



Building a Strong Workforce

The promise of North Carolina is that where you come from should never limit how far you can go. So, our people need a real shot at success – to get a good-paying job or advance their career. We must strengthen our workforce and ensure more people have access to good jobs with good pay.

Credential & Degree Attainment

Our goal is for at least 2 million North Carolinians to gain industry-valued credentials or degrees by 2030. To better prepare and connect students with high-demand, high-wage jobs, we must invest in workforce education and training. The Governor's budget proposes:

- Rewarding North Carolina's community colleges for providing credentialing courses in high-demand fields
- Providing free community college to students pursuing credentials in high-demand industries
- Hiring more instructors for professions facing critical vacancies
- Supporting people reentering communities from incarceration
- Reducing health care workforce shortages by funding more health care professionals' education

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships enable people to learn and earn. They afford access to high-demand careers and provide training and paid work. They also give employers a dependable workforce with a high retention rate. More than 3,500 employers and 15,000 apprentices have benefited from on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeships, or apprenticeships. Governor Stein has set a goal to double the number of apprenticeships in North Carolina over the next four years. The Governor's budget proposes:

- Expanding apprenticeship programs in state government to recruit and retain talent to fill vacancies
- Helping small businesses and farmers recruit and retain talent
- Establishing a rural apprenticeship program

Workforce Pipelines

Whether it's health care, law enforcement, caregiving, or vocational rehabilitation support for people with disabilities and older adults, we are facing vacancies in the sectors that keep our state healthy and safe. The Governor's budget proposes:

- Creating scholarships, apprenticeships, and retention programs for caregiving professionals
- Recruiting more nursing instructors and creating new nursing training sites
- Adding more law enforcement basic training instructors and offering signing bonuses for newly-hired BLET graduates
- Raising salaries for vocational rehabilitation counselors



Reentry

We all benefit when people reentering communities from incarceration are able to find employment and successfully reintegrate. The Governor's budget proposes:

- Increasing higher educational degree programs for people who are incarcerated
- Providing support services and health care to people before they leave prison to set them up for success when they return to their communities

Unemployment Insurance

Our state ranks 42nd for unemployment benefits, and we offer the shortest benefit duration in the nation. We can strengthen our system without bankrupting our businesses or dipping into our Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund. The Governor's budget proposes:

- Increasing the maximum weekly unemployment benefit and extending the maximum benefit duration
- Providing businesses with a one-time credit for their contributions to unemployment insurance