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Governor Walker Introduces Initial Phase of “Wisconsin Working” Plan

Plan Focuses on Improving Workforce Training and Connecting Unemployed Wisconsinites with Available Jobs

Madison—Today Governor Scott Walker unveiled the first phase of his [“Wisconsin Working” plan](#). Governor Walker continues his focus on job creation and economic growth. After the Administration’s Special Cabinet on Economic and Workforce Investment listened to job creators, job seekers and government officials, they recommended an initial phase of policy changes and agency collaboration to ensure job seekers connect with current job needs, while building the skills necessary for family-supporting jobs.

“Wisconsin continues to work together to foster an environment of economic stability and job creation,” said Governor Walker. “These new initiatives will help connect Wisconsin workers to available jobs, so they can provide for their families.”

“The Governor’s Administration remains focused on helping Wisconsin workers find jobs,” said Lt. Governor Kleefisch. “The initial phase of his Wisconsin Working plan concentrates on aligning Wisconsin’s current job creators with our state’s current job seekers, while equipping job seekers with the skills they need to succeed.”

Improve Workforce Training

Employers need skilled workers. At the same time, workers need access to affordable and timely career and training programs. To address these needs, the Governor is creating the College and Workforce Readiness Council. The Council will be comprised of representatives from small business, the workforce, the State School Superintendent, Cabinet Secretaries and top officials from public and private universities and technical colleges. The Council will work to improve student readiness for college and careers through a variety of measures, including designing shorter and less costly degree programs aimed at filling high-need positions. In addition, the Council will look at ways to expand dual enrollment and dual credit opportunities for high school students, allowing them to earn college and workforce training credits while in high school.

Governor Walker also announced his support of the *Wisconsin Wins* legislation proposed by Representative Mark Honadel. As currently conceived, the program will allow Wisconsinites receiving unemployment to take part-time training jobs with employers potentially leading to full-time employment and allowing current job seekers to receive training and demonstrate their skills for potential employers.

Additionally, the Governor is directing the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) to support Assembly Bill 429 and Assembly Bill 438 authored by Representative Evan Wynn. The

legislation will remove many employment hurdles for veterans, such as removing the initial license fee for certain veterans and allowing military training to fulfill requirements for specific state licenses.

Lastly, the Governor is directing the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to work together to align unemployment insurance claimants with businesses currently expanding in Wisconsin.

Matching Job Seekers with Jobs

During listening sessions with job creators throughout the state, the Governor repeatedly heard job creators speak of current job openings for which they could not find workers. To help address this, DWD will double the number of job fairs they hold. The Department will also hire an additional fourteen staff to assist in reemployment services.

“One of the Department of Workforce Development’s core functions is to connect jobseekers to jobs,” said Governor Walker. “DWD will remain focused on innovative opportunities to make sure Wisconsin workers find Wisconsin jobs.”

Last year, the DWD held approximately fifty job fairs. This year, they will hold at least 100 jobs fairs throughout the state. DWD will add fourteen staffers to help serve another 350-400 unemployment insurance (UI) claimants each week in their job searches. The additional staff will hold training sessions, perform skills tests and certifications for work readiness, perform employer matching, career assistance, align the unemployed to job fairs, and provide follow up services among other duties aimed at matching the unemployed to jobs.

In addition to the increased efforts by DWD, the WDVA will also be expanding its efforts to help veterans find jobs. The veteran’s unemployment rate in Wisconsin is estimated at between 13 and 15 percent.

“We owe it to our nation’s heroes to help them find work when they return home,” said Governor Walker. “That is why I’ve directed the Department of Veterans Affairs to expand their efforts of helping place our veterans in jobs.”

The Department will hold fourteen job fairs this year in conjunction with DWD. Governor Walker directed WDVA to proactively reach out to unemployed veterans in order to align them with job placement assistance. About 3,000 veterans will be contacted immediately. WDVA will also partner with the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) to organize an employer educational seminar to inform employers of the benefits of hiring veterans.

The Governor is also directing WDVA to partner with Milicruit to create a Wisconsin specific platform to hold online job fairs for veterans. WDVA, DWD, and DMA recently partnered with Milicruit and other Midwest states to hold a regional online job fair. The results of that job fair are not final, but to date the survey data available shows there were 2,773 visitors, 34 employers participating, 6,655 online chats, and 2,549 email exchanges between employers and veterans.

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