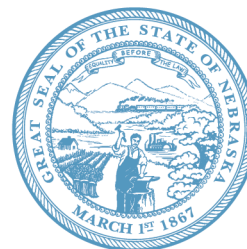


NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Jim Pillen, Governor

December 1, 2024

The Honorable Jim Pillen
Governor of Nebraska
P.O. Box 94848
Lincoln, NE 68509

Mr. Brandon Metzler
Clerk of the Legislature
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509

Subject: Employment Educational Activities Report

Dear Governor Pillen and Mr. Metzler:

Nebraska Revised Statute § 43-517 requires the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to report annually to the Legislature information regarding employment educational activities for those participating in the Employment First Program due to receipt of an Aid to Dependent Children grant.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shannon Grotrian".

Shannon Grotrian
Director, Office of Economic Assistance

Attachment

Division of Children and Family Services: Office of Economic Assistance

Employment Educational Activities Report

December 2024

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 43-517

Employment First Program

The purpose of the Employment First (EF) Program is to provide temporary, transitional support for Nebraska families to achieve economic self-sufficiency through the provision of training, education, and employment preparation. To be eligible for the EF program, the work-eligible individual must meet the eligibility requirements for the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program.

Monthly Earnings, Educational Level, and Employment Status

As of April 1, 2024, six months after terminating participation in the ADC program, 38 out of 54 participants remained employed. These participants' average monthly earnings were \$2,969.81. The participants reported the following education levels:

- Four participants have less than a 12th grade education.
- Thirteen have a 12th grade education.
- Twelve have received a certificate or diploma beyond high school.
- Two have an associate degree.
- Four have a bachelor's degree.
- Two have a master's degree; and
- One has a doctorate.

Twelve months after terminating participation in the ADC program, 38 of 54 participants listed in the previous paragraph remained employed on October 1, 2024. The participants' average monthly earnings were \$2,969.81. These participants reported the following education levels:


- Four participants have less than a 12th grade education.
- Thirteen have a 12th grade education.
- Twelve have received a certificate or diploma beyond high school.
- Two have an associate's degree.
- Four have a bachelor's degree.
- Two have a master's degree; and
- One has a doctorate.

Current Participants Pursuing an Associate Degree

In September 2024, 21 EF participants were engaged in an associate degree educational program. All 21 of these participants were making satisfactory progress in their educational pursuits. These participants spent an average of 4.62 months in education to fulfill their work requirements under the program. As of September 1, 2024, the expected number of current participants that have an upcoming graduation is as follows: two participants will graduate in 2024, eight in 2025, eight in 2026, and three in 2027.

Activities Promoting Post-Secondary Education for Participants

Upon entry into EF, the Department provides individual participant assessments. These assessments determine current education levels and career interests, plus identify any barriers to attaining economic self-sufficiency. Following an assessment, EF case managers engage participants to identify activities they may participate in to help them reach their ultimate career goals. An EF case manager assists participants in meeting their goals by providing information about the job market, specific careers, wages,



addressing barriers to employment, and providing support in seeking childcare and transportation assistance.

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) encourages EF Program participants to pursue post-secondary education. DHHS highlights the importance of enrolling in post-secondary education programs, which can help participants acquire essential technical skills. Such skills often lead to securing full-time employment and significantly increasing income, especially before their ADC benefits expire.

EF participants may be approved to attend any education program that helps them accomplish their goals. Participants interested in college are encouraged to participate in public community colleges, where tuition and fees are more affordable. To assist participants with applying for federal student aid, they are referred to free college planning services organizations in their area of the state. EF participants are also encouraged to join the TRIO program, a service offered by some public colleges and universities that provides support services to students with significant barriers to attending and completing college.