



Workforce Board highlights \$1.3 billion public investment in workforce training and education

Nearly 480,000 Washingtonians receive training and services to find jobs, ease workforce shortage

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OLYMPIA — As the nation's workforce shortage continues, [a new publication](#) highlights \$1.3 billion invested in Washington's workforce development system. These funds train, educate and serve nearly 480,000 workers and students.

Federal and state funds support several programs to help people find jobs, improve their skills, train for new industries, become an apprentice and more. These programs also support Washington employers as they compete for talent in a historically competitive labor market.

Many of these programs deliver a good return on investment for taxpayers. Apprenticeships deliver a \$7.80 to \$1 return, and services for low-income job seekers deliver a \$7 to \$1 return.

The report covers the 2021 fiscal year since data on participant outcomes is not collected until a year after people leave a workforce program to best evaluate the impact. The report does not include all workforce investments statewide.

"A lack of qualified workers is one of the top concerns of Washington employers," says Gary Chandler, co-chair of the state Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. "This shortage limits the ability of businesses to expand and grow, which has a major impact on our economy. It's critical that we invest these training dollars efficiently to help our state succeed."

"Washington's workforce shortage continues to challenge families and communities across the state," says Larry Brown, co-chair of the state Workforce Board. "Workers lose out on new

opportunities when businesses can't expand. And far too many people have dropped out of the workforce altogether to care for loved ones because of labor shortages in childcare, healthcare and long-term care. This limits their income and earning potential, and affects our quality of life."

[The publication](#) is an annual summary produced by the state [Workforce Board](#). The Board advises the Governor and Legislature on workforce development policy, ensures the state's workforce services and programs work together, and evaluates the performance of Washington's key workforce programs.

Highlights include:

- The economic impact of programs, from apprenticeships to support for dislocated workers and individuals with disabilities.
- \$1.16 billion in state training funds, including significant investments in career and technical education (CTE) at the high school and college level.
- \$180 million in federal funds, including allocations from the federal [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#) and the [Wagner-Peyser Act](#).
- What organizations delivered the services, including [WorkSource Centers](#), community and technical colleges, and community-based organizations.
- The number of Washington residents served by each program.
- The percentage of program participants who got jobs.
- What participants earned after completing a workforce program.

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About the Workforce Board:

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board is a partnership of business, labor and government dedicated to helping Washington residents succeed in family-wage jobs, while meeting employer needs for skilled workers.

The Board's vision is that every Washington community is thriving, inclusive and economically resilient. Learn more at <https://wtb.wa.gov/>.