



D 2022 027

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Concerning Apprenticeships for the State Workforce and Promoting Apprenticeship as a Solution for Colorado Employers

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Governor of the State of Colorado and, in particular, Article IV, Section 2 of the Colorado Constitution, I, Jared Polis, Governor of the State of Colorado, issue this Executive Order on apprenticeship program goals and requirements for the State workforce.

I. Background and Purpose

Colorado's need for skilled talent has accelerated due to a greater number of retirements, people leaving the workforce, and an increased demand for skilled workers. Because of these trends, there is an increased urgency to educate and train people on-the-job to ensure Colorado employers have the talent they need and workers have the skills for in-demand jobs. Registered apprenticeship programs (RAPs) offer an important and evidence-based avenue for Coloradans to build the skills employers need while they earn a paycheck or earn-and-learn. RAPs allow for business-led, on-the-job training and education, and align the workforce with the demands of Colorado's dynamic economy. RAPs create employment and career opportunities for more individuals, many of whom have been historically overlooked by employers.

RAPs also confer many benefits to employers in the State. By making these high-quality apprenticeships available, employers have the ability to recruit and build a high-skilled workforce through specialized, tailored training processes specific to their in-demand positions. RAPs have been found to promote efficiency, productivity, increased retention rates, and profitability, which contribute to any business's bottom line. Further, when businesses build RAPs, they can qualify for certain tax credits, minimize liability through proper training, and provide flexible training options that ensure workers develop the right skills for a given position.

The General Assembly has already made strides to promote expansion of RAPs by passing House Bill 21-1007 to establish a State Apprenticeship agency. The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) was awarded over \$11 million from the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) to diversify and expand apprenticeships and has prioritized apprenticeship expansion for ARPA stimulus investment. These actions are a testament to Colorado's commitment to expanding apprenticeship opportunities, especially for historically excluded populations of all ages and industries. Colorado has over 500 active apprenticeship programs, including programs in six State Departments, with more than 5,000

participants. Because of these successes, the State can increase our adoption of this important model and create more opportunities for Coloradans to find economic success and businesses to find the talent they need.

This Executive Order instructs agencies and departments managed by governor-appointed executives (Agencies and/or Departments) to expand RAPS offered by the State. The Office of Future of Work will develop statewide guidance and strategies for Agencies and Departments. This Executive Order also encourages private sector employers to build new or expand existing apprenticeship programs to create more employment and career opportunities across the State.

II. Declaration

- A. Registered Apprenticeship Programs create additional quality education and career pathways for Coloradans.
- B. Registered Apprenticeship Programs confer many benefits to employers, including a sustainable talent development pipeline.
- C. Registered Apprenticeship Programs contain five key elements:
 - a. Direct industry involvement;
 - b. Structured on-the-job-learning and mentorship;
 - c. Related classroom instruction to complement the on-the-job-learning;
 - d. Progressive wage increases for apprentices as their skills and knowledge increase; and
 - e. National Industry-Recognized Credential, referred to as a Certificate of Completion, which is issued by USDOL or a federally recognized SAA.
- D. Because high school students have the opportunity to graduate with widely-recognized credentials of value (industry credentials, certificates, or associate's degrees) in addition to a high school diploma, and Coloradans can earn credit for competencies, knowledge, and skills gained from work experience toward postsecondary degrees and credentials, there is a wide pool of individuals that would pursue Registered Apprenticeship Programs here in Colorado.

III. Apprenticeship Goals and Directives

- A. I direct the Office of Future of Work within CDLE and the Division of Human Resources within the Department of Personnel & Administration (DPA) to develop statewide guidance and strategies for expanding the number of RAPS offered by Agencies and Departments by twenty percent (20%) by the end of Fiscal Year 2022-2023. To support the implementation of the statewide guidance and strategies, the Office of Future of Work and Division of Human Resources will:

1. Collaborate to remove administrative and statutory barriers to the adoption of RAPs, including a review classification system to include an apprentice classification for in-demand occupations;
 2. Coordinate with Related Instruction providers, such as institutions of higher education, to enhance registered apprenticeship with additional credentials and professional certificates where appropriate for occupational skill-building;
 3. In alignment with Executive Order D 2022 015, Concerning Skills-based Hiring for the State Workforce, provide training and resources for human resources teams to evaluate how RAPs could address these talent development goals by December 2022;
 4. Work with agencies to provide technical assistance and resources to launch and expand registered apprenticeship programs in state Agencies and Departments by twenty percent (20%) by June 2023;
 5. Increase the number of apprentices in state Agencies and Departments by twenty percent (20%) by June 2023; and
 6. Work with Talent Partners and supportive service providers to develop an equity-driven apprenticeship recruitment and retention strategy, coordinating resources to support job seekers and employer-led Diversity Equity Inclusion and Accessibility strategies.
- B. I direct CDLE to continue to support and provide technical assistance to employers across the state to adopt RAPs, and thereby increase the number of apprenticeship programs in Colorado by 100 by June 30, 2023.
- C. I encourage all private employers in the State to:
1. Pursue grants and stimulus money made available by legislation, such as House Bill 21-1264 and grants from USDOL, to build new or expand apprenticeship programs; and
 2. Reach out to the Office of Future of Work to connect with resources and explore how apprenticeships may address their talent development needs.
- D. Employers who compose their workforce with five-percent or more of individuals participating in RAPs, will be honored at future Apprenticeship Awards events and will be featured and celebrated on the State Apprenticeship Agency website.
- E. Agencies and Departments shall implement current fiscal year actions within existing budgets and authorities. If necessary, based on what is appropriated, Agencies and Departments shall engage with the Office of State Planning and Budgeting to identify resource requirements and incorporate those requirements into the annual budget development process for any actions to be implemented in future fiscal years.

IV. Duration

This Executive Order shall remain in effect unless modified or rescinded by future Executive Order of the Governor.



GIVEN under my hand and
the Executive Seal of the
State of Colorado, this ninth
day of June 2022.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jared Polis".

Jared Polis
Governor