



NCWorks Commission

NCWorks Commission Policy Statement Number: CPS 05-2021, Change 1

Date: November 19, 2025

Subject: NC Job Ready Workforce Investment Grants

From:

Draft

Tom B. Rabon, Jr.
Chair, NCWorks Commission

Purpose:

To transmit guidance for the NC Job Ready Grants. The Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) will provide grants up to \$50,000 to workforce development boards in support of economic development projects. The DWS has developed policies and guidelines for reviewing and awarding NC Job Ready Grants to Local Area Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) to participate in economic development activities and to foster the alignment of economic and workforce development, both priorities of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (Public Law 113-128).

This Change updates the following:

- Updates the allowable uses of the funding to include recruitment and related activities
- Changes the framework used to determine award amount
- Updates the application

This Change rescinds CPS 05-2021. This Commission Policy Statement and the procedures herein supersede all previous policies, procedures, and guidelines regarding NC Job Ready Grants.

Background:

The DWS has created NC Job Ready Grants in response to the WIOA priority to foster the alignment of economic and workforce development. These grants will allow WDBs to support local and regional economic development projects in targeted industry sectors. The grants are intended to assist in solving common workforce recruitment challenges employers face related to recruiting for large scale economic development projects, skills gaps, and workforce shortages. The grants will also show further commitment to employers who are investing in North Carolina by moving to or expanding within the state. When employers are choosing to locate or expand in North Carolina, their stability as a viable business can be compromised if they cannot find and hire the employees they need. Employer engagement is critical to the implementation of this initiative, since it is the employer who will be taking the leadership of investing in their current and future

employees.

NC Job Ready Grants will be awarded to WDBs to be used to support economic development projects seeking state incentives. Funding will be used to meet the needs of employers while aligning with WIOA requirements. The amount an employer is eligible for will be determined by the number of new hires, county tier, and capital investment. Eligible uses include support for recruitment efforts, hiring and screening, training and education, talent pipeline development, and transition services.

NC Job Ready Grants will be subject to the WDB's WIOA Grant Administration Agreement.

In addition, employers will receive additional information about Work Opportunity Tax Credits and Federal Bonding, which will be specified within a formal support letter from the DWS and addressed to the state economic development project manager. Each economic development project must have a total capital investment that exceeds the grant award amount. The DWS anticipates awarding grants annually depending on the availability of funding and reserves the right to amend this policy based on the availability of funds.

Action:

North Carolina's WDBs may send applications to the DWS's Industry and Talent Development Unit for NC Job Ready Grants for qualifying projects, not to exceed \$50,000 per economic development project, when working in partnership with the Economic Development Partnership for North Carolina (EDPNC) and local economic developers on recruitment, retention, or expansion projects that seek state economic development incentives from the NC Department of Commerce. Grants are awarded in addition to support that WDB's may offer through WIOA programs. Grants are designated for the specific economic development project for which the application is made and are awarded for:

- **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 NC Job Ready funds, though they are not the primary focus of this initiative.

The WDBs are responsible for returning unexpended funds on the approved project. Upon request and approval, previously awarded NC Job Ready Grants can also be used to support activities as outlined in this policy.

Effective Date: Immediately

Expiration: Indefinite

Contact: Industry and Talent Development Unit

Attachments:

1. NC Job Ready Grant Application
2. NC Job Ready Grant - Updated Distribution Framework

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