



2020

Talent Pipeline Report Overview

Colorado and the world have been experiencing economic disruption and uncertainty since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in spring 2020. Colorado’s economy was thriving in 2019 with steady job growth and low unemployment. Now, towards the end of 2020, we are working to restructure and rebuild our workforce and our economy for the future. Rebuilding includes purposeful equitable practices, reskilling and upskilling, investment in programs with promising results, and career-connected education so all Coloradans may prosper, regardless of life circumstances.

The 2020 Talent Pipeline report identifies:

- leading industries and occupations,
- Top Jobs,
- key features of the current labor force,
- COVID-19 impact and response, and
- strategies to align supply with industry demand.

It is important to note the data available at this time do not yet show the full impact the pandemic has had on our economy and the workforce.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the future of work trends and highlighted inequity in our education and workforce systems. In order to build back stronger, **Colorado must focus on its talent pipeline** in order to facilitate an **equitable economic recovery** that creates more opportunity for prosperity throughout the state.

The [2020 Talent Pipeline Report](#) recommendations outline what is possible to facilitate economic advancements in the coming year. This collection of strategies, investments, and policy recommendations formulates a bold response to the COVID-19 pandemic that will stimulate growth by **stabilizing, accelerating, and preparing** all segments of the labor force for the immediate and long-term future. Together, we can rebuild a better Colorado and a future with more opportunity and prosperity for all Coloradans.

POWERED BY talent FOUND





RECOMMENDATIONS

As we enter the 2021 legislative session, state agencies and affiliates of the TalentFOUND network recognize that state funding levels remain below prior levels and that difficult decisions must be made to invest in the most critical programs with the best opportunity for return to the state. Therefore, the recommendations in this year's report look beyond state policy opportunities and outline what is possible to facilitate economic advancements in the coming year, and we are pleased to introduce this plan to the state. This is a collective action plan, developed jointly by state agencies to build upon existing strategies and work in close alignment across sectors to strengthen Colorado.

CO POWER '21

Colorado's Plan for Workforce and Economic Recovery in 2021

Colorado must focus on its talent pipeline in order to facilitate an equitable economic recovery that creates more opportunity for prosperity throughout the state. This collection of strategies, investments, and policy recommendations formulates a bold response to the COVID-19 pandemic that will stimulate growth by stabilizing, accelerating, and preparing all segments of the labor force for the immediate and long-term future.

Each of these actions must be pursued with an intentional and focused approach on equity that **examines who benefits and who is left behind** by existing structures so that state-supported education, training, and business stabilization programs can provide the foundation for an equitable recovery.

CO POWER '21 is both an action plan and a vision. **Execution of these concepts is already underway** through existing resources and programming, deploying a combination of state, federal, and private funding. To the extent that additional financial investments in stimulating the economy and promoting recovery become available, **this plan presents strategies that are ready to scale quickly and efficiently.**

Equity in the Talent Pipeline

In order for Colorado's economy to work for everyone in our state, approaches to education, hiring, and advancement must be re-envisioned. Training and technical assistance for businesses and organizations are being launched to implement the [Talent Equity Agenda](#), and resources are available that can guide the design and implementation of programs and initiatives so that they maximize equitable opportunity.

Stabilize

Existing programs and available jobs can be leveraged to mitigate worker displacement in the short-term by using data to identify trends, expose individuals to the best information on career pathways, and invest in what works.

Colorado's existing suite of labor market information tools can be further enhanced by investing in localized forecasting data platforms such as EMSI's Profile Analytics and Skill Shapes and Dunn and Bradstreet, as well as Working Metrics that can identify and benchmark factors of job quality.

As data are obtained, continued investment in providing information to individuals that is consumable and accessible is critical to allow for informed choices by Coloradans. Finally, in order to fully analyze the evidence about existing programs, investments in connections across data sources (e.g., data trusts) are necessary so that accurate conclusions can be drawn and transformative policy decisions can be made.

Accelerate

The TalentFOUND network has a robust infrastructure in place for training and connecting individuals to in-demand jobs and career pathways. The response time to put Coloradans back to work can be advanced through a variety of programs that provide job training with critical wraparound supports and career coaching. Programs and strategies that have demonstrated results include internships, apprenticeships, and supportive services.

Additional investments can enhance growth by incentivizing changes in hiring practices, providing more training funds for local networks to distribute, and streamlining registration and oversight processes through state structures. The existing concepts that have been developed, are in many cases field-tested, and are ready for rapid scale as investments include:

- Dislocated Worker Grants - COResponds and RecoverCO - totaling \$10.6 million
- Work-based learning, including State Apprenticeship Expansion, accelerating grants and incentives, and the Colorado Collegiate Apprenticeship Program
- Rapid Response services for companies laying off workers
- Governor’s Coaching Corps
- Skill Advance grants
- Skillful Talent Series training program
- Wraparound support services, such as HB 19-1107

Prepare

As Colorado responds to the immediate talent crisis brought about by COVID-19, we must continue to enhance the mechanisms that will upskill and reskill individuals for the future of work.

Investments and policy that reduce barriers or incentivize participation in these areas will ensure that all Coloradans are equipped to succeed in the emerging economy.

- Affordability of postsecondary education through the identified strategies in the CDHE Master Plan and the Roadmap of Containing College Costs and Making College Affordable.
- Expansion of early childhood education, with emphasis on facility creation within communities and businesses and developing the pipeline of workers.
- Increasing digital access through the Office of the Future of Work’s plan to enhance digital literacy and close the divide, which also requires scaling access to broadband.
- Growing Concurrent Enrollment by enabling access for all school districts in the state.
- Credentialing, by completing a state definition and inventory of quality non-degree credentials and promoting the acquisition of those to individuals in both the K-12 and postsecondary education environments.
- Completion, by connecting individuals with some college credit but no degree to the resources necessary to return to education programs.

With an intentional focus on equity, this three-phased approach to stabilize, accelerate, and prepare Colorado’s talent pipeline is already underway. It will only be realized through the alignment of agency strategic plans and effective development of partnerships within and across sectors in all areas of our state. **Together, we can emerge from our current economic state with a better Colorado and a future with more opportunity and prosperity for all Coloradans.**

BY THE NUMBERS

88.8%

Tier 1 Top Jobs requiring a credential past high school

77%

of all jobs require digital skills

\$453,333,190

in wages were returned to the economy

through the Colorado public workforce system in PY2019.

313,370

job seekers and **9,045** businesses were served by local workforce centers in PY2019.

57.6%

of Coloradans have a certificate, associate degree, bachelor’s degree, and/or a graduate or professional degree.

Top Posted Remote Occupations

(March - September 2020)

Software Developers, Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers, Insurance Sales Agents, & Customer Service Representatives

Top Essential Skills in Job Postings

(March - September 2020)

Communications Management Customer Service

12.9% / 5.6% – The unemployment rate from August 2019 - July 2020 for Black or African American women and the overall unemployment rate



2020 Colorado Talent Pipeline Report Overview
Produced by the Colorado Workforce Development Council
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View the full 2020 Talent Pipeline Report at
cwdc.colorado.gov/colorado-talent-pipeline-report