

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED NINTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 45

Introduced by McKinney, 11.

Read first time January 09, 2025

Committee: Business and Labor

1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to jobs; to amend section 48-622.03, Reissue
2 Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and section 48-622.02, Revised
3 Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2024; to provide for grants for job
4 programs for historically underserved youth; to state intent
5 regarding appropriations; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the
6 original sections.
7 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 **Section 1.** Section 48-622.02, Revised Statutes Cumulative
2 Supplement, 2024, is amended to read:

3 48-622.02 (1) The Nebraska Training and Support Cash Fund is
4 created. Any money in the fund available for investment shall be invested
5 by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital
6 Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act. No
7 expenditures shall be made from the Nebraska Training and Support Cash
8 Fund without the written authorization of the Governor upon the
9 recommendation of the commissioner. Transfers may be made from the fund
10 to the General Fund at the direction of the Legislature. Any interest
11 earned on money in the State Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund shall be
12 credited to the Nebraska Training and Support Cash Fund.

13 (2) Money in the Nebraska Training and Support Cash Fund shall be
14 used for (a) administrative costs of establishing, assessing, collecting,
15 and maintaining state unemployment insurance tax liability and payments,
16 (b) administrative costs of creating, operating, maintaining, and
17 dissolving the State Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund and the Nebraska
18 Training and Support Cash Fund, (c) support of public and private job
19 training programs designed to train, retrain, or upgrade work skills of
20 existing Nebraska workers of for-profit and not-for-profit businesses,
21 (d) recruitment of workers to Nebraska, (e) training new employees of
22 expanding Nebraska businesses, (f) retention of existing employees of
23 Nebraska businesses, (g) the costs of creating a common web portal for
24 the attraction of businesses and workers to Nebraska, (h) developing and
25 conducting labor availability and skills gap studies pursuant to the
26 Sector Partnership Program Act, for which money may be transferred to the
27 Sector Partnership Program Fund as directed by the Legislature, ~~and~~ (i)
28 payment of unemployment insurance benefits if solvency of the state's
29 account in the Unemployment Trust Fund and of the State Unemployment
30 Insurance Trust Fund so require, and (j) awarding grants under section 3
31 of this act.

1 (3) The Administrative Costs Reserve Account is created within the
2 Nebraska Training and Support Cash Fund. Money shall be allocated from
3 the Nebraska Training and Support Cash Fund to the Administrative Costs
4 Reserve Account in amounts sufficient to pay the anticipated
5 administrative costs identified in subsection (2) of this section.

6 ~~(4) The State Treasurer shall transfer two hundred fifty thousand~~
7 ~~dollars from the Nebraska Training and Support Cash Fund to the Sector~~
8 ~~Partnership Program Fund no later than July 15, 2016.~~

9 **Sec. 2.** Section 48-622.03, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
10 amended to read:

11 48-622.03 (1) There is hereby created the Nebraska Worker Training
12 Board. The board shall consist of seven members appointed and serving for
13 terms determined by the Governor as follows:

- 14 (a) A representative of employers in Nebraska;
- 15 (b) A representative of employees in Nebraska;
- 16 (c) A representative of the public;
- 17 (d) The Commissioner of Labor or a designee;
- 18 (e) The Director of Economic Development or a designee;
- 19 (f) The Commissioner of Education or a designee; and
- 20 (g) The chairperson of the governing board of the Nebraska Community
21 College Association or a designee.

22 (2) The chairperson of the Nebraska Worker Training Board shall be
23 the representative of the employers in Nebraska.

24 (3) By July 1 of each year, the board shall prepare an annual
25 program plan for the upcoming fiscal year containing guidelines for the
26 program under subdivisions (2)(c) through (f) of section 48-622.02
27 financed by the Nebraska Training and Support Cash Fund. The guidelines
28 shall include, but not be limited to, guidelines for certifying training
29 providers, criteria for evaluating requests for the use of money under
30 subdivisions (2)(c) through (f) of section 48-622.02, and guidelines for
31 requiring employers to provide matching funds. The guidelines shall give

1 priority to training that contributes to the expansion of the Nebraska
2 workforce and increasing the pool of highly skilled workers in Nebraska.

3 (4) By December 31 of each year, the Department of Labor shall
4 provide a report to the Governor covering the activities of such the
5 program ~~financed by the Nebraska Training and Support Cash Fund~~ for the
6 previous fiscal year. The report shall contain an assessment of the
7 effectiveness of the program and its administration.

8 **Sec. 3.** (1) For purposes of this section, historically underserved
9 youth means a person who is eighteen years of age or younger and who has
10 experienced homelessness, is from a low-income family or resides in a
11 poverty area as determined by the department, has been involved in foster
12 care or the juvenile justice system, is at risk of dropping out of
13 school, or resides in a qualified census tract as defined in 26 U.S.C.
14 42(d)(5)(B)(ii)(I), as such section existed on January 1, 2025.

15 (2) The Department of Labor shall establish a five-year pilot grant
16 program to provide grants to any entity that meets the requirements of
17 subsection (2) of this section subject to the amount appropriated for
18 this purpose. The department shall implement an initial pilot phase in a
19 city of the metropolitan class, a city of the primary class, and two
20 rural communities, allowing for assessment of program efficacy,
21 challenges, and resource requirements before statewide expansion.
22 Following the pilot phase, the department shall compile a comprehensive
23 evaluation report outlining successes, obstacles, and recommended program
24 modifications. The statewide program shall then be expanded based on
25 these findings to maximize impact. The department may establish a
26 regional distribution mechanism to ensure equitable access to grants by
27 applicants from various regions of the state. If the appropriation is not
28 sufficient to award grants to all eligible applicants, the grants shall
29 be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis and priority shall be
30 given to grant recipients operating in census tracts with the highest
31 poverty rates, lowest employment rates, or greatest need as determined by

1 the department.

2 (3) The purpose of the program is to provide job training,
3 employment, and mentorship opportunities to historically underserved
4 youth in urban areas as determined by the department. The program shall
5 aim to provide historically underserved youth with skills that lead to a
6 certification or qualifications for high-demand fields, including, but
7 not limited to, information technology, health care, and skilled trades.
8 The department shall report on placement rates within these fields in the
9 report required by this section.

10 (4) In order to be eligible to apply for a grant, an entity shall:

11 (a) Have its headquarters in a qualified census tract as defined in
12 26 U.S.C. 42(d)(5)(B)(ii)(I), as such section existed on January 1, 2025;

13 (b) Demonstrate to the department that it is committed to hiring
14 historically underserved youth. Commitment to hiring historically
15 underserved youth shall be demonstrated through structured job training
16 or employment programs with clear timelines, resources, and personnel
17 dedicated to supporting historically underserved youth; and

18 (c) Demonstrate to the department that it is committed to reach
19 historically underserved youth to create safety and stability for the
20 youth and the community.

21 (5) An applicant shall demonstrate in the application to the
22 satisfaction of the department that the applicant has the ability to
23 provide job training, competitive wages, mentorship initiatives, and any
24 other resources necessary to support employment and social wellness
25 development for historically underserved youth and that the job training
26 will provide practical skills and valuable work experience.

27 (6) As a condition of acceptance of the grant, the grant recipient
28 shall provide a report annually to the department that states the number
29 of historically underserved youth employed with grant funds in the past
30 calendar year, the specific expenditures of the grant funds during such
31 time, and the plan to use any unexpended funds. The report shall include

1 evidence of skill attainment, such as an industry-recognized
2 certification, within six months after youth program completion, if
3 applicable. Each grant recipient shall track and report on metrics,
4 including youth job retention rates, wage progression over time, and the
5 number of youth who transition to higher-skilled roles or pursue further
6 education after completing the program offered by the grant recipient.

7 (7) A grant recipient is encouraged to create partnerships with
8 employers or educational institutions that commit to offering
9 internships, apprenticeships, or job placements upon completion of the
10 program offered by the grant recipient. If available, the department may
11 award additional grant funds to grant recipients that partner with local
12 businesses, educational institutions, or workforce development agencies
13 to expand training and mentorship opportunities. The department shall
14 review the reports prior to awarding any future grants to make sure that
15 the grant funds are used appropriately and to measure the effectiveness
16 and impact of the grant program. Following the submission of annual
17 reports, the department shall provide feedback to each grant recipient,
18 highlighting areas of strength and areas for potential improvement based
19 on program performance data. The department shall compile an annual
20 report of best practices from high-performing grant recipients and
21 distribute this to all grant recipients to enhance program quality.

22 The department shall annually evaluate program impact, assessing
23 youth employment outcomes, long-term job retention, and economic
24 advancement for historically underserved youth.

25 (8) It is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate twenty
26 million dollars for fiscal year 2025-26 and every fiscal year thereafter
27 to the Department of Labor from the Nebraska Training and Support Cash
28 Fund for the purposes of awarding grants under this section. The
29 department shall use no more than one percent of the appropriation for
30 administration of the grants. Administrative costs shall be limited to
31 expenses directly related to grant program oversight, including personnel

1 for application review, program auditing, and data management. No portion
2 of administrative costs shall be allocated for unrelated departmental
3 expenses. The department shall publish an annual report detailing
4 administrative expenditures, ensuring transparency in the management of
5 allocated funds.

6 **Sec. 4.** Original section 48-622.03, Reissue Revised Statutes of
7 Nebraska, and section 48-622.02, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
8 2024, are repealed.