of Illinois (https://www.illinois.gov/)

Welcome! I am the small business virtual assistant. Please click here to get started.