



Performance Plan FY

2025 - 26

[CDLE.COLORADO.GOV](https://cdle.colorado.gov)



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview.....	4
Divisions.....	13
Special Initiatives.....	24
Wildly Important Goals.....	33
Accomplishments.....	45





OVERVIEW

CDLE Overview.....	4
Letter from the Executive Director.....	5
CDLE Vision, Mission and Priorities.....	6
Organizational Structure.....	7
Budget Breakdown.....	8



CDLE OVERVIEW

The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) is a roughly 1,900-person state agency that oversees eight major divisions and four special initiatives.

CDLE serves Colorado, now more critically than ever, by helping workers and businesses thrive. We help keep our workforce competitive while supporting the business community with skilled talent, resources and information that saves them valuable time and money.

CDLE services and resources support Colorado's economy in the following ways:



Building Colorado's talent pipeline



Connecting unemployed workers to job opportunities



Helping businesses recruit and retain employees



Helping people with disabilities obtain, maintain or regain employment



Protecting our communities through a variety of consumer protection and safety programs



Protecting workers' right to fair pay and preventing misclassification



Presenting labor market information providing an up-to-date and accurate picture of the economy



Assisting workers who have been injured on the job



Ensuring employers across the state are aware and follow fair labor practices



Contributing to a stable economy through wage-replacement programs including unemployment insurance, workers' compensation and paid family and medical leave insurance



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Coloradans,

At the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, we continuously seek ways to better serve our constituents across the State through our benefits programs to workers and support to employers. Our programs, systems and processes are constantly evolving to meet the needs of a rapidly changing workforce landscape. We are preparing for the future of work by modernizing our systems, expanding our portfolio of services to ensure all Colorado workers have the opportunity to thrive and innovating new ways to support our employer community.

The rapid expansion and adoption of new technologies and service delivery is helping us create more human-centered design approaches to our systems, which will help us remain agile and responsive to the customers we serve.

In the 2024-2025 performance year, we continued our work toward modernizing our aging technology systems to support more agile, responsive services to our customers. Our Division of Employment and Training completed work on a new labor exchange – Connecting Colorado, the official online platform of Colorado’s public workforce system, designed to connect job seekers with career opportunities and support employers in finding skilled talent.

The new Connecting Colorado includes a number of powerful new features for jobseekers including career planning tools to track progress and set goals, a targeted resume builder to create tailored resumes and job matching functionality to discover opportunities aligned with their individual skills and experience. For employers, new features streamline the talent identification process, helping businesses reduce time-to-fill and keep operations moving efficiently.

In other divisions within the Department, work is currently underway to modernize several of our other external-facing systems including our Division of Workers’ Compensation claims system and our Division of Vocational Rehabilitation’s case management system. Like Connecting Colorado, these systems are leveraging more agile, human-centered design approaches to technology builds to help our teams manage programs more effectively and efficiently while providing a better user experience for customers.

In addition to how we are serving our customers through our system modernizations, in the 2024-2025 performance year we also expanded how we are serving our customers through new programs. The Colorado Disability

Opportunity Office (CDOO) and the Colorado Disability Funding Committee (CDFC) joined CDLE’s special offices portfolio in 2024. CDOO works directly with the Governor’s Office to advise on disability policy and strategy and to ensure cross-agency collaboration. By housing CDOO within CDLE, disability policy will be framed through an opportunity lens with the goal of helping those with disabilities get on a path to self-sufficiency, so more people with disabilities can prosper.

These are just a few examples of how we are responding to the needs of Colorado workers and businesses by committing to continuous improvement of our systems and processes. Within this 2025-2026 Performance Plan, you will find many examples of our accomplishments over the past year in better service to our customers, as we look ahead to strengthen and build upon this work through our Wildly Important Goals. Our agency continues to embrace opportunities to help build “a working economy that elevates all of Colorado,” and we look forward to the work ahead.

Joe Barela
Executive Director
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

CDLE MISSION, VISION, VALUES AND PRIORITIES

The work done at the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment is not just what is done, but how it gets done. Our department has a values-based culture that is rooted in its employees. The values of accountability, agility, collaboration and respect were created by our own employees to help guide decision making and cultivate our work identity and culture.

VALUES

Accountability

The personal choice to demonstrate ownership for achieving key results

Agility

The ability to renew, adapt, change quickly and succeed in a rapidly changing, ambiguous environment

Collaboration

The action of working together with someone to produce or create something, joint effort, working together

Respect

The intentional consideration of the feelings, wishes, rights or traditions of others

MISSION

Working together to promote a thriving employment environment with opportunity for every Coloradan to prosper.

VISION

A working economy that elevates all of Colorado.

PRIORITIES



Model Employer

Lead the state in becoming a model employer



Workers Prosper

Through meaningful employment, every Colorado worker prospers



Exceptional Services

Exceptional execution of core services



Future of Work

Ensure Colorado is prepared for the future of work

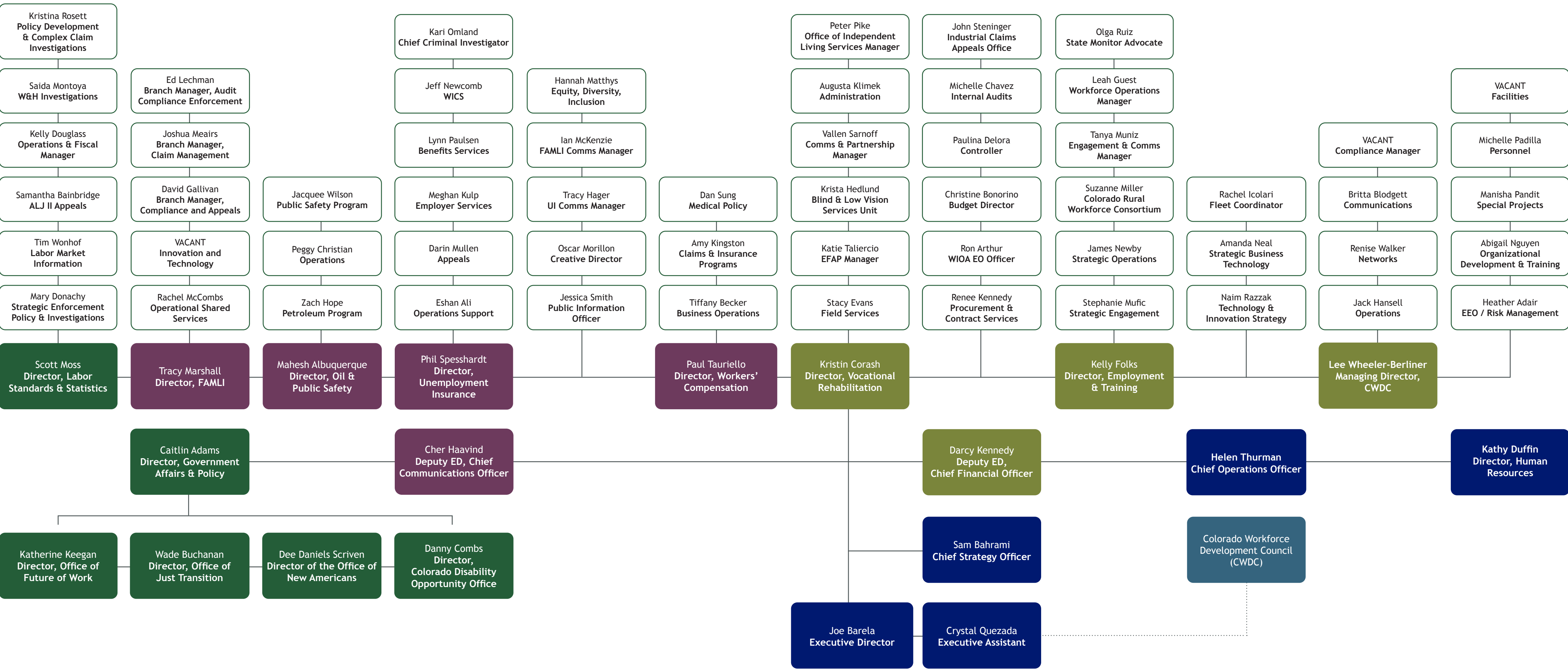


Employers Thrive

Cultivate processes and policies that help employers thrive



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



CDLE BUDGET BREAKDOWN FY26

TOTAL FTE

1745.2

TOTAL FUNDS

\$464,570,837

GENERAL FUNDS (GF)

\$34,543,480

CASH FUNDS (CF)

\$189,063,930

Reappropriated Funds (RF)

\$23,912,040

FEDERAL FUNDS (FF)

\$217,051,387



DIVISIONS

Unemployment Insurance.....	10
Employment and Training.....	12
Labor Standards and Statistics.....	14
Oil and Public Safety.....	16
Workers’ Compensation.....	17
Vocational Rehab.....	18
Colorado Workforce Development Council.....	19
Family and Medical Leave Insurance.....	20



DIVISION OF **UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

The UI Division consists of four primary branches

EMPLOYER SERVICES

- Determine employers' liability, assign premium rates and collect premiums.
- Conduct random and targeted audits of businesses to ensure proper classification of workers and premiums paid.

BENEFITS SERVICES

- Provide customer service to inform unemployment claimants of their responsibilities, and rights and answer claimants' questions about the UI process.
- Research, analyze and interpret the law to determine a claimants' eligibility and entitlement to receive benefits.
- Prevent, detect and recover overpaid benefits.

OPERATIONS SUPPORT

- Investigate and refer fraud cases for criminal prosecution.
- Conduct quality reviews of benefit-related and employer premium-related functions to ensure compliance with federal and state unemployment laws, policies and guidelines.
- Identify and address major root causes of improper payments
- Provide efficient maintenance and retention of records and access and storage of all UI correspondence, forms and reports.

APPEALS

- Provide a hearing venue at locations throughout the state for decisions issued by the Employer Services, Benefits Services, and Operations Support branches that are appealed by a claimant, employer or other interested party.





Overview

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) Division helps Coloradans who have lost their jobs by providing temporary wage replacement through UI benefits. The provision of UI benefits helps workers pay their bills and contributes to the state's economic stability. The UI Division strives to provide unemployment insurance benefits in a fair, timely, accurate and efficient manner to the citizens of Colorado. The provision of these benefits helps stabilize the workforce and minimize the impact of unemployment on Colorado's economy.



Highlighted Accomplishments Achieved in FY 2024-25

DURING THE LAST FISCAL YEAR, THE UI DIVISION HAS:

- Served roughly 145,586 new claimants.
- Paid more than \$842 million in partial wage replacement benefits.
- Issued the first payment to approved claimants within 25 days on average.
- Prevented \$32.79 million from going to fraudulent claims.
- Collected \$1.38 billion in premiums.



Funding

The UI Division's funding includes an estimated \$62,261,088 (63%) federal funds provided by the United States Department of Labor and \$36,404,109 (37%) by state cash funds (Unemployment Insurance Support fund, Revenue Fund and various other cash funds).



DIVISION OF EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

Overview

Dedicated to strengthening Colorado's regional economies, the Division of Employment and Training (E&T) collaborates with state and county-run local workforce areas to provide comprehensive services for businesses and job seekers statewide. E&T programs are funded by a combination of federal grants, state general funds, and cash funds. Additionally, E&T provides oversight to ten local workforce areas, including its own Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium (CRWC).

E&T is responsible for policy guidance, program oversight and administration of workforce programs in accordance with federal and state guidelines. The division administers several key programs, including Wagner Peyser Act, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Veterans Employment and Training Program, Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA), Trade Readjustment Allowance Program (TRA) and Displaced Homemaker Program. Additional programs for employers include the Work Opportunity Tax Credit program (WOTC), Federal Bonding and Foreign Labor Certification. Federal discretionary grants include: the Pathways Offender grant, the Employment Recovery Grant and the Disaster Recovery Grant. State-legislated programs include the Employment Support & Job Retention program, Work-Based Learning Incentive Program, Veterans' Service-to-Career program, the Teacher Externship program, Hospitality Education grant program and others.

The Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium (CRWC), one of ten federally designated local workforce areas in the state and a branch of E&T, provides in-person service delivery to job seekers and employers with 23 workforce center locations, while also delivering services at partner locations and virtually across 51 of Colorado's 64 counties.



Funding

The E&T Division's funding consists of 75% federal funds (Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act and other grants from the U.S. Department of Labor), and 25% state funds (Employment Support Fund [cash], Workforce Enterprise Fund [cash], and state general fund appropriations).

THE FY26 FUNDING WILL CONSIST OF THE FOLLOWING:

WIOA: \$33,868,700
Wagner-Peyser: \$12,129,654
ESF (DPN): \$504,273
Workforce Enterprise Fund: \$14,321,619
Employment Support and Job Retention (ESJR): \$250,000
Hospitality: \$424,037

The FY26 budget will total \$61,498,283 of new state + federal funding, with an estimated carry-forward of \$25 million of existing federal funding, which is multi-year funding.

Total State Appropriations: \$15,499,926



Highlighted Accomplishments Achieved in FY 2024-25

- **CONNECTING COLORADO MODERNIZATION:**

The Division modernized the state's legacy labor exchange in June 2025. The new Connecting Colorado has a bold new design and is powered by advanced technology to more effectively match Colorado's talent with hiring employers. Not only does the modernized career platform support job seekers and employers, state and local leaders have access to real-time workforce data and are now empowered to make smarter decisions that address local needs and shape long-term success.

- **QUALITY JOBS, EQUITY, STRATEGY AND TRAINING (QUEST) 1**

The QUEST program had a goal to serve 575 participants this fiscal year and has already exceeded that target by serving 1,447.

- **THE GOVERNORS SUMMER JOB HUNT (GSJH):**

The GSJH has surpassed its goal of supporting 40 youth-focused career events across the state. As of May 2025, the team had supported 88 youth events, significantly increasing awareness among youth ages 16 - 24 about the career development services available to them through the Colorado public workforce system.

- **TEACHER EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

Driven by Colorado House Bill 23-1198, the K-12 Teacher Externship Program provides STEM teachers with immersive, work-based learning opportunities through partnerships with industry employers. Founded on principles of innovation and collaboration, this program equips educators with current industry knowledge to better prepare students for future careers. What began with 39 teacher placements and 14 business hosts, has since tripled in teacher participation. This summer, 144 applicants are engaging with 23 confirmed businesses, showcasing the program's remarkable expansion and success.

- **PAVING ACCESS TO CAREERS AND EMPLOYMENT (PACE)**

The Paving Access to Careers and Employment (PACE) program supports Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants at local Workforce Centers. Through a collaboration between the Colorado Department of Human Services, Employment & Training (E&T), and ten local workforce areas, PACE provides work-related education and training to help SNAP recipients achieve long-term, self-sufficiency and meaningful employment. Since its inception, PACE has assisted over 630 individuals.





DIVISION OF **LABOR STANDARDS & STATISTICS**

Overview

The Division of Labor Standards and Statistics (DLSS) is comprised of two units: Labor Standards (LS) and Labor Market Information (LMI).

LABOR STANDARDS ENFORCES AND FACILITATES COMPLIANCE WITH COLORADO LABOR LAWS THROUGH;

- Receiving thousands of wage and other labor law claims annually, then investigating and issuing individualized written determinations
- Issuing and regularly updating binding regulations that implement, interpret and clarify Colorado labor law statutes
- Facilitating labor law compliance with publications, outreach events and a call center that fields thousands of inquiries annually
- Administering union elections and, where appropriate, intervening to help resolve labor-management disputes

LMI PRODUCES SEVERAL KEY DATA SETS ON COLORADO'S LABOR FORCE INCLUDING:

- Current Employment Statistics - monthly employment levels and wages, statewide and by locality and industry
- Local Area Unemployment Statistics - monthly unemployment rates, statewide and by locality
- Occupational Employment Statistics - compensation and employment levels by occupation, from surveys of data from employers statewide
- Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages - wage data and employment levels by industry, from large-scale censuses of employers statewide and a range of projections of job growth by occupation and industry





Highlighted Accomplishments Achieved in FY 2024-25

- In 2024, even with wage claim filings up 80% from five years ago, the Wage & Hour investigations team closed 3,659 wage claims, with violations found in 947 cases, resulting in over \$2.2 million in wages ordered and over \$1.9 million in wages paid.
- Of the 342 Equal Pay Transparency claims received in 2024:
 - Employers were deemed compliant before any Division involvement in 52 claims.
 - Employers became compliant before a formal investigation by engaging in voluntary compliance assistance in 98 claims.
 - Employers worked with the Division to reach a settlement in 21 claims.
 - In the remaining 171 claims, the Division declined to pursue the investigation or the filer withdrew their complaint.
- In 2024, the Division published over 40 updates to its public guidance on its [Labor Law Guidance & Education webpage](#), including updates to Interpretive Notices and Formal Opinions (INFOs), the Division's officially approved notices, opinions, and explanations on various labor law topics; and KNOWLEDGE Sheets, one-page summaries for employees on their labor rights (Knowledge for Workers on Labor Law is Empowering & Drives Good Employment).
- New in 2025, the Division initiated its inaugural payments for the Wage Theft Enforcement Fund, known as the "WHOLE Fund". Under this discretionary payment authority, the Division identified 112 workers whose employers had failed to pay them their earned wages and statutory penalties - totalling \$756,249.93. As of June 2025, the Division collaborated closely with CDLE's Finance and Accounts Payable teams and the Controller's Office to issue payments for 25 workers in the total amount of \$130,099.01. The processing is underway for the second batch, which includes payments for 33 workers in the total amount of \$182,642.48.



Funding

DLSS IS FUNDED THROUGH:

- \$3.8M from the Employment Support Fund (ESF), \$5.8M from the General Fund, and \$0.6M generated by the work of Labor Standards fund the Labor Standards Unit.
- \$3.6M of federal funds and other funds provided by agencies for which LMI provides services fund LMI.



DIVISION OF **OIL & PUBLIC SAFETY**

Overview

The Division of Oil & Public Safety (OPS) is responsible for a variety of regulatory functions related to environmental and consumer protection and public safety. Program oversight includes: amusement rides and devices, explosives use and storage, boilers, conveyances, fuel products, underground and aboveground petroleum storage tanks, cleanup of petroleum spills and reimbursement of cleanup costs to qualifying storage tank owners/operators. The Division's oversight also includes the Underground Damage Prevention Safety Commission and Fund, which includes enforcement oversight for Colorado 811.



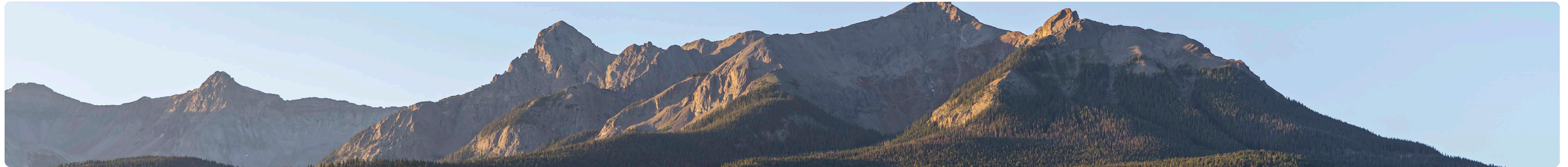
Highlighted Accomplishments Achieved in FY 2024-25

- The Boiler Inspection Section inspected 22,705 boilers and pressure vessel systems.
- The Conveyance Program issued 4,969 Certificates of Operations.
- The Explosives Program issued 648 permits.
- The Amusement Rides and Devices Program conducted 86 total field visits, which included 52 audits, to ensure safety for riders of the devices.



Funding

The Division is primarily funded by \$6.4M in cash funds, along with \$0.7M of federal funding and \$0.3M of state general funds.



DIVISION OF **WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

Overview

The Division of Workers' Compensation (DOWC) administers and enforces the Workers' Compensation Act. The Division assures the quick and efficient delivery of disability and medical benefits to injured workers at a reasonable cost to employers, with minimum litigation.

The operations of the DOWC generally fall into the categories of claims, insurance or medical care, along with mediating disputes related to these items. With some exceptions, the DOWC's role is primarily one of oversight, and it does not pay wage replacement benefits like the Divisions of Unemployment Insurance and Family and Medical Leave Insurance. An exception is the Special Funds Unit, which operates like an insurance company and pays benefits to injured workers. New injury claims are not accepted by the Special Funds Unit, but benefits continue to be paid to individuals who met the statutory criteria when their claims were opened in the early 1990s. Recent legislation has also created the Colorado Uninsured Employer Fund, which provides financial relief to workers who were injured while working for employers who failed to carry workers' compensation insurance.

Additionally, the Premium Cost Containment Program offers qualifying employers a discount on premiums for demonstrating workplace safety above and beyond the stated requirements. The Self-Insured Program assists qualifying employers, meeting strict financial and loss control standards, to self-insure their workers' compensation liabilities.



Highlighted Accomplishments Achieved in FY 2024-25

- As of May 31, 2025, data from the National Council on Compensation Insurance (NCCI) shows 160,783 active policies in Colorado, exceeding the DOWC's three-year target of 160,138 by 645 employers.
- The DOWC Customer Service team was invited to join the Call Center Community of Practice, part of the Governor's 2025 operational agenda, to solidify the team's operational legacy and make lasting improvements across five key pillars. The Customer Service Unit's goal is to transform the customer experience to meet Coloradans' needs by sharing best practices across various agency call centers across the state. As of May 2025, 91% of calls coming into the DOWC contact center are answered within 20 seconds



Funding

The Division of Workers' Compensation is funded by cash funds that receive their primary revenue as a surcharge on workers' compensation insurance premiums paid by commercial insurance companies and self-insured employers. The approximate revenue for FY25 is \$23M.



DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Overview

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provides a range of individualized vocational rehabilitation services. These services help eligible individuals with disabilities prepare for, obtain, maintain, regain or advance in competitive integrated employment. Employment is consistent with individuals' strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice. Services include education, vocational training, physical or mental restoration, rehabilitation technology, job placement and on-the-job support. DVR also provides pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities in order to prepare them to enter the world of work as they begin their transition from secondary education. The services DVR provides directly to Coloradans with disabilities are supplemented by a statewide employer outreach program focused on developing relationships with businesses to increase employment opportunities for the people DVR serves.

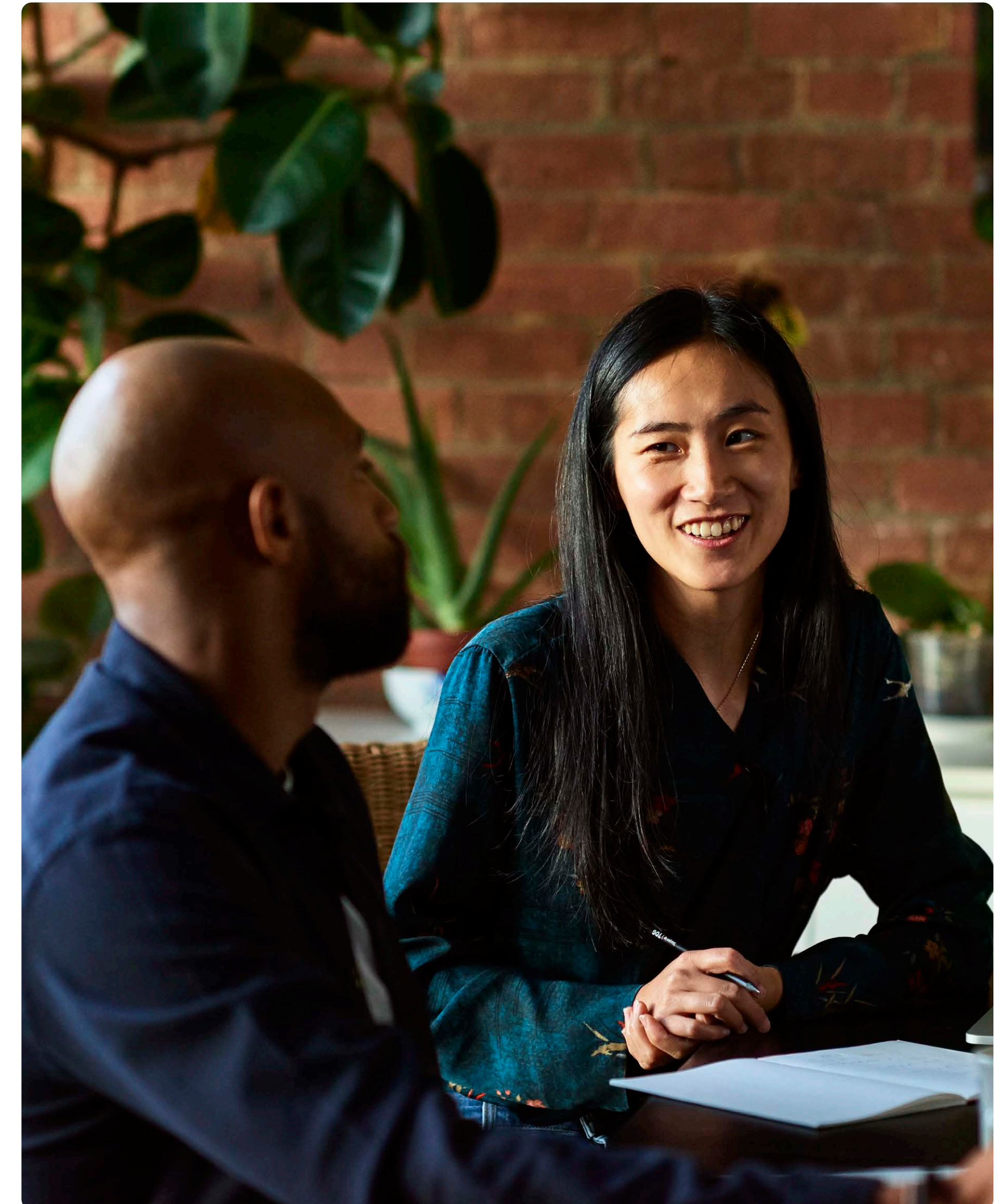
The U.S. Department of Education, through a grant administered by the Rehabilitation Services Administration, provides reimbursement for 78.7% of eligible rehabilitation expenditures up to the total annual federal grant. The matching funds for federal dollars are either General Fund dollars or local government funds, primarily from school districts in the School to Work Alliance Program.

DVR also administers state and federal grants for the Centers for Independent Living (CIL), the Business Enterprise Program, and Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB). The Division participated in two fully federally funded research projects, including SEEKS (Securing Employment and Economic Keys to Stability), a five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Community Living that will end in September 2025. DVR was also awarded technical assistance from the National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network for benefits counseling and developing a statewide strategic plan.

The Youth Services and Transition team was recently awarded a \$14 million Disability Innovation Fund - Pathways to Partnership grant to broaden access to transition services for youth with disabilities and to strengthen collaborations between vocational rehabilitation, CIL, state and local education agencies, and local community rehabilitation partners over the next five years. The grant will include a partnership with Utah State University researchers, to develop an interactive website called "Map My Path" for parents and youth with disabilities.

DVR's Disability Employment Manager submitted \$1 million in grant proposals and secured \$100,000 for the development of a virtual connection center for easier access to available resources and data storytelling through the State Internet Portal Authority (SIPA.) Work has begun on the development of the connection center.

There were many collaborative projects launched during this performance year. Notably, DVR's Business Relations Unit was asked to partner in a Disability Innovation Fund (DIF) grant application by the National Disability Institute and the state of Maine to improve Vocational Rehabilitation Self-Employment programs, with a focus on supported self-employment (for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities) and youth entrepreneurship.





Highlighted Accomplishments Achieved in FY 2024-25

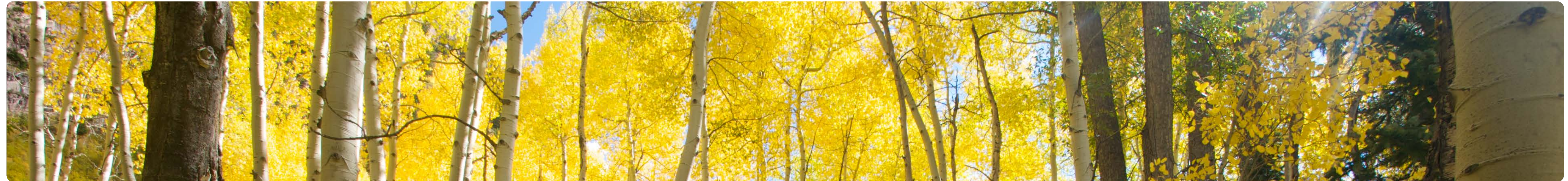
- Colorado DVR stepped up to take the lead on bidding for multi-state, multi-billion dollar military contracts to preserve Blind Operators' rights under the Randolph-Sheppard Act across the United States.
- All DVR Counselors are trained on how Registered Apprenticeships (RAPs) work and can support the participation of the people with disabilities they serve in RAPs.
- Colorado DVR was featured in the April edition of Amazon's Community Connect Newsletter, sharing information about the recruitment and retention support DVR has provided them. The newsletter is distributed to all Amazon's staff, suppliers, and partners across Amazon's entire network.
- DVR led the creation of a national Community of Practice for State as a Model Employer (SAME) professionals.
- Awarded a NEON grant for technical assistance including focus areas of benefits planning, customized employment, State as a Model Employer, gathering and reporting data for Employment for All Partnership.
- National Disability Institute (NDI) Included Colorado in its DIF grant proposal for self-employment of people with disabilities and was awarded.
- With the help of our partners, DVR passed HB25-1018 reducing barriers to VR services.
- Implemented a formal virtual ticketing system for BEP work order requests improving processes and supports for BEP Operators.



Funding

DVR is primarily funded with federal grant dollars. Each grant program has its own funding requirements. DVR's largest grant is the Vocational Rehabilitation Services grant. This grant has a 21.3% non-federal match requirement; about 35% of the non-federal match comes from the state General Fund. In FFY25, DVR was awarded \$56.2M in federal VR grant funds and \$300k in Supported Employment grant funds. The Independent Living Services for Older Individuals with Blindness (OIB) grant provided DVR with \$483,331, which is passed on to subgrantees. DVR was awarded the Part B Independent Living Services grant in the amount of \$348,060 in FFY2025. A portion of this grant along with \$6.7M state General Fund supports certified non-profit Centers for Independent Living.

Total FY25/26 funding for DVR is \$82.98M, \$12.4M in general funds, \$0.88M in cash funds, \$22.4M in re-appropriated funds and an estimate of \$47.3M in federal funds.



COLORADO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Overview

The Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) is a Governor-appointed, public-private partnership with the purpose to advise, oversee, and integrate the work of the Colorado talent development network. The CWDC Office is the work unit that supports the Council. The Council and the CWDC Office provide recommendations to the Governor on issues related to talent development. The CWDC facilitates collaboration among state agencies and partners to ensure effective and efficient leveraging of resources and reduction of redundancies, including managing the support needed to ensure the success of this collaboration of partners and agencies.

The CWDC's vision is that every Colorado employer has access to a skilled workforce and every Coloradan has the opportunity for meaningful employment, resulting in individual and statewide economic prosperity. The CWDC's mission is to enhance and sustain a skills-based talent development network that meets the needs of employers, workers, job seekers and learners for today and tomorrow. The CWDC's values are equity, agility and integration.

The CWDC Office provides strategic, administrative, technical and logistical support to the Council, its steering committees and task groups; the Governor's Business Experiential Learning Commission; and other oversight boards responsible for integration of talent development efforts in meeting the needs of the current and future worker and economy.



Highlighted Accomplishments Achieved in FY 2024-25

- Reached more than 15,000 individuals served by stimulus programs, exceeding the target by more than 100%. The Reskilling, Upskilling, Nextskilling (RUN) program participants saw an average wage growth of \$2,540 for the quarter after program exit, or a 26% increase across major demographics. Workforce Innovation program participants saw average wages increase by \$1,371 for the quarter after program exit, or a 36-percent increase across major demographics.
- Led the collaboration among state agencies to research, publish and launch the [2024 Talent Pipeline Report](#).
- CWDC and partners are piloting a demonstration to test the use and application of Learning and Employment Records (LERs). The current demonstration is aimed at leveraging skills-first practices and LERS to address talent shortages in healthcare with the goal of using applicable learnings to refine approaches to addressing shortages in other in-demand industries in the state. Learnings from employers have resulted in the report [Exploring Primary Source Verification Experiences with Colorado Hospital and Healthcare Employers](#), which explores how the solutions can tackle critical issues that hinder our ability to fill critical healthcare positions in the state. The LER solution being developed also serves as a digital skills portfolio allowing learners and workers to aggregate the skills, credentials and experiences they've acquired from a variety of settings. The ability to share those credentials from a digital wallet, increased the skills visibility and portability of learners and workers as the state seeks to create more fluid opportunities for working and learning through apprenticeships and work-based learning.



Funding

The Council is allocated \$633,124 in reappropriated funds through the FY26 Long Bill that comes from WIOA through the Colorado Departments of: Labor and Employment, Human Services, Education, Local Affairs, and the Colorado Community College System. State legislation authorized \$980,949 in general funds to execute specific talent development initiatives that promote seamless career development from the K-12 system through adulthood. Private grants are also utilized that were received in prior fiscal years to pursue innovative initiatives that increase access to quality jobs.





DIVISION OF **FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE INSURANCE**

Overview

The Division of Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) was established through a vote of the people in Proposition 118 on the 2020 ballot, and mandates that all employers in the state offer paid Family and Medical Leave, with the exception of local governments who may opt out of the program. Private employers are required to engage with the FAMLI Division either by fully participating in the program or by applying for private plan approval to ensure their employees have access to the same or greater benefits as the FAMLI program.

FAMLI covers most workers, including self-employed individuals and independent contractors, and ensures Colorado workers have access to paid leave during certain life events like caring for a new child during the first year after the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of that child; caring for one's own serious health condition or a family member with a serious health condition; making arrangements for a family member's military deployment; and addressing the immediate safety needs and impact of domestic violence. Starting in January 2026, additional leave will be available to parents with a newborn in the intensive care unit.

FAMLI provides 12-16 weeks of leave benefits with up to 90% wage replacement on a sliding scale based on wages and relative to the State's average weekly wage. The Division began collecting premiums in January of 2023 and began paying benefits in January 2024.



Funding

The Division is 100% cash funded as an enterprise by employer and employee premiums, with \$2,433,205,193.45 collected by 5/31/25. Employers and their employees are both responsible for funding the FAMLI program. The premiums are set to 0.9% of the employee's wage, with 0.45% paid by the employer and 0.45% paid by the employee. Beginning in 2026, premiums will be set to .88% of wages (.44% paid by both employees and employers). Wage reporting and premium obligations began in January 2023.



Highlighted Accomplishments Achieved in FY 2024-25

**AFTER ONLY 18 MONTHS OF OPERATION, AND AS OF
MAY 31, 2025, THE FAMLI DIVISION:**

- Processed over 210,000 claims.
- Paid \$1,003,502,346 to 175,283 Colorado workers across the state.
- Answered its customer service line in an average of 38 seconds, and over 80% of all calls within 5 minutes.
- Received a customer call center satisfaction rating of 4 out of every 5 users.
- Ensured nearly all claimants (98%) received their benefit payment within ten days.
- Saw 96% of all claimants submit their application online.
- Reached a variety of income brackets, including low-wage earners (\$906 was the average weekly payment to claimants).
- Received [2025 Government Changemaker Award by Code for America](#), the nation's leading civic technology nonprofit.





SPECIAL INITIATIVES

Office of Just Transition.....	25
Office of the Future of Work.....	27
Office of New Americans.....	29
Colorado Disability Opportunity Office.....	31



OFFICE OF JUST TRANSITION

Overview

The Office of Just Transition (OJT) develops, coordinates and manages programs to assist workers facing the loss of their jobs and communities facing economic disruption resulting from Colorado's transition away from coal as a fuel for generating electricity and the subsequent closure of power plants, coal mines and related businesses. OJT accomplishes its tasks primarily by working directly with local communities and individual workers to support community and worker-driven transition strategies, and by coordinating and collaborating with other state agencies responsible for economic and community development, workforce training and development, and related programs.

The Office of Just Transition manages several programs designed to support coal transition communities and workers. The Transition Worker program has been underway for over a year with Transition Navigators building relationships with and assisting workers and their families with planning and resource connections for their transition to new jobs, sometimes in entirely new industries. The Community Assistance Grant program, in conjunction with the Office of Economic Development and International Trade, has awarded \$11.3 million of the \$15.8 million available in grants to coal communities to assist with economic development and diversification. The Office expanded its grant-writing program to all coal transition communities, provided funding for attorneys so communities can independently intervene in proceedings at the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC), and continued piloting a business retention and expansion program. OJT will continue to regularly publish news briefs and pursue policy objectives through the PUC, the state legislature and Congress.



Highlighted Accomplishments Achieved in FY 2024-25

- Community Assistance Grant Program: OJT distributed \$7.9 million in community grants funding allocated to the Yampa Valley for business park infrastructure, business retention and expansion, river infrastructure for tourism, capacity building, medical tourism, engineering and design studies for economic development projects and others.
- Grant Writer Program: OJT provides a grant writer to coal transition communities to assist with writing federal, state and philanthropic grants. In 22 months of the program, 11 grants of the 14 written were funded, providing transition communities with \$8.7 million. Communities from the West End of Montrose County, the western part of Gunnison County and Brush in Morgan County have participated in the program.
- Worker Program: Transition Navigators are developing relationships with workers and assisting them in developing their transition plans and connecting them to resources.
- Public Utilities Commission (PUC) Intervention: OJT funded an attorney for Moffat County and the City of Craig to intervene in the Tri-State G&T 2023 Electric Resource Plan (ERP) at the PUC. Their attorneys negotiated a roughly \$73 million community assistance settlement with Tri-State. OJT also funded an attorney for Routt County and the Town of Hayden to intervene in the current Public Service Company Electric Resource Plan at the PUC.



Funding

For FY25-26, OJT has \$432,635 in general funds for office operations and \$15,000,000 in cash funds for the provision of assistance to coal communities and coal industry and supply chain workers transitioning away from coal based economies. Some of the cash funds are already encumbered by coal transition communities and the rest is earmarked for communities and worker programs.





OFFICE OF THE FUTURE OF WORK

Overview

The Office of the Future of Work (OFW) was established in September 2019 through an Executive Order from Governor Polis and codified in March 2023. The OFW was created to raise awareness about the future of work, and to identify policy and program solutions that ensure Coloradans are future-ready. To achieve this purpose, the OFW:

- Conducts new research to understand future of work trends and their impact
- Shares best practices, research and data to inform new work and legislation
- Leads key initiatives on behalf of the state

THE OFW ALSO LEADS TWO MAJOR STATEWIDE INITIATIVES:



Apprenticeship Colorado

[Apprenticeship Colorado](#) is the State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) in the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment that has the responsibility for:

- Registering and overseeing apprenticeship programs
- Providing technical assistance to current and prospective sponsors
- Aligning the registered apprenticeship system with Colorado's workforce, education and economic development priorities
- Other duties as assigned in statute



Digital Access and Empowerment Initiative

The OFW leads the [Digital Access and Empowerment Initiative](#), which includes the creation of the state's Digital Access Plan per the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. OFW is evaluating and exploring creative ways to implement the plan given recent changes to federal funding.



Highlighted Accomplishments Achieved in FY 2024-25

- Apprenticeship Colorado awarded \$1.59 million to organizations to support the expansion of apprenticeships.
- Apprenticeship Colorado registered 101 apprenticeships in FY24 and has already met this year's goal of adding 100 more in FY25.
- The OFW successfully launched and completed the first statewide Digital Navigator Pilot Program, with over 10,000 appointments and 75 sites providing free digital navigation services to Coloradans.



Funding

The OFW has approximately \$23.4 million funding from federal grants (69%), philanthropic grants (<1%) and the general or cash funds (31%).





OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS

Overview

The Office of New Americans (ONA) works to support the successful integration and inclusion of immigrants and refugees in Colorado. Created in 2021 by HB 21-1150, ONA advances programs and policies that foster belonging, opportunity and economic mobility.

ONA IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON THE FOLLOWING INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS:

ONA is currently working on the following initiatives and programs:

Language Access

Leading and promoting equitable language access to state agency services through the statewide Interim Language Access Working Group.

Immigration Legal Defense Fund (ILDF)

Helps immigrants navigate legal proceedings in order to promote family unity, protect civil liberties and ensure due process.

Welcoming, Reception and Integration (WRI) Grant Program

Through a third party administrator, funding community-based organizations that prioritize direct support to newly arrived immigrants.

Benefits Recovery Fund (BRF)

Through a third party administrator, offers emergency assistance to individuals who lose their jobs through no fault of their own and are otherwise ineligible for unemployment insurance due to their immigration status.

Colorado Refugee Services Program (CRSP) programs

Coordinating refugee resettlement and integration services statewide, including employment, case management, youth services and community engagement.



Highlighted Accomplishments Achieved in FY 2024-25

- Successfully integrated CRSP into ONA.
- Released Colorado's first statewide language access report in partnership with the Migration Policy Institute.
- Expanded Colorado's network of Department of Justice (DOJ)-accredited immigration representatives through technical assistance and training support.
- Secured and leveraged funding to expand capacity among immigrant-serving community partners.
- Launched the Colorado Future for All Fund to strengthen the long-term infrastructure for immigrant inclusion.
- Partnered with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) in launching the International Medical Graduates (IMG) program placing 75% of its first clinical readiness cohort into residency programs in Colorado and supporting over 30 IMGs in pursuing the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) certification.



Funding

The Office of New Americans is funded through various sources, including a General Fund (GF) allocation of \$365,100. Those sources include:

- Immigration Legal Defense Fund - \$350,000 (GF)
- WRI - one-time allocation of \$2.5M (GF)
- BRF - Colorado employer support surcharge; SFY25 - estimated \$6.5M in expenditures. Legislative cap of \$30M
- CRSP - strictly limited to serve eligible populations as defined by the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement. In the previous FFY - \$44M (FF) to serve ~14,000 individuals (of the more than 600,000 New American Coloradans). Due to extensive federal policy shifts, arrivals and funding are expected to be significantly reduced in the coming FFYs.





COLORADO DISABILITY OPPORTUNITY OFFICE

Overview

In summer 2024, HB24-1360 created the Colorado Disability Opportunity Office (CDOO) and housed within it the Colorado Disability Funding Committee (CDFC), funding both from the Disability Support Fund (DSF). CDOO is housed in the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment and is unique in that it works directly with the Governor's Office to advise on disability policy and strategy and to ensure cross-agency collaboration. By housing the CDOO within CDLE, disability policy will be framed through an opportunity lens with the goal of helping people with disabilities to prosper.

The CDFC consists of thirteen members appointed by the governor. CDFC's mission is to maximize support for new and innovative programs benefiting Colorado's disability community by raising and distributing funds through grants as authorized by the Laura Hershey Disability Support Act. At least seven members of the committee must be either a person with a disability, a care giver of a person with a disability, or a person who lives in a household with a person with a disability and is meaningfully involved in the care of a person with a disability.

CDOO is also responsible for ensuring that the State is meeting its responsibilities under HB25-1017, known as "the Olmstead bill." The bill brings the protections announced in the 1999 U.S. Supreme Court case of *Olmstead v. L.C.* into state law by making sure that people with disabilities have the choices and resources to live in their communities rather than being forced unnecessarily into institutions.



Highlighted Accomplishments Achieved in FY 2024-25

In the eight months since CDOO has been staffed, CDOO and the CDFC have successfully completed multiple grant rounds:

- In 2024, \$924,717 in grant funds were awarded to 16 recipients.
- In 2025, that number increased to \$4 million in grant funds being awarded (or are in the process of being awarded) to 57 recipients through two grant rounds.



Funding

CDOO is cash-funded through the sale of historic license plate backgrounds, expired vanity plates auctions and a 50% share of fees paid for disability parking violations.

From the DSF cash fund, CDOO has appropriated \$5.6 million for grants, \$658,410 for Olmstead, and ~\$150,000 for disabled parking enforcement.





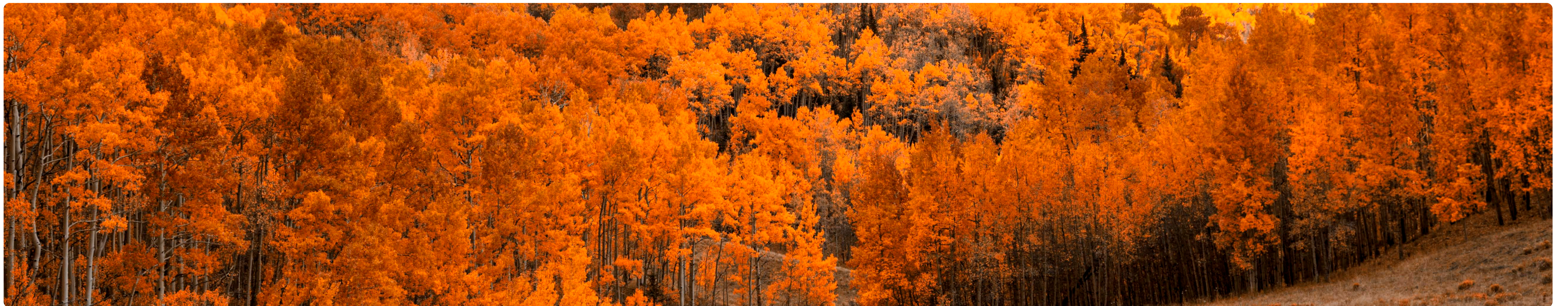
WILDLY IMPORTANT GOALS

2024/2025 Performance Plan Evaluation.....	34
Wildly Important Goals (WIGS) for FY 2025-26.....	40



Priorities, Goals, Strategies, and Metrics

2024/25 PERFORMANCE PLAN EVALUATION



DEPARTMENT WIG

Timely & Accurate Benefit Payments: UI

WIG	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET	3 YEAR TARGET	2024-2025 ACTUAL
Increase the percent of Colorado claimants who receive their first UI benefit payment within three weeks (after the first compensable week) to 87% by June 30, 2025.	40%	87%	89%	64.06%
LEAD MEASURES	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET	2024-2025 ACTUAL	
Increase the percent of Colorado claimants who receive their first UI benefit payment within three weeks (after the first compensable week) to 87% by June 30, 2025.	0	8	11	
Implement 6 process improvements based on workflow analysis by June 30, 2025.	0	6	10	
Conduct intake workflow analysis to identify process improvements within the UI system by October 31, 2024.	0	Milestone Project Completed	Milestone Project Completed	
Create baseline skills and knowledge assessment for front line staff to determine retraining needs, develop training curriculum, assess proficiency by June 30, 2025.	0	Milestone Project Completed	Milestone Project Completed	

Results Summary

The UI Division exceeded performance on all of our lead measures and made significant progress toward our WIG for this year. During performance year FY 23/24, our average time to payment was 45 days; in FY 24/25 the Division reduced it to 25 days. While we missed our timeliness target for the year, more claimants are getting paid more quickly thanks to the improvements in staff productivity and system functionality.

The Division exceeded its target for implemented process improvements this year, and that work is ongoing and will continue into next year’s UI WIG.

DEPARTMENT WIG

Timely & Accurate Benefit Payments: FAMLI

WIG	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET	2024-2025 ACTUAL
Increase the percent of eligible Colorado claimants who receive their FAMLI benefit payment within ten days to 90% by June 30, 2025.	85%	90%	97.60%
LEAD MEASURES	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET	2024- 2025 ACTUAL
Increase in-person support for FAMLI applicants by cross training at least five staff members as on-site navigators by June 30, 2025.	0	5	10
Maintain or exceed 97% of claims that are successfully submitted via self-service by June 30, 2025.	95.6%	97%	96.20%

Results Summary

The FAMLI Division has successfully achieved this WIG and significantly surpassed its target. The Division has received more than 265,000 applications and distributed more than a billion dollars in benefit payments since the program launched in January of 2024 all while surpassing a 90% rate for payment timeliness.

This achievement is a reflection of the Division’s dedication to exceptional customer service as indicated by the FAMLI Contact Center’s 4-point customer satisfaction rating.

While the target to exceed 97% of claims being successfully submitted via self-service was narrowly missed by tenths of a percentage, the Division’s high performance in customer service and success in adding more on-site support proved fruitful in achieving the overall WIG.

DEPARTMENT WIG

Workers’ Compensation Compliance

WIG	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET	3 YEAR TARGET	2024-2025 ACTUAL
Increase the number of Colorado employers with mandatory workers’ compensation insurance by 500 employers by June 30, 2025, and by 1500 employers by June 30, 2027.	158,638	159,138 (+500)	160,138 (+1500)	160,783
LEAD MEASURES	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET	2024- 2025 ACTUAL	
Coverage Enforcement unit staff will review workplace injury data to identify the top five target industries and seek staff input on industry compliance trends recognized during investigations by August 31, 2024.	0	Milestone Project Completed	Milestone Project Completed	
Complete twelve monthly meetings to update each other on progress, to enhance existing strategies and outreach opportunities and develop new ones by June 30, 2025.	0	12	13	
Launch 12 social media campaigns in both English and Spanish on the importance of workers’ compensation coverage by June 30, 2025.	0	12	12	

Results Summary

The Division of Workers’ Compensation achieved all of its lead measures and surpassed its three-year target for this WIG, significantly increasing the number of employers with mandatory workers’ compensation insurance in just one fiscal year. Due to our success, we will discontinue our reporting on this Wildly Important Goal and associated strategies.

The Division identified the following industries based on industry compliance trends in order to target their outreach efforts, ultimately resulting in their success:

- Construction
 - Transportation (specifically courier and express delivery services)
 - Skilled nursing / Assisted living facilities
 - Restaurant
 - Veterinary
- Across the 12 social media campaigns executed throughout the year, the Division achieved the following results:
- Reached **more than 816,00 accounts** and secured **more than 1.657 million** impressions on Meta platforms (Facebook and Instagram)
 - Secured **more than 1.39 million impressions** on LinkedIn

DEPARTMENT WIG

Youth Labor Force Participation

WIG	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET	2024-2025 ACTUAL
Elevate Colorado’s Lead in Youth Workforce Engagement by maintaining a lead of 7% above the National Average of Youth Labor Force Participation Rate by June 30, 2025.	61.2%	63% <i>7% above national average</i>	60.4% <i>4.4% above national average</i>

Results Summary

Currently the United States is projecting a continued downward trend in youth employment and participation in the workforce. Despite Colorado’s robust economy and opportunities for youth employment, [Colorado is not immune to the current trend](#). The main reason for youth not participating in the labor force [remains to be education attainment](#).

As such, we narrowly missed our target of keeping a 7% gain on the national average of Youth Labor Force Participation Rate despite exceeding all lead measures to help support this WIG. The most current available data has Colorado with 4.6 percentage points above the national average.

The Department far exceeded its targets for increasing the number of youth registered in youth employment services, the number of youth-focused career events it supported, the percentage of youth placed in jobs after receiving youth employment services and the number of teachers enrolled in STEM externships.

Apprenticeship Colorado also exceeded its targets—adding more than 100 new or expanded registered apprenticeship programs and increasing the percentage of youth enrolled in an apprenticeship by 25% from 1,413 to 1,942.

While these successes may not have widened Colorado’s gap above the national average of Youth Labor Force Participation Rate, the Department’s critical work provided youth with valuable opportunities that will ultimately support the prosperity of the state’s future workforce.

LEAD MEASURES	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET	2024-2025 ACTUAL
Increase the percentage of youth 24 and under enrolling in a registered apprenticeship program by 25% from 1,413 in FY 24 to 1,766 by June 30, 2025.	1,413	1,766	1,943
Increase the number of registrations for youth employment services from 12,673 to 15,207 by June 30, 2025.	12,673	15,207	21,632
Enroll 45 teachers in STEM externships by December 31, 2025 to learn about real skills needed in current high-demand jobs in order to impact future curriculum in the classroom.	0	45	111
Support 40 youth-focused career events across the state to increase awareness of career opportunities for Coloradans age 16-24 by June 30, 2025.	0	40	88
Add or expand 100 registered apprenticeship programs in Colorado by June 30, 2025.	101	100	109
Increase the percentage of youth who are placed in jobs after receiving youth employment services from 24.7% to 27.4% by June 30, 25.	24.7%	24.7%	34.86%

DEPARTMENT WIG

Ensuring Colorado’s Workforce System Works for New Americans

WIG	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET	2024-2025 ACTUAL
Increase the number of New Americans served statewide by Colorado’s Workforce System from 2,500 to 3,200 by June 30, 2025.	2,500	3,200	3,000
LEAD MEASURES	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET	2024- 2025 ACTUAL
ONA will provide 20 training and technical assistance sessions to workforce centers statewide to increase their ability to serve New Americans by June 30, 2025.	0	20	33
In collaboration with ONA, CDLE Workforce Programs and local workforce centers meet with and provide 10 presentations to Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in the ONA network on workforce programs available to New Americans and where to find them by June 30, 2025.	0	10	38
Increase in-person support for FAMILI applicants by cross training at least five staff members as on-site navigators by June 30, 2025.	0	Milestone Project Completed	Milestone Project Completed

Results Summary

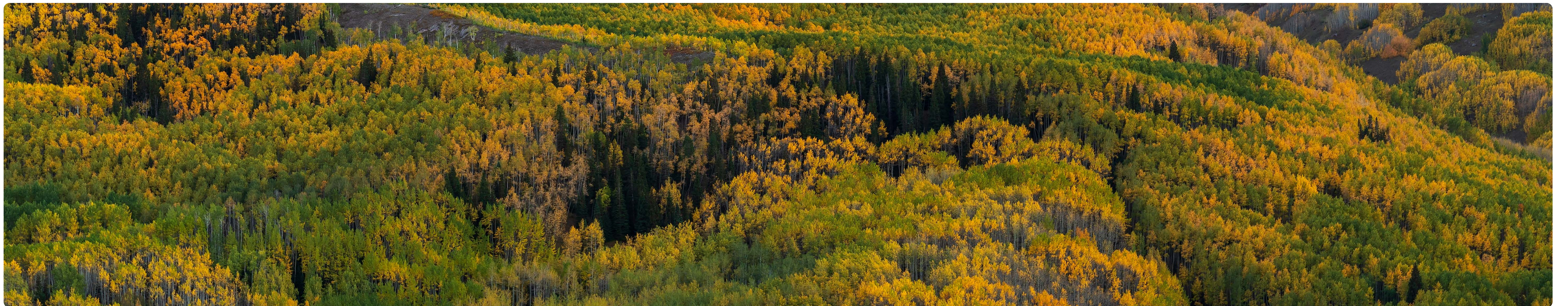
Together with the statewide public workforce system, CDLE’s Office of New Americans far exceeded each lead measure and anticipates meeting the target for this WIG once final data becomes available.

These efforts mean that 3,000 new Americans who want to call Colorado home got the support they needed to fully integrate into our state’s civic culture on their path to self-sufficiency.



Governor's Dashboard

CDLE WILDLY IMPORTANT GOALS (WIGS) FOR FY 2025-2026



DEPARTMENT WIG

Timely & Accurate Benefit Payments: UI

WIG	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET	2024-2025 ACTUAL
Increase the percent of Colorado claimants who receive their first UI benefit payment within three weeks (after the first compensable week) to 87% by June 30, 2026.	64.06%	87%	89%

Background

Unemployment benefits help all individuals through periods of joblessness meet financial obligations while they pursue reemployment. Timely payment of wage replacement benefits means unemployed Coloradans will be able to stay afloat by being able to pay for necessities while seeking work, thus reducing the anxiety often felt during job transitions. Colorado’s economy will also benefit from that financial security.

This is an ambitious but achievable goal carried over from the current fiscal year, as the Division of UI continues to face the challenges of staff shortages, reduced funding and evolving fraud schemes. Significant process improvements have been made this year resulting in the average time to payment being reduced from 45 days to 25 days, and the Division will continue to build on these improvements during the upcoming fiscal year.

How we will achieve this goal

We will achieve this goal through a variety of tactics including an agile recruitment, training and professional development model for UI staff focused on multifunction roles, adjustments to the bank verification process for direct deposit and additional performance improvements within the call center.

Lead Measures

- Conduct in-depth process analysis, at a greater level of detail than prior year’s report and implement 3-4 additional process improvements based on findings by June 30, 2026.
- Conduct product management and user experience assessment.
- Implement at least one GenAI use case to improve efficiency or experience.
- Modify controls to allow for smaller regional banks and credit unions to meet approval criteria for direct deposit.
- Reduce the average speed to answer in the call center from 40 to 20 minutes.
- Implement at least one GenAI use case to improve efficiency or experience.
- Cross-train 25 UI staff members for Multifunction Team (MFT) roles allowing them to more efficiently support the needs of the Division based on claim volume, call volume, fraud activity etc., while simultaneously providing more reallocation opportunities for existing staff, by June 30, 2026.
- Implement an improved tracking system for identifying dropped calls and reduce dropped call rate by 20%.

DEPARTMENT WIG

FAMLI Employer Experience

WIG	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET
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Improve the FAMLI employer user experience by achieving an average Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) score of 4 or above on a 5* point scale for MY FAMLI+ Employer by June 30, 2026.

04 or above

Background

Two factors significantly impact an employer’s ability to provide paid leave to its employees: cost, and operation. Without a national paid leave policy, only the largest companies can typically afford to invest in and manage paid leave programs. This places small business owners who aren’t able to offer the same competitive benefits at a disadvantage when it comes to hiring employees and increasing their community’s quality of life. To address this, the FAMLI Division provides Colorado employers of all sizes with an affordable way to invest in paid leave and, through its innovative My FAMLI+ Employer portal, an efficient way to manage its operation.

As with other state programs, however, a simple, accessible interface that organizes tasks and quickly resolves issues is key for building trust and uptake. By improving the user experience within the My FAMLI+ Employer portal, FAMLI aims to more equitably distribute the positive impacts of paid leave to employers of all sizes across the state.

How we will achieve this goal

By increasing the timeliness of core program processes - including employer payments, wage reporting, premium calculations, and issue support - our tactics will increase the ease of employer participation and user satisfaction with the My FAMLI+ Employer portal.

Lead Measures

- Increase timeliness of employer support ticket resolution by 14% from 84 hours to 72 hours by June 30, 2026.
- Increase timeliness for processing employer premium calculation by 68% from 6.25 hours to 2 hours by June 30, 2026.
- Increase timeliness for processing bulk employer payments by 50% from 20 hours to 10 hours by June 30, 2026.
- Increase timeliness for processing employer wage uploads by 44% from 27 minutes to 15 minutes by June 30, 2026.

DEPARTMENT WIG

Supporting Colorado Business

WIG	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET
Connecting Colorado will achieve an average Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) score of 4 or above on a 5-point scale by helping employers meet their workforce needs by June 30, 2026.	0	4 or above

Background

When Colorado businesses underutilize the public workforce system to find talent there are missed opportunities to create optimal economic outcomes. The modernization of the statewide labor exchange and case management system, “Connecting Colorado,” aims to level the playing field. The modernized platform will provide every employer, regardless of size, with access to sophisticated recruiting tools previously only available to large corporations with premium resources.

How we will achieve this goal

By increasing employer awareness and utilization of our public workforce system’s services through targeted skills-based outreach and education, by driving more direct hires through Connecting Colorado, by reducing the time it takes for Colorado businesses to fill vacant positions and by monitoring of the new system’s performance and user feedback, we aim to ensure the Connecting Colorado is user friendly and supporting businesses with their recruiting and hiring needs. Ultimately, this will strengthen the pipeline of homegrown Colorado talent directly into our state’s workforce.

Lead Measures

- Increase business utilization of the public workforce system by 15% from the 19,000 increase in FY25 to 21,850 by June 30, 2026.
- Support 2,000 job seekers get hired directly through the modernized Connecting Colorado labor exchange by June 30, 2026.
- Organize 12 business events across the state to promote skills-based hiring practices in job postings, with the goal of improving candidate matching by June 30, 2026.

DEPARTMENT WIG

Youth Labor Force Participation

Wildly Important Priority (WIP)	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET
Position Colorado as a leader in youth workforce engagement by maintaining a lead of 7% or more above the National Average of Youth Labor Force Participation Rate by June 30, 2026.	60.6% <i>4.8% above national average</i>	62.8% <i>7% above national average</i>
WIG (Key Performance Indicator)	BASELINE	1 YEAR TARGET
Increase the percentage of youth who are placed in jobs, apprenticeships or continuing education after receiving youth employment services from the Colorado Public Workforce System from 31% to 35% by June 30, 2026.	31%	35%

Background

As mentioned above in the evaluation of our current WIG, the country continues to see a downward trend in youth employment and participation in the workforce, and Colorado is not immune to this trend. One of the main reasons for this age group not participating in the labor force remains to be their pursuit for higher education.

CDLE will continue to monitor its Wildly Important Priority (WIP) to position Colorado as a leader in Youth Labor Force by maintaining a 7% lead in youth labor force participation over the national average. This WIP is reflective of collaborative efforts across several state agencies (CDLE, CDHE, CDE, and OEDIT) as well as macroeconomic dynamics at both the state and national levels. In support of this WIP, CDLE has set its WIG to increase the percentage of youth connected to jobs, continuing education or apprenticeships from the public workforce system which is the key driver within our purview.

CDLE will work to ensure the state’s continued prosperity by providing youth with valuable opportunities, whether that be a work-based learning program, apprenticeship, internship or continuing education. Increasing the number of youth participating in these critical services will address the factors that may initially delay their participation in the labor force and increase their engagement in meaningful employment in the future, ultimately supporting Colorado’s economy, by preparing youth with the skills and experience they’ll need to succeed in the future workforce.

Lead Measures

- Increase the number of registrations for youth employment services by 25% from 22,800 in FY25 to 25,000 by June 30, 2026.
- Increase the percentage of youth 24 and under enrolling in a registered apprenticeship program by 25% from 1,766 to 2,207 by June 30, 2026.
- Add or expand 100 registered apprenticeship programs in Colorado by June 30, 2026.
- Increase the number of businesses served through the Governor’s Summer Job Hunt program by 5% from 1,975 to 2,075 by June 30, 2026.
- Increase the number of youth registered to participate in the Governor’s Summer Job Hunt program by 5% from 30,400 to 31,920 by June 30, 2026.

How we will achieve this goal

Increases are achievable over time by executing strategies that create more interest and opportunity in a variety of services that lead to meaningful careers in the long run. We will achieve this ambitious goal by pulling all levers that exist within the agency to increase the overall youth we serve across our programs.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Model Employer.....	33
Workers Prosper.....	11
Exceptional Services.....	11
Employers Thrive.....	11
Future of Work.....	11



With our commitment to gathering feedback from stakeholders, CDLE continues to implement changes in order to provide better services. Our approach to customer service enhancements and process improvement is aligned with the Governor's Reimagine State Government directive to ensure we remain agile and responsive, leverage new innovations, and eliminate waste to deliver exceptional services to all Coloradans.





MODEL EMPLOYER

CDLE leads the State in skills based hiring practices and our enhanced employee engagement strategy through new affinity groups available across the agency. Additional ways we've led the state in becoming a model employer include:

CDLE partnered with the Department of Personnel & Administration (DPA) to grow work based learning activities for state workers and serves as a model employer by executing skills based hiring best practices. 100% of CDLE's job postings meet skills based hiring requirements, which means our job postings prioritize the competencies and skills necessary to be successful in the position as the foundation of qualifications instead of prioritizing a specific degree to qualify.

Three teams within CDLE have their own Registered Apprenticeship Programs including the Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC), the Office of the Future of Work (OFW) and the agency's Human Resources department. Six apprentices have either completed or are actively participating in those programs. These programs offer real-world learning experiences and paid opportunities for students and job seekers, providing a pathway to meaningful careers within the agency. CDLE's active participation in developing our own registered apprenticeship programs and hiring apprentices demonstrates our commitment to proving the important role apprentices play in Colorado's workforce.



WORKERS PROSPER

Through meaningful employment, every Colorado worker prospers. The impact CDLE’s programs have on workers across the state is critical to Colorado’s economy, and we continue to keep our hard-working citizens top of mind with every initiative. Examples of how we ensure Colorado workers prosper include:

The Employment & Training Division modernized Connecting Colorado, the state’s legacy labor exchange. With a bold new design powered by advanced technology, the modernized career platform not only supports unemployment claimants on their path to reemployment, its powerful new tools support all Colorado job seekers take the next step in their careers by building customized resumes, strengthening existing resumes, making connections to programs that will improve skills and by connecting candidates directly to employers looking for their experience.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has served over 19,000 Coloradans with disabilities interested in entering, returning to or advancing in the workforce, including nearly 3,000 students exploring their first careers. Of those served by DVR, average wages range over \$23 per hour, helping Colorado become a premier state for folks with disabilities.

The Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium (CRWC) participated in a multi-agency Colorado Broadband Training Initiative that resulted in successful completion of 100% of its participants. The pilot program was the first of its kind in Colorado and has established a new model for replication throughout the state, linking local broadband industry needs to state-level resources and industry partners to provide skills training and develop the needed broadband workforce. Several graduates in two southwest Colorado communities secured employment upon completion of the program, and additional direct hires are expected.

The CRWC also led the San Luis Valley Healthcare (SLV) Sector Partnership Mobile Lab. This sector partnership identified the need for helping encourage youth to take an interest in healthcare careers, specifically in nursing within the San Luis Valley. To address this need, the SLV Healthcare Sector Partnership worked to create a mobile lab that could be transported to various high schools throughout the valley, allowing youth to get hands-on experience with the basics of healthcare practice such as taking blood pressure, checking vital signs and wound care. The lab officially deployed in April of 2025. The CRWC also led the San Luis Valley Healthcare (SLV) Sector Partnership Mobile Lab. This sector partnership identified the need for helping encourage youth to take an interest in healthcare careers, specifically in nursing within the San Luis Valley. To address this need, the SLV Healthcare Sector Partnership worked to create a mobile lab that could be transported to various high schools throughout the valley, allowing youth to get hands-on experience with the basics of healthcare practice such as taking blood pressure, checking vital signs and wound care. The lab officially deployed in April of 2025.

The Migrant Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) State Monitor Advocate team, along with Weld County, organized the Agriculture Leadership Conference on March 22, 2025. The event was hosted in partnership with the Colorado Department of Agriculture, the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) Department of Chicana/o and LatinX Studies and other key stakeholders. The conference brought together 257 attendees and provided agricultural workers valuable workshops on employment law, immigration rights and available resources, equipping seasonal farmworkers with the tools and information they need to navigate the evolving labor landscape.

The CRWC continues to collaborate with the Colorado Department of Corrections to host regularly scheduled hiring events and conduct outreach for justice-involved individuals. Between July 1, 2024 through May 31, 2025, more than 725 job seekers attended these events. Additionally, the CRWC works with the Federal Bureau of Prisons to provide support for justice-involved individuals through the PROWD Grant Initiative. This programming will strengthen the CRWC’s ability to serve individuals re-entering rural communities across the state.



EXCEPTIONAL SERVICES

Exceptional execution of core services in partnership with customers and stakeholders. In order to ensure CDLE is meeting the standard of exceptional services, Divisions achieved the following to help us get there:

The Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) Division was named the nation's 2025 Government Changemaker by Code for America, the nation's leading civic technology nonprofit. This prestigious award honors FAMLI for its transformative work in streamlining access to paid family and medical leave for Coloradans through its innovative user portal, My FAMLI+. The annual recognition celebrates individuals or organizations that use human-centered design to improve their community's quality of life.

The Division of Labor Standards and Statistics began releasing short educational videos about Colorado labor laws, including "Break Times," "Final Pay," and "What are Impermissible Deductions," in early 2025 and has more educational labor law videos coming soon.

CDLE participated in the American Sign Language (ASL) Digital Interpreter Pilot Program by offering free, on-demand ASL interpreting services using Aira ASL, a free app that helps deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals access in-person services instantly by connecting them with a professional ASL interpreter. The free services were offered at all workforce centers and vocational rehabilitation offices statewide through July 31, 2025.

The Virtual Coaching Collaborative (VCC), a program in collaboration with CRWC and CWDC, served 850 participants statewide between July 1, 2024, and June 2, 2025. VCC provides job seekers with one-on-one, remote career coaching services, connecting them to workforce programs, job search support and training opportunities through a virtual platform.



EMPLOYERS THRIVE

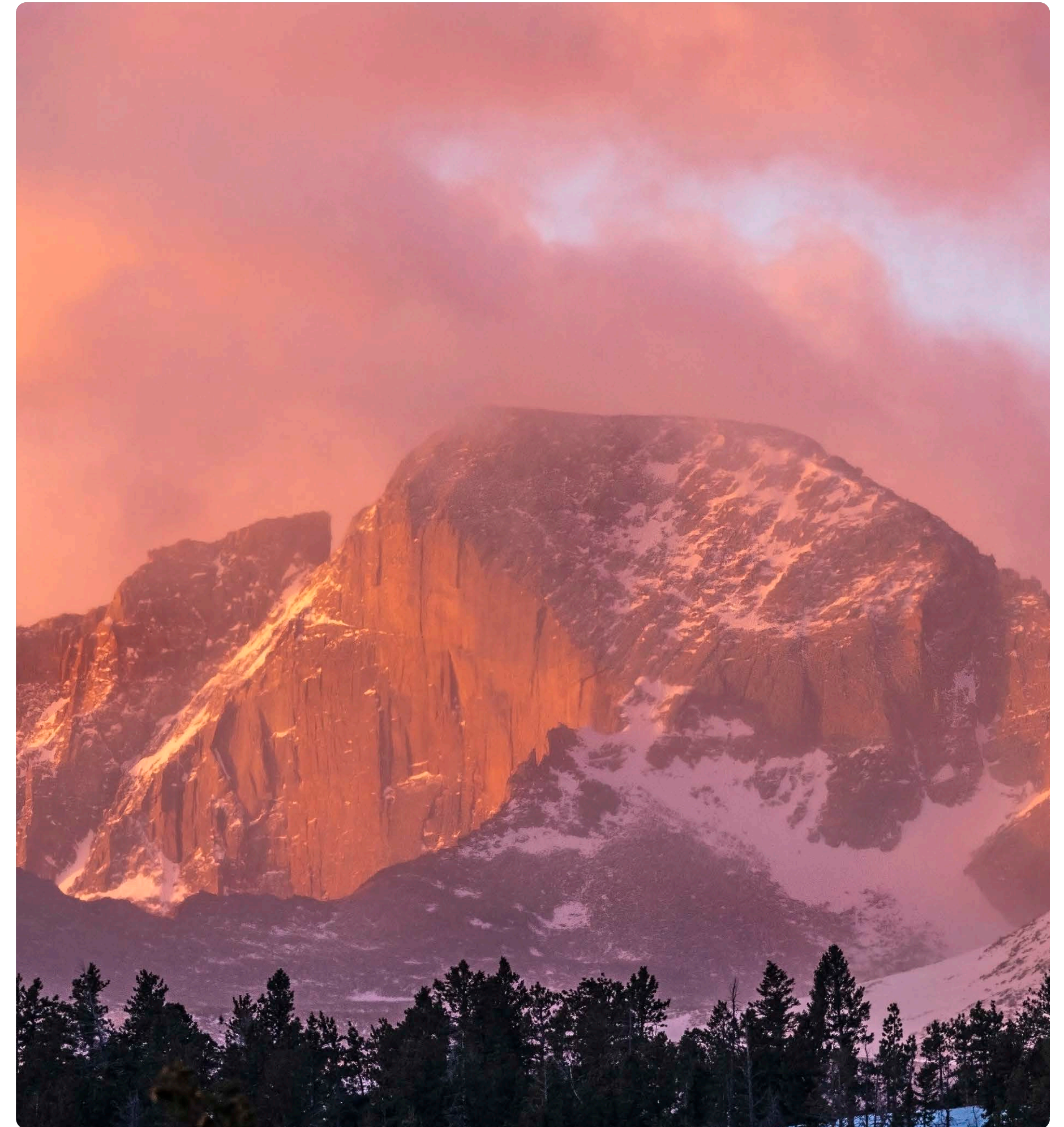
CDLE is committed to cultivating processes and policies that help employers thrive. We have helped Colorado employers succeed by expanding our engagement and increasing our compliance assistance efforts in the following ways:

The Department's Office of Government Policy and Public Relations (GPPR) launched its Compliance Quarterly employer outreach series in 2025. The initiative consolidates the most important compliance requirements, deadlines and corresponding tech updates for Colorado employers all in one quarterly newsletter and live webinar. The newsletter series has a 34% open rate, and each webinar has had more than 1,000 participants register.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's Business Relations Unit provided over 600 Skills-Based Training opportunities and over 600 Reasonable Accommodation workshops to Colorado employers, resulting in over 1,000 Colorado employees with disabilities retaining their current positions and improved hiring practices for all.

Collaboration between the Office of New Americans and the Business Services Team within the Employment & Training Division resulted in a direct avenue for New Americans to search for jobs with companies who are interested in hiring English language learners. Over 100 jobs were posted and over 630 job seeker profiles have been created.

CDLE's Teacher Externship Program was featured in Forbes Magazine and far exceeded its goals for the fiscal year. The program bridges education and industry by placing teachers in real world settings in high-demand careers. The hands-on experience allows teachers to bring back that insight to inspire their students to pursue lucrative careers they may have never heard of. 109 teachers have participated in an externship, and 24 businesses have hosted those teachers.





FUTURE OF WORK

We ensure Colorado is prepared for the future of work. With our dedicated Office of Future of Work (OFW), our Office of New Americans (ONA) and our Office of Just Transition (OJT) we are spearheading several initiatives to ensure all Coloradans-both those new to the state and those whose families have been here for generations-are not only set up for success for the workforce of today but also gain the ever-evolving skills and talent needed for tomorrow.

Apprenticeship Colorado within OFW helped Colorado become the first state to recognize 34 Qualified Apprenticeship Intermediaries in FY25 to support and accelerate Registered Apprenticeship expansion in the state. Qualified Apprenticeship Intermediaries are organizations operating in Colorado that play a crucial role in expanding or enhancing our state's Registered Apprenticeship System through their support of career seekers, apprentices, employers, and/or Sponsors.

OFW also successfully launched and completed the first statewide Digital Navigator Pilot Program, with over 75 sites providing free digital navigation services to Coloradans.

Northeast Manufacturers Girls in Manufacturing:

The Northeast Manufacturing Sector Partnership (NECOM) convened by the CRWC identified the opportunity to encourage more young women to see the potential of working in manufacturing within Northeast Colorado, and hosted a specific event on May 5th in Sterling which brought over 70 young women from various high schools in the region to get hands on experience with various manufacturing processes. They also heard from keynote speakers made up of women in leadership roles within the manufacturing industry in the Front Range, allowing them to see female role-models who have had successful careers in the industry. The event was so well received by community and educational partners that it will be replicated in Fort Morgan during the next school year this Fall.

Together with the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT), OJT awarded Moffat County a \$2 million Just Transition Community Funding grant to support the creation of a Multi-Use Events and Resiliency Center. The project supports Moffat County's economic transition strategy by capitalizing on year-round fairground utilization and enhancing opportunities for expanded use, generating increased economic benefits and cultural value. Since 2022, OJT and OEDIT have dedicated over \$8 million in funding to local economic development initiatives in northwest Colorado to support communities that have relied on coal mines and coal-fired power plants to find new sources of jobs and property tax revenues.

In partnership with the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) and with support from the Colorado Trust, ONA released a first-of-its-kind report assessing the state of language access across Colorado state agency programs and services. The report, "Language Access in Colorado State Agencies: Existing Efforts and Opportunities for Expansion" highlights Colorado's innovative efforts to expand language access and provides actionable recommendations informed by national best practices.

