



WorkWell MN 2024 Policy Priorities

WorkWell MN, a coalition of 20+ workforce development nonprofit organizations, seeks to address Minnesota’s significant worker shortage and continued racial disparities through the preparation of an often-overlooked population of workers. Through skilling up and reskilling workers, we can prepare a new generation of individuals to meet current employer needs across the state. Together, we are committed to solving some of Minnesota’s biggest employment challenges and creating positive change for both jobseekers and employers across the Minnesota workforce system.

Our shared 2024 public policy priorities include:

1) Expand Access to Dislocated Worker Program

The Dislocated Worker program offers a rich set of resources to jobseekers to help them successfully secure employment. However, the program currently limits eligibility to those who have only recently been laid off from employment. Expanding both eligibility and flexibility with the program will allow better outcomes for jobseekers and will help address employment equity in Minnesota.

2) Workforce Equity Initiative

Minnesota’s employment disparities remain some of the worst in the nation. Jobseekers who are not already employed in this current economy need intensive, tailored, one-to-one employment supports. Flexible services that offer one-to-one employment placement, support services, and retention will help accomplish this goal. Community-based organizations are well positioned to provide necessary intensive services to individuals needing more assistance for successful employment. A focus on job-readiness, digital skills, and language-acquisition with greater flexibility to meet individual and cultural needs, will assist low-income people needing employment services but not necessarily training. Swift employment readiness services will be a priority.

3) **Build Workforce Program Continuity**

Training and job placement outcomes suffer when time and energy is spent on jumping through administrative hoops rather than meeting jobseeker needs. Even more harmful are the gaps in services that occur due to staggered funding cycles. The state should:

- a. Improve continuity of services for greatest efficiency and outcomes
- b. Streamline review for organizations that have previously met grant outcomes

4) **Provide Training and Work-experience Incentives**

Some Minnesotans need additional work experience and/or short-term training to successfully transition into high demand careers with the potential for a living wage. However, few adults can take time off from paid work or caregiving even for free training. The legislature should consider including paid short-term pre-employment training into existing programming to increase diversity and incentivize workers into high demand sectors that provide a family-sustaining wage. WorkWell MN advocates for allowing the provision of training stipends and/or incentives for participants enrolled in training programs to support successful program completion.

Workforce Adjacent Issues

In addition to core employment services, most low-income jobseekers also need access to affordable childcare, transportation, digital equity and stable housing supports.

- **Childcare** – We advocate for policies that make childcare more accessible and affordable for families and workers.
- **Transportation** – We support policies that expand and improve public and personal transportation options to ensure workers can access jobs across the state.
- **Technology** – We support access to technology and internet services to ensure equitable access to hybrid training opportunities.

Join us for WorkWell MN Day at the Capitol on March 12, 2024!

American Indian OIC

Avivo

BrookLynk

CAPI USA

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services, Inc.

CLUES Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio

EMERGE

Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota

HAP

Hired

International Institute of Minnesota

JFCS

Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota

MN Teamsters Service Bureau

NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center, Inc.

Project for Pride in Living

SOAR Career Solutions

Summit Academy OIC

True North Goodwill

Twin Cities RISE

Urban League Twin Cities

Vietnamese Social Services

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