

Workforce Resources Support Your Business Attraction

Ray Allen, Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development



Businesses across the globe are choosing Wisconsin as the place to locate and expand, thanks to our best-in-class workforce, top 10 business climate, outstanding higher education system, and excellent quality of life.

For local communities, the effort to attract, retain, and grow businesses has never been more critical or challenging. At the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) we hear time and again that businesses need skilled workers to stay competitive and prosper.

To this end, we invite all Wisconsin communities to learn more about the variety of talent development programs that are available at the local, regional, and state levels. By familiarizing yourselves with the opportunities available to businesses and assisting with connecting businesses to these resources, you can gain an edge in your attraction, recruitment, and retention strategies.

The following workforce system overview serves as a “primer” for boosting local efforts:

Workforce System 101

DWD is the state agency charged with building and strengthening Wisconsin’s workforce in the 21st century and beyond. The Department’s primary responsibilities include providing job services, training, and employment assistance to people looking for work, at the same time as it works with employers on finding the necessary workers to fill current job openings.

DWD partners with 11 regional workforce boards, the Wisconsin Technical College System, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, and the Wisconsin Departments of Children and Families, Health Services, and Public Instruction and many other organizations to

strategize, plan, and implement programs and services that develop Wisconsin’s workforce and connect talent with job opportunities.

DWD’s Business Services team stands ready to help any Wisconsin employer recruit and retain talent, identify training solutions, and access workforce planning resources.

Provide this article to your business community. We also welcome referrals from local communities and will offer existing and new businesses the following talent development resources:

Talent Recruitment and Retention

JOB CENTER OF WISCONSIN: Encourage employers to contact DWD Business Services at the nearest Job Center to access effective, low- and no-cost talent development solutions available through DWD and local partners. A searchable list and map of Job Centers is available online at: JobCenterofWisconsin.com/directory

Job Center staff can help any business post job openings online, recruit talent, coordinate onsite recruitments, collect applications, screen job candidates, administer pre-employment assessments, access hiring incentives and tax credits, and more.

We also encourage all businesses to register on JobCenterOfWisconsin.com, Wisconsin’s online public labor exchange, to connect with talent at no cost. Employers can build job descriptions based on skills to expand the search for qualified talent, make informed employment decisions using enhanced tools and MyLMI widgets to access, and save integrated labor market information for future access.

COLLEGE INTERNS: We invite public and private-sector employers to recruit college interns on WisConnect, a free online resource that matches college students with internships by location, college major, and key skills. Sign in to develop an employer profile, build programs, post internships, and search for interns. More information at InternshipWisconsin.com

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES: National workforce studies show that employees with disabilities often have higher than average attendance, job performance, safety, and retention rates. Employers are welcome to tap into highly reliable, qualified job applicants who are ready to put their diverse abilities to work. More information at dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/business

VETERANS: Veterans offer the advantage of military experience to help any business build an innovative, resourceful, and reliable workforce. Details on how to recruit veteran job seekers, identify transferrable skills between military and civilian occupations, and access incentives for hiring veterans are available at dwd.wisconsin.gov/veterans/vetreps.htm

YOUTH: Work-based learning opportunities for youth continue to grow as a key talent development strategy in Wisconsin. Businesses can create a loyal talent pipeline by helping local youth obtain in-demand skills through mentored job training. More details about innovative models available for building tomorrow's workforce today, including training programs for youth with disabilities, are available at ya.wi.gov and dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/business

Training Solutions

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING: We offer solutions to help employers onboard qualifying new hires and prospective workers with on-the-job training solutions and work experiences to improve retention results. Employers may apply for reimbursement to cover a portion of the training costs. For more information, email BJSBusinessServ@dwd.wisconsin.gov

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP: Businesses can build a customized skills training system that instills the company's values while helping apprentices earn good-paying, family supporting wages as they gain high-demand occupational skills. Help address the skills gap with this proven workforce readiness solution. More information at WisconsinApprenticeship.org

YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP: Youth apprentices help companies develop their talent pipeline and help high school juniors and seniors graduate with high-demand job

skills and industry certifications. Participating businesses can choose to retain youth after graduation through full-time employment and a seamless transition into Registered Apprenticeship. More information at ya.wi.gov

WISCONSIN FAST FORWARD: The Wisconsin Fast Forward program awards customized worker training grants to Wisconsin businesses to fill current and ongoing skill requirements. Employers in all sectors with worker training needs are encouraged to apply for available grants. More information at WisconsinFastForward.com

Planning Future Workforce

WISCONOMY: WisConomy is an online resource that offers powerful, easy-to-use tools to help businesses research economic and labor market data and make informed employment decisions. Users can create personalized reports and visualizations using the most current data available in Wisconsin to learn about the local labor pool; examine wages and long-term employment projections by industry and occupation; and help determine business location and expansion plans. More information at WisConomy.com

ACCESSIBILITY: Businesses can get help with developing positive disability-related workforce strategies and solutions. We welcome requests for information about accommodations and how to improve accessibility to increase worker productivity and expand any employer's customer base. More information at dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/business

HIRING INCENTIVES AND TAX CREDITS:

Businesses may qualify for hiring incentives and tax credits when they promote workforce diversity and facilitate access to good jobs by hiring individuals with barriers to employment. More information at wisconsinjobcenter.org/businessassistance/taxcredits.htm

For more information about the talent development solutions available to businesses in your community, contact DWD Business Services at 1-888-258-9966 or BJSBusinessServ@dwd.wisconsin.gov

About the author:

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Secretary Raymond Allen leads the state agency charged with building and strengthening Wisconsin's workforce. He was appointed to the position by Governor Scott Walker in January 2016.