NC Job Ready Grant Application

November 2025

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Application Submission

Submit the completed application with original signatures and supporting documents (DocuSign® or similar software is acceptable), including employer training proposal and approved training vendor quote. Electronic mail of the application is acceptable with a scanned copy of the signatory page and scanned documents. The signature page can be found at Page 6 of this Attachment.

Submit the Application Package to:

David Lee
david.lee@commerce.nc.gov
NC Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Solutions

Review Process

NC Department of Commerce's assigned Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) staff will complete a review of all state economic development project Briefing Memos with the appropriate Workforce Development Board(s) (WDB(s)) staff to determine eligibility and level of support for the project. Since economic development projects are time sensitive, the review will be completed within one business day of receiving the project Briefing Memo. A compilation of all supporting state and WDB investments will be outlined in a formal support letter from the DWS and addressed to the state economic development project manager. Included in that letter will be an additional amount of supplemental funds from the NC Job Ready Grant, as agreed upon between the DWS and the WDB(s), not to exceed $50,000 per economic development project. All investment grants will be awarded based on eligibility and availability of funds and as approved by the DWS Assistant Secretary of Workforce Development.

Introduction

As North Carolina continues to attract major economic development projects, the state's ability to respond quickly with a qualified workforce remains critical. Employers relocating or expanding operations in North Carolina must be able to recruit and hire talent efficiently to ensure successful business startup and long-term viability.

Through the **NC Job Ready (NCJR) initiative**, Governor Josh Stein has prioritized deepening employer engagement and strengthening partnerships across the workforce system. This includes engaging tens of thousands of employers to help meet shared workforce goals and fostering coordinated strategies between workforce boards, education providers, and industry to respond to real-time hiring needs. The NC Job Ready Grant supports this mission by helping WDBs provide immediate, recruitment-focused solutions to businesses as they establish or expand operations in North Carolina.

This adjustment amends the previously administered NC Job Ready (NCJR) Workforce Investment Grant. Local Area WDBs that received NCJR awards for approved economic development projects but have not yet drawn down those funds will be grandfathered into the new program, retaining the same award amount as previously approved.

The NC Job Ready Grant directly supports this vision by providing funding to WDBs to assist with recruitment-related activities tied to state-supported economic development projects. In partnership with the NC Department of Commerce, Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC), and local economic developers, WDBs may use these funds to help new or expanding employers with targeted recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and talent engagement strategies.

Allowable uses of the grant may include:

- **Recruitment and Talent Attraction Efforts,** including job fairs, digital outreach, and candidate sourcing initiatives.
- **Hiring and Screening Support,** such as pre-employment assessments, onboarding facilitation, and coordination of interviews or hiring events.
- **Talent Pipeline Development,** including engagement in sector partnerships or development of employer-led career pathways in targeted industries.
- **Work-Based Learning Activities,** including **On-the-Job Training (OJT)** and **Incumbent Worker Training (IWT**) remain allowable uses of NJR funds, though they are not the primary focus of this initiative.

Award amounts are determined by the DWS based on factors such as availability of funds, county tier, capital investment, net job growth, and WIOA compliance. Local WDBs serve as grant administrators and are responsible for required program and fiscal reporting. Additional incentives such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and Federal Bonding may be offered and will be outlined in a formal support letter issued by the DWS to the project's designated economic development lead. Each project must demonstrate a capital investment that exceeds the awarded grant amount. Grants are contingent upon funding availability and the DWS reserves the right to update guidance as needed.

APPLICATION

Section I. Grant Narrative:

The narrative portion of the application should not exceed two (2) pages in a font of 12 point or higher, with 1" margins, and 1.5 line spacing. Grants must be expended within 18 months of receipt of the Notice of Funding Availability and WDBs are responsible for returning unexpended funds on the approved project within 30 days of the end of the 18 months or grant termination notice, if earlier.

The narrative should demonstrate the need for the grant funds as it relates to WDBs supporting local and regional economic development projects. The grants are intended to address common talent recruitment challenges that employers face related to skills gaps or workforce shortages and to show further commitment to employers who are investing in North Carolina by moving to or expanding within the state. Local WDBs are encouraged to partner with each other to serve employers that may recruit from multi-board regions.

Narratives shall detail recruitment strategies, how grant funds will be used to implement recruiting efforts and/or training and detail the collaboration with economic development partners for the approved economic development project.

Section II. NC Job Ready Grant Budget:

Complete this section if the intended use of the NCJR fund is for Recruitment Activities.

Activity (i.e. job fair, digital outreach, etc.)	Item or Service to be purchased / Vendor	Estimated Projected Timeline (start and end date)	Total Amount Requested

Complete this section if the intended use of the NCJR fund is for OJT and/or IWT. Attach employer training proposal and approved training vendor quote(s).

Category	Quantity	Job Title	Eligible %*	Total Amount Requested
Company Employee Wages (please list as job titles, quantities of each job title and annual salaries for each. This list should total the number of employees trained)[1]				
Total receiving OJT				
Company Employee Wages (please list as job titles, quantities of each job title, and annual salaries for each. This list should total the number of employees trained)				
Total receiving IWT				
Approved Vendor Travel (if applicable)				
Company Employee Travel (if applicable)				
Approved Vendor Materials and Supplies				
Training Expenses				
Local Area Administrative Fee**				
Other Expenses – please specify				
Totals				

* **NOTES**: WDBs will utilize local OJT/IWT policies in the expenditure of these funds and should state if the OJT is for 50% or 75% of the salary.

[1] All individual participants must be registered in the NCWorks Online system per US Department of Labor regulations and State policies. In addition, all employers must be recorded as receiving OJT, IWT, and economic development services within an appropriate online reporting system.

**Up to 5% of the total grant award can be used for the WDB's Administrative Fee.

Grant awards are based on funding availability.

NC Job Ready
Signature Page

Local Area Workforce Development Board Name	
Application Contact Person	
Address	
Telephone Numbers	
Email	
Date	
Amount Requested in Grant Application	

_____ _____

(Type Name) **Signature** **Date**

Local Area Workforce Development Board Director

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