

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Bad River Band of
Lake Superior Chippewa Indians



Forest County
Potawatomi Community



Ho-Chunk Nation



Lac Courte Oreilles Band of
Lake Superior Chippewa Indians



Lac du Flambeau Band of
Lake Superior Chippewa Indians



Menominee Indian Tribe of
Wisconsin



Oneida Nation of
Wisconsin



Red Cliff Band of
Lake Superior Chippewa Indians



Sokaogon Chippewa
Community



St. Croix Chippewa
Community



Stockbridge-Munsee Band of
Mohican Indians



2025
TRIBAL CONSULTATION

Contents

2025 DWD Tribal Consultation Agenda	2
DWD Tribal Affairs Website and Contact	3
DWD Organizational Chart	4
DWD Tribal Action Plan	5
DWD Funding and Programs	17
DWD Boards, Councils, and Committees.....	25
Additional Resources	29
• DWD Agency Overview	
• Wisconsin Fast Forward for Businesses	
• Wisconsin Fast Forward for Schools and Nonprofits	
• Apprenticeship Overview	
• DWD Business Services	
• DWD Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Process	
• DVR Tribal Liaison Staff Directory	
• DWD Labor Market and Workforce Development Update	

Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Tribal Consultation Meeting Agenda

Consultation information:

- Wednesday, June 11, 2025
- Bad River Lodge & Casino, 73370 Us Highway 2, Ashland, WI, 54806

Agenda:

- 10:00 a.m. Welcome & Introductions – Secretary Amy Pechacek
- 10:15 a.m. DWD Agency Overview – Secretary Amy Pechacek
- 10:30 a.m. Discussion – Tribal Representatives and DWD Leaders
- 11:50 a.m. Summary and Next Steps – Julia Halopka, deputy legislative director and tribal liaison
- 12:00 p.m. Adjourn

Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Information for Wisconsin's Tribal Nations

Website:

DWD's Tribal Affairs website features various resources for the Tribes including:

- The Department's current Tribal Action Plan.
- An overview of workforce programs and services.
- Grant opportunities.
- Upcoming engagement opportunities.
- Contact information for DWD and its partners.

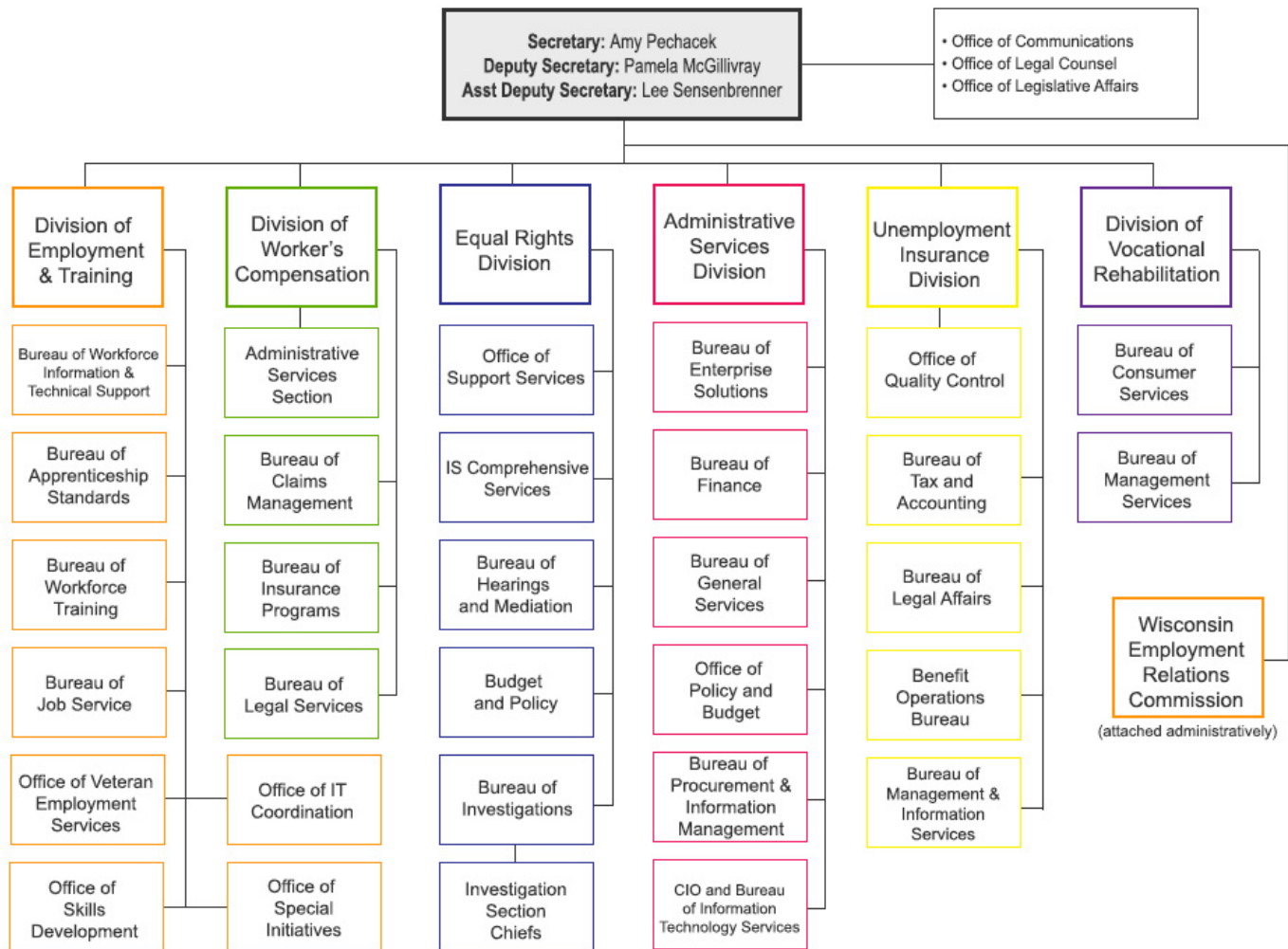
Visit dwd.wisconsin.gov/tribalaffairs to learn more.

Contact:

DWD's Deputy Legislative Director and Tribal Liaison, Julia Halopka, is here to help you navigate Wisconsin's workforce system. Julia can assist in connecting you with DWD's programs, services, and staff. Julia's contact information is below.

Julia Halopka, DWD Deputy Legislative Director and Tribal Liaison
Work: (608) 405-4573
Cell: (608) 512-7218
Email: julia.halopka@dwd.wisconsin.gov

Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Organization Chart



Department of Workforce Development Tribal Action Plan

September 2024 – September 2025

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) recognizes and appreciates the State of Wisconsin's unique legal relationship with the 11 federally recognized Tribes with elected or appointed Tribal governments in the state. As affirmed by [Gov. Tony Evers' Executive Order #18 of April 9, 2019](#), state and tribal governments play key roles in efficiently delivering effective services to all the citizens of Wisconsin. This action plan, informed by consultation with the Tribes, highlights mutually agreeable short- and long-term strategies to address issues of interest to Tribes. DWD and the Tribes headquartered in Wisconsin agree to collaborate on these strategies and provide staff support as required to successfully achieve these outcomes.

Item 01	
Item Name	Assist Tribes with Addressing Workforce Challenges
Responsible Party	DWD's Division of Employment and Training (DET)
In collaboration with	Tribal Leaders, Tribal Departments of Labor, Tribal Human Resources, Workforce Development Boards, Agency Tribal Liaisons
History	<p>At the April 3, 2024, DWD Tribal Consultation meeting and in subsequent meetings, Tribal leaders and DWD reviewed important progress on workforce development collaborations and service delivery. At the same time, Tribal leaders expressed continued concerns about the workforce challenges they are experiencing. The issues included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employee recruitment and retention. Tribal leaders reflected on their achievements in increasing wages and benefits and many tribal enterprises are considered the employers of choice in their neighboring communities and beyond. Tribal human resource leaders also reflected on their efforts to expand their recruitment efforts. Even with this success and continued progress, many Tribal enterprises and communities face challenges with employee recruitment and retention.• Issues of job seeker work readiness, including a mismatch in skills and training, and the lack of soft skills.• Barriers to employment such as the lack of affordable housing, transportation, and broadband access.• High cost and limited availability of childcare, particularly during second and third shifts.• Challenges connecting younger generations with in-demand skills that will lead to rewarding, family-sustaining careers.• Challenges with attracting and retaining certain professions in Tribal and neighboring communities, including doctors, dentists, counselors, and substance use disorders specialists.• Issues with incarceration and substance use disorder rates in Tribal communities.• Lack of access to mental health care and lack of funding to support or expand existing mental health resources.

In summary, while progress is being made, Wisconsin's Tribes are experiencing uneven results in addressing workforce challenges in Tribal government and Tribal services, as well as in Tribal-owned businesses including gaming and hospitality sectors. In comparison with consultations in previous years, more Tribal leaders expressed familiarity with DWD workforce development services. The Tribal leaders reflected on the need for continuing collaboration with DWD to strengthen service delivery.

To help address the workforce issues raised, DWD's Division of Employment and Training (DET) will work closely with the local Workforce Development Boards, the technical colleges, and other state agencies to continue reducing workforce barriers and addressing needs for training and upskilling in Tribal communities.

Outcome/ Update Thanks to Gov. Tony Evers's groundbreaking investment of over \$158 million in the Workforce Solutions Initiative, the administration is working to address the state's workforce needs, including the worker quantity shortage and barriers to entering the workforce among Tribal nations. DWD collaborates with the Tribes on the following Workforce Solutions Initiative programs:

Worker Advancement Initiative

The Worker Advancement Initiative (WAI) serves people whose jobs have not come back since the pandemic, as well as those who were not attached to or were not successful in the labor market prior to the pandemic, by offering subsidized employment and skills training opportunities with local employers. The program builds on the success of current transitional job programs in the state by launching a new, statewide effort to provide subsidized work opportunities to individuals. To date, approximately 291 Tribal members have accessed over 1,454 training and supportive services through targeted outreach and opportunities created in collaboration with the local Workforce Development Boards across the state.

- In Workforce Development Area (WDA) 5, the New Boost Project is partnered with the College of Menominee Nation to provide digital literacy training and career services to Tribal members in collaboration with New North, African Heritage, and Abaxent. A total of 18 individuals successfully completed this programming. Employment details are not yet available.
- In WDA 7, a Construction Management Certification program was created in partnership with the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe College. At Northwood Technical College, there

were cohorts participating in programs on Machine Tool Basics. These programs primarily serve Bad River, Lac Courte Oreilles, and St. Croix. A total of 69 individuals successfully completed this programming.

- In WDA 9, two programs were created in partnership with Ho-Chunk Nation. In the TRANs Training program, participants earn an OSHA 10 certification and apprenticeship pre-test upon program completion. Participants also learn Commercial Drivers' License flagger duties, first-aid and CPR training, proper tool usage, and resume-building skills. A total of 60 individuals successfully completed this programming.
- The Empowerment Training program is derived from the Mending Broken Hearts approach to address intergenerational trauma for Tribal communities. The training program provides financial literacy and workforce readiness skills while considering the specific barriers to entering the workforce that Tribal communities face.

The Workforce Innovation Grant (WIG) Program

WIG helps communities solve their most pressing workforce challenges by financially supporting collaborative, sustainable, and innovative pandemic-recovery plans developed by regional organizations led in collaboration with WEDC. The following WIG programs are in collaboration with Tribes:

- Lac Courte Oreilles received \$4.5 million in WIG funding to develop water infrastructure that will ultimately support the development of Tribal workforce housing units serving 80-120% area median income (AMI) residents.
- Northwoods Technical College, in partnership with the St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin, funded a new mobile welding lab that extends access to welding education to St. Croix Tribal members.

The Worker Connection Program

The Worker Connection program provides free career navigation services aimed at expanding career opportunities to job seekers in the greater Milwaukee and Green Bay areas. The program targets organizations that work with justice-involved individuals including adults on probation and parole, inside jails and other correctional facilities, and individuals affiliated with other community-based organizations. Since enrollment began in March 2022, the program has enrolled 65 Tribal members.

Through the Worker Connection program, career navigators offer coaching that meets clients where they're at and quickly connects them with career, training, and supportive services. Navigators use motivational interviewing techniques combined with a trauma-informed lens to guide job seekers through a process to identify strengths and skills that match with job opportunities.

Career navigators have been in touch with the Oneida Nation regarding additional services available to Tribal members. Additionally, career navigators attended the business services meeting for the Menominee Nation in January 2024. Recently, navigators have been collaborating with faculty and conducting monthly outreach at the college.

Tribal Colleges and WIOA-Funded Tuition Assistance

The College of Menominee Nation and Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe College each have a program that qualifies for the Workforce Opportunity and Innovation Act (WIOA)-funded tuition assistance and is listed on the state's Eligible Training Programs List.

- At the College of Menominee Nation, the 90-hour Home Health Aide course was developed to provide students with a basic core of specialized instruction and practical health care experience in preparation for employment in-home health care. Students also have the opportunity to progress into a more advanced health care training, such as nursing assistant, practical nursing, and ADN nursing programs.
- At the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe College, the Associate Degree of Nursing program educates students in the art of caring and prepares them with evidence-based knowledge and clinical experience to take the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) for Registered Nurses upon graduation. This fundamental level of nursing helps students to earn a career foundation in the health care field and provides opportunities to work in entry-level nursing positions.

Veteran Outreach and Employment Services

DWD's Office of Veteran Employment Services (OVES) is committed to advancing employment opportunities for Wisconsin veterans through targeted business engagement and services for the veteran community. During the period of January through September 2024, OVES provided 268 services to Tribal members.

OVES has noted a higher population of Tribal members who are veterans and a higher demand for veterans services in several key Workforce Development Areas. From January through September 2024, the strongest demand for services came from Employ Milwaukee, WDA 2; the South Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, WDA 10; and the Bay Area Workforce Development Board, WDA 5. The Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) in these areas are currently making strong efforts to advance relationships with the Tribal communities in these areas.

In WDA 4 and 5, staff met at the Oneida Nation Tribal Veteran Service Officers Meeting on April 19, 2024 to provide a presentation about OVES and its programs. The OVES team will continue to discuss OVES services with the President of the County Veterans Service Officers Association of Wisconsin (CVSOA) and the CVSOA of Menominee Nation and Menominee County.

In WDA 2, OVES staff has formed relationships with Potawatomi Casino and several Tribal veterans who are employed there. OVES will continue to work with Tribal partners to be active in the American Indian Chamber of Commerce (AICC). Staff will continue efforts to partner with AICC for OVES to provide employment assistance for Tribal veterans in these areas.

Support to Communities Grant

DWD is also a proud recipient of the federal Support to Communities grant, which fosters opioid recovery through workforce development. Through this U.S. Department of Labor grant program, DWD was awarded funding to provide training, career services, and supportive services to individuals affected by the opioid crisis. This program has served approximately 57 Tribal members throughout the grant, connecting them to a total of 701 services.

Job Service Outreach

Job service managers continue to work with Tribal communities to partner in engagement and outreach efforts with the goal of meeting constituents where they are at. For example, the Oneida Nation created a space in their library for constituents to access virtual job service resources offered by DWD.

Resources [Workforce Solutions Initiative \(wisconsin.gov\)](https://www.wisconsin.gov/workforce)
[Home Page - ETPL \(wisconsin.gov\)](https://www.wisconsin.gov/etpl)
[Job Center of Wisconsin - Where Talent & Opportunity Meet](https://www.wisconsin.gov/jobcenter)

Item 02

Item Name **Apprenticeships**

Responsible Party DWD's Division of Employment and Training Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards (BAS)

In collaboration with Tribal Leaders, Tribal Government Staff, and Tribal Employers

History At the April 3, 2024, DWD Tribal Consultation meeting and subsequent meetings, Tribal leaders expressed interest in sponsoring apprenticeships or expanding apprenticeship opportunities to engage more Tribal members.

DWD's Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards (BAS) will meet with interested Tribes to provide information about Registered Apprenticeship, Youth Apprenticeship, and Certified Pre-Apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship opportunities can help job seekers build the skills necessary for higher wage employment while helping employers find qualified applicants. DWD's Bureau of Apprenticeship can also support the Tribes in encouraging Tribal members to pursue diverse and expanding career pathways through apprenticeship programming.

Outcome/Update On Feb. 29, 2024, DWD Bureau of Apprenticeship Deputy Director Liz Pusch presented on Wisconsin Apprenticeship during a virtual meeting open to all tribes and attended by members from Bad River, Oneida, Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Oneida, Menominee, Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Sokaogon Chippewa Community and Ho-Chunk. Pusch provided a high-level overview of Wisconsin Apprenticeship and its recent record performance. She also explained the roles and responsibilities of employers and apprentices and discussed the successful partnership with the Wisconsin Technical College System to adapt training programs to employer needs.

Trina Schofield, an Ojibwe who gained work experience and management skills at the Potawatomi Casino Hotel in Milwaukee, also presented on efforts by Wisconsin Apprenticeship to expand career pathways into emerging fields. Apprenticeship programs offer a powerful pathway for Indigenous communities to strengthen their workforce, preserve and pass on

traditional skills and knowledge, while also providing valuable opportunities for economic development and self-sufficiency. Through these programs, tribal members can gain hands-on experience and attain nationally recognized credentials in a wide range of fields, empowering individuals and enhancing the collective capacity of our tribes. In her role as an Apprenticeship Training Representative, Schofield supports and facilitates these opportunities, ensuring they align with Tribal communities' needs and aspirations.

Daniel Webster, an Oneida Tribal member and Director of Diversity and Inclusion for the Walbec Group, shared information on his career path and provided a spotlight on how Apprenticeship can lead to success in construction and other careers.

Resources

[Apprenticeship – Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development](#)

Item 03

Item Name **Access to Resources**

Responsible Party DWD

In collaboration with Tribal Leaders, Tribal Government Staff, Governor's Office, Agency Tribal Liaisons

History At the April 3, 2024, DWD Tribal Consultation meeting and subsequent meetings, Tribal leaders expressed difficulties navigating state resources and programs and determining which programs best fit their needs.

DWD's divisions are continuing to explore how to best increase their programs' accessibility to Tribal nations at the statewide and regional level. DWD staff will share information about resources during the ongoing DWD and Tribal virtual check-ins between consultations.

The department will continue to work with the Governor's Office and other agencies on how to streamline access to state services.

Outcome/Update

Department-wide Updates

- DWD hosted its first virtual check-in with Tribes on Feb. 29, 2024 to share resources about apprenticeship and economic/labor market information.
- DWD hosted its second virtual check-in with Tribes on July 26, 2024 to share resources about DWD's Unemployment Insurance Program and the work of the Equal Rights Division to make Wisconsin a fair and just place for all people to live and work.
- DWD's webpage, dwd.wisconsin.gov/tribalaffairs continues to undergo refinement and provides more information about DWD's resources for Tribal nations.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Update

	DWD DVR Tribal Liaison staff attended a one and a half day training on substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health diagnoses that is co-hosted by American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation (AIVR) projects at Menominee Casino and Resort on April 30, 2024, and May 1, 2024. The training was designed to educate staff about substance use disorders and statistics related to co-occurrence with other disabilities in addition to providing information for resources through the Tribes, community-based organization, and the state. The trainings and learning objectives were jointly developed with DVR and AIVR staff.
Resources	Tribal Affairs (wisconsin.gov)

Item 04	
Item Name	Investing in Tribal Youth
Responsible Party	DWD
In collaboration with	Tribal Leaders, Tribal Government Staff, Local Workforce Development Boards
History	<p>At the April 3, 2024, DWD Tribal Consultation meeting and subsequent meetings, Tribal leaders emphasized the importance of serving the Tribal youth population to invest in the state's future workforce. The following youth resources and services were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial literacy courses; • Work-readiness courses; • Mental health resources; • Career counseling; and • Youth Apprenticeships. <p>Participants emphasized the importance of culturally competent services and programs for Tribal youth. Tribal members who currently work with Tribal youth discussed the success and engagement in existing programs, the need to expand current programs, and the need to evaluate additional program opportunities. DWD will conduct outreach to the Tribes to outline current services available to Tribal youth. DWD's divisions will explore how to best increase their programs' accessibility to Tribal youth and improve overall cultural competency at the statewide and regional level.</p>
Outcome/Update	<p>Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Updates</p> <p>DWD's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) offers work-based learning opportunities to eligible/potentially eligible students. Participation in the program is voluntary, and parental consent is required for all participants.</p> <p>Throughout 2024, DVR worked in partnership with the Lac Courte Oreilles Vocational Rehabilitation program and the Vocational Rehabilitation for Native Americans program offered by the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council. The focus of the collaboration was youth engagement and the Tribal summer youth program.</p>

During 2024, the Tribal summer youth program served 70 students. This included two from Lac Courte Oreilles, five from Red Cliff, 28 from St. Croix, and 35 from Bad River.

The program is operated by the Tribal community and is tailored to meet their specific needs. For example, in St. Croix, a six-week program has been implemented that extends beyond DVR's involvement. In recent years, the St. Croix program covered various topics such as spiritual wellness, traditional arts and language, healthy relationships, Narcan training, immersion into the Korean culture, a canoe trip, and concluded by holding a ceremonial Powwow. In Red Cliff and Bad River, similar programs have been discussed, including opportunities for CPR training, work safety, and ATV safety courses.

By collaborating with Tribal partners, DVR can support comprehensive programs like these in St. Croix, Red Cliff, and Bad River, contributing to DWD's commitment to serve potentially eligible students in underserved areas, including tribal communities. Some of the work sites have included Bad River Health Clinic, Bad River Boys and Girls Club, Bad River Maintenance Department, Bad River Legal Department, Bad River Admin Department, Red Cliff Health Clinic, Red Cliff Food Distribution, Red Cliff Library, Red Cliff Youth Center, St. Croix Tribal Office, St. Croix Clinic, and St. Croix Maintenance Crew.

Youth Apprenticeship

A Youth Apprenticeship is a one- or two-year “earn while you learn” program for high school juniors and seniors consisting of work and related classroom instruction in a chosen occupation. Training is received on-the-job where the employer teaches the skills of the occupation. This is augmented by taking courses that are related to that occupation. Youth Apprenticeship (YA) opportunities are organized into 16 broad YA Program Areas. Within each Program Area are a number of more specific Occupational Pathways. Those Program Areas include agriculture, food, and natural resources; architecture and construction; finance; health sciences; hospitality and tourism; information technology; manufacturing, etc. Schools that are interested in offering the YA program, as well as interested employers and students, can find their local YA consortium by contacting the Department of Workforce Development YA staff at YA@dwd.wisconsin.gov, or by looking up your local consortium here: <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/apprenticeship/contacts.htm>.

Resources

[Tribal Affairs \(wisconsin.gov\)](https://wisconsin.gov/tribal-affairs)
[Youth Apprenticeship \(wisconsin.gov\)](https://wisconsin.gov/youth-apprenticeship)

Item 05

Item Name

Workforce Data

Responsible Party

DWD Division of Employment and Training (DET)

In collaboration with	Tribal Leaders
History	<p>At the April 3, 2024, DWD Tribal Consultation meeting and subsequent meetings, Tribal leaders identified the need for labor and workforce data specific to Tribal nations. HR specialists noted that the data would inform the development and evaluation of recruitment and retention strategies.</p> <p>DWD's Division of Employment and Training includes regional labor market economists who are skilled in assembling and interpreting local data on workforce trends, wages, housing, transportation, and demographics for use in strategic planning and workforce recruitment and retention. The economists are available for Tribal meetings and may provide specific data to support the Tribes in community development and employment success. DWD's Tribal Liaison can facilitate these meetings.</p>
Outcome/Update	<p>DET's Lead Economist Dennis Winters gave a presentation on labor market information and the state of the economy at the department's virtual check-in with Tribes on Feb. 29, 2024.</p> <p>In addition to providing an overview of the labor market successes and worker quantity challenges facing Wisconsin as a whole, Winters' presentation featured information tailored to Tribal data requests. The presentation covered labor market characteristics in key counties with a strong Tribal population and examined the career opportunities based on industry concentration in these counties. Winters also discussed technology trends that may hold promise for shifting valuable Tribal talent from dull and repetitive jobs to more strategic needs.</p>
Resources	Employment & Training Dashboard (wisconsin.gov) WisConomy.com

Item 06	
Item Name	Connections to Vocational Rehabilitation
Responsible Party	DWD Division of Vocation Rehabilitation (DVR)
In collaboration with	Tribal leaders, government staff, and vocational rehabilitation services
History	<p>At the April 3, 2024, DWD Tribal Consultation meeting and subsequent meetings, DVR leadership shared information about the division and Vocational Rehabilitation for Native Americans (VRNA) connections and collaboration on services offered. Both DVR and Tribal leaders expressed the need to keep supporting and enhancing this shared work.</p> <p>DWD will continue efforts to support and expand vocational rehabilitation connections, services, and relationships. DWD will assess the feasibility of continuing to expand DVR Summer Youth Services to other Tribes. In addition, DVR will expand efforts to incorporate culturally specific elements into its rehabilitation services to help counselors work with individuals on their needs related to their disability and intergenerational trauma.</p>

Outcome/Update	<p>On Sept. 20, 2024, approximately 20 DVR staff attended the joint annual meeting and training with staff from AIVR partner programs and Lac Courte Oreilles Casino and Resort. The meeting focused on staff networking with partners, program updates, history of Lac Courte Oreilles, and next steps.</p> <p>DVR also invited Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation partners to present to a meeting of DVR staff and others attended by some 300 people. Presenters included Myrna Warrington, Director of Vocational Rehabilitation for the College of Menominee Nation; Julie Murray of GLITC VRNA; and Ernest Oberst, Oneida VR. The presenters covered historical trauma and informed care.</p> <p>These activities build on attendance by four DVR staff members at the National Consortia of Administrators of Native American Rehabilitation Conference in December 2023 to learn and apply cultural competency to their work alongside WI AIVR partners. The conference was a great opportunity to learn national best practices and network with Tribal partners.</p> <p>Additionally, in January 2024, DVR helped fund an event for Tribal youth with disabilities in collaboration with the College of Menominee Nation to have Bronson Koenig, former UW basketball player and member of the Ho-Chunk Nation, discuss resilience, mental health, and career success.</p>
Resources	Vocational Rehabilitation (wisconsin.gov)

Item 07	
Item Name	Improving Cultural Competency
Responsible Party	DWD
In collaboration with	Governor's Office, Tribal Liaisons, Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council (GLITC)
History	<p>DWD recognizes the need to expand the department's cultural competencies to improve collaboration with the Tribes and best serve Tribal communities. DWD will evaluate how to best train and educate non-native staff to improve understanding of Tribal histories, cultures and customs, ways of working, shared and individual trauma experiences, Tribal languages, and Tribal services.</p> <p>DWD's Tribal Liaison can assist with these efforts in consultation with agencies' Tribal Liaisons, the Governor's Office, and the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council (GLITC).</p>
Outcome/Update	<p>DWD's Tribal Liaison attended the Department of Transportation (DOT) Tribal affairs and cultural competency training on March 6-7, 2024, and is exploring the opportunity to adapt that training for DWD's staff.</p> <p>Four DVR staff members attended the National Consortia of Administrators of Native American Rehabilitation Conference in December 2023 to learn and apply cultural</p>

	competency to their work alongside WI AIVR partners. The conference was a great opportunity to learn national best practices and network with Tribal partners.
Resources	--

Item 08	
Item Name	Resources for Justice-Involved Individuals
Responsible Party	DWD Division of Employment and Training (DET), DWD Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Local Workforce Development Boards
In collaboration with	Tribal Leaders, Tribal Governments, the Department of Corrections (DOC)
History	<p>At the April 3, 2024, DWD Tribal Consultation meeting and subsequent meetings, Tribal leaders expressed the need for resources for adults and youth who are justice-involved. Incarceration and re-entry barriers significantly impact individuals' ability to obtain and maintain employment. Conversely, employment is key to combatting recidivism.</p> <p>DWD will conduct outreach to the Tribes to outline current services available to individuals that are justice-involved. As part of the department's increasing accessibility and improving cultural competency efforts, DWD will emphasize evaluating the expansion of these services to Tribal communities and how to cater to Tribal members' needs.</p>
Outcome/Update	<p>In 2017, DET identified strategies to prepare justice-involved individuals for employment when re-entering their community after release. A year later, in 2018, the first correctional job lab opened at Oakhill Correctional Institution in Oregon, WI.</p> <p>Since 2018, 11 correctional job labs have opened, including one mobile job lab and 10 classrooms inside correctional facilities. In 2023, DWD and the Department of Corrections (DOC) assisted nearly 8,729 persons in DOC care through the correctional job labs.</p>
Resources	--

Item 09	
Item Name	DWD's Overall Engagement with Wisconsin's Tribes
Responsible Party	DWD Secretary's Office
In collaboration with	Tribal Leaders
History	At the April 3, 2024, DWD Tribal Consultation meeting and subsequent meetings, improving communication between DWD leadership and Tribal leadership was discussed. DWD is

dedicated to fostering these relationships to improve coordination and better serve Tribal job seekers, employers, and workers.

DWD will provide virtual engagement opportunities on a quarterly basis, or more frequently as mutually determined, for Tribal leaders or their designees to receive updates on resources and opportunities, connect with technical assistance, and develop relationships that support deeper engagement. Additionally, the Secretary plans to visit each of the Tribes over the course of the year.

DWD is also interested in increasing Tribal representation on its various councils and boards to provide more opportunities for engagement and increase collaboration. The department will continue this discussion with Tribal leaders and communities to gauge interest and identify potential appointees.

Outcome/Update

Secretary Pechacek visited Ho-Chunk Nation on March 28, 2024, Menominee Nation on June 12, 2024, Red Cliff on June 25, 2024, Oneida Nation on July 12, 2024, and the Forest County Potawatomi on Aug. 29. Scheduling for other visits is in progress.

The department held a virtual check-in with Tribal leadership and their staff on Thursday, Feb. 29, 2024. This check-in covered information from DWD's Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards and labor market information from the Bureau of Workforce Information and Technical Support. The department also held a virtual check-in on July 16, 2024. This check-in covered information from DWD's Equal Rights and Unemployment Insurance Divisions.

Regarding DWD's councils, Daniel Webster, who is the Director of Diversity and Inclusion for the Walbec Group and a member of the Oneida Nation, was appointed to Wisconsin's Apprenticeship Advisory Council at the end of 2023. He also participated in the department's virtual check-in on Feb. 29, 2024 to discuss his experience with apprenticeship.

Resources

--

Department of Workforce Development (DWD)
Funding and Programs Available to Tribal Nations
 (updated June 2025)

The 2021 Tribal Consultation Policy states: each agency shall create a list of programs and services available to Tribes, including an overview listed by agency division/bureau/section, contact information, and summary. Below are DWD programs and funding opportunities available to tribal nations.

Registered Apprenticeship (RA)	
Program Name:	Registered Apprenticeship
Program Type:	Education for employment services, on-the-job learning reimbursement, supportive services reimbursement administered by DWD
Funding Cycle:	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding is annual. Federal grants have periods of performance.
Description:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To register apprenticeships in high-growth occupations including advanced manufacturing, biotechnology, financial services, healthcare, IT industries as well as expanding on existing programs. To provide up to \$600 reimbursement to apprentices for costs incurred during an apprenticeship for work-related clothing, boots, tools, transportation, housing, childcare, etc. To provide up to \$2,500 reimbursement per apprentice to the sponsor of the apprentice.
Target Population:	Anyone age 16 or above
Program Requirements:	Apprenticeships, credential attainment, occupational training
Funding Stream(s):	WIOA and U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) competitive grants
Lead DWD Division:	Employment and Training
Resources:	Apprenticeship website: dwd.wisconsin.gov/apprenticeship
DWD Contact:	David Polk, Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards Director, david.polk@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Youth Apprenticeship (YA)	
Program Name:	Youth Apprenticeship (YA)
Program Type:	Education for employment services coordinated locally by YA consortia.
Funding Cycle:	Annual
Description:	To provide grants to local school districts, partnerships, and/or consortiums for the implementation and coordination of local youth apprenticeship programs. YA programming provides hands-on instruction, while youth apprentices complete coursework that pertains to a specific career field.

Target Population:	High schoolers ages 16 to 18
Program Requirements:	Consortia must provide 50% matching funds up to \$550 per student served.
Funding Stream(s):	General Purpose Revenue (GPR)
Lead DWD Division:	Employment and Training
Resources:	YA website: dwd.wi.gov/apprenticeship/ya
DWD Contact:	David Polk, Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards Director david.polk@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Apprenticeship Completion Award Program (ACAP)	
Program Name:	Apprenticeship Completion Award Program (ACAP)
Program Type:	Reimbursement
Funding Cycle:	Annual
Description:	The Apprenticeship Completion Award Program (ACAP) partially reimburses eligible apprentices or sponsors for partial reimbursement for the costs associated with a Wisconsin registered apprenticeship.
Target Population:	Apprentices and sponsors
Program Requirements:	<p>When the apprentice is eligible, the party or parties that incurred the costs (the apprentice or the sponsor) can request reimbursement from the Bureau.</p> <p>To be eligible, the apprentice must meet either eligibility event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year One: the apprentice is active and in good standing at the one-year anniversary of their contract registration. • Completion: the apprentice successfully completes, and is currently employed in the program they were trained in. <p>Public sector apprentices and sponsors, such as protective services, utilities, and more, are excluded from ACAP by law.</p>
Funding Stream(s):	General Purpose Revenue (GPR)
Lead DWD Division:	Employment and Training
Resources:	Apprenticeship website: dwd.wisconsin.gov/apprenticeship
DWD Contact:	David Polk, Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards Director david.polk@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Vocational Rehabilitation to Native Americans with Disabilities	
Program Name:	Vocational Rehabilitation to Native Americans with Disabilities
Program Type:	MOA with the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council (GLITC)
Funding Cycle:	Annual
Description:	<p>Vocational Rehabilitation services are sensitive to individual cultural beliefs, strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, and abilities so each may engage in gainful employment.</p> <p>Support may include one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational counseling; • Vocational evaluation and/or career exploration;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job seeking skills; • Job development; • Transition from high school to post-secondary education or immediate employment; • Physical or technical aids needed to accommodate a disability in the workplace; • Tools and equipment; and • Other federally approved services needed to find, keep, or advance at a job.
Target Population:	Native American individuals with disabilities who have barriers to employment.
Program Requirements:	Internships, apprenticeships, job training and placement, summer programs, childcare and transportation subsidies, career planning, and credential attainment.
Funding Stream(s):	U.S. Department of Education grant and Tribal Gaming Revenue
Lead DWD Division:	Vocational Rehabilitation
DWD Contact:	Meredith Dressel, DVR Administrator meredith.dressel@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Teacher Training and Recruitment	
Program Name:	Teacher Training and Recruitment
Program Type:	Grant
Funding Cycle:	Annual
Description:	The Teacher Training and Recruitment program is a state-funded annual grant program open to non-profit organizations that can demonstrate a critical need to recruit, train, and prepare individuals to teach in low-income or urban Wisconsin schools.
Target Population:	Nonprofit organizations
Program Requirements:	Funds may not be "passed through" or transferred from the grant award recipient to another entity or individual. Rather, awarded funds are used to reimburse grant award recipients for approved, eligible expenses.
Funding Stream(s):	General Purpose Revenue (GPR)
Lead DWD Division:	Employment and Training
DWD Contact:	John Roos, Office of Skills Development Director John.Roos@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Career and Technical Education (CTE) Incentive Grants and Completion Awards	
Program Name:	Career and Technical Education (CTE) Incentive Grants and Completion Awards
Program Type:	Grant
Funding Cycle:	Annual

Description:	Grants from this program incentivize school districts to offer high-quality career and technical education programs that mitigate workforce shortages in key industries and occupations. The grants reimburse schools up to \$1,000 for each recent graduate in the district earning an approved industry-recognized certification. Additionally, student completion awards of \$500 per eligible certification are permitted for graduates who earned certifications in EMT, EMR, Fire Fighter I, Fire Fighter II, and/or Fire Inspector. District incentives are paid to the school, and student completion awards are paid directly to the graduates.
Target Population:	Students and schools
Program Requirements:	Schools must apply annually to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) by submitting eligible claims for certifications earned by their graduates and providing supporting documentation for each certification.
Funding Stream(s):	General Purpose Revenue (GPR)
Lead DWD Division:	Employment and Training
DWD Contact:	John Keckhaver, Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards-YA Section Manager John.Keckhaver@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Technical Education Equipment Grants	
Program Name:	Technical Education Equipment Grants
Program Type:	Grant
Funding Cycle:	Annual
Description:	Help schools equip their technical education classes with CNC (computer numerical control) augers, lathes, mills, routers, and water jet cutters; also, robotic arms and PLC (programmable logic control) computers to operate them and other machines. The list of items for school equipment includes 3D metal printers and an array of welding equipment.
Target Population:	Students interested in advancement manufacturing careers
Program Requirements:	A school district grantee must provide matching funds at a 2:1 rate.
Funding Stream(s):	General Purpose Revenue (GPR)
Lead DWD Division:	Employment and Training
DWD Contact Name:	John Roos, Office of Skills Development Director John.Roos@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF)	
Program Name:	Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF)
Program Type: (Grant/Contract)	State-funded grant program for industry sector training and internship development
Funding Cycle:	Annual
Description (Purpose):	Grants to businesses and to business/workforce stakeholder consortiums from all Wisconsin industry sectors to reimburse the costs of customized occupational training for unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers. Additionally, grants are provided to increase student internship participation.

Target Population:	Anyone age 16 or above
Program Requirements:	Visit the Wisconsin Fast Forward website for details concerning industry sector training and/or internship coordination opportunities.
Funding Stream(s):	General Purpose Revenue (GPR)
Lead DWD Division:	Employment and Training
Resources:	Wisconsin Fast Forward website: WisconsinFastForward.com
DWD Contact:	John Roos, Office of Skills Development Director John.Roos@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Worker Connection	
Program Name:	Worker Connection
Program Type:	Federal funding provided to DWD through an MOU with the Wisconsin Department of Administration.
Funding Cycle:	Period of performance ends October 31, 2026.
Description:	The Worker Connection program provides free navigation services to expand career opportunities at the local level. Trained Career Navigators work one-on-one with clients to identify their interests, values, and conditions of work. Navigators then connect clients to resources, trainings, and in-demand career pathways in their area. The program also partners with community-based organizations and businesses to provide support and help employers with their workforce needs. Currently, the Worker Connection program is active in Milwaukee County (WDA 2) and the Green Bay area (WDA 5) and expanding to the other nine WDAs.
Target Population:	Individuals with barriers to employment.
Program Requirements:	Career navigation services, including sector-based training and work-related supports
Funding Stream(s):	American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds
Lead DWD Division:	Employment and Training
DWD Contact Name:	Michele Carter, Employment and Training Administrator michele.carter1@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Worker Advancement Initiative (WAI)	
Program Name:	Worker Advancement Initiative (WAI)
Program Type:	Grants to Workforce Development Boards
Funding Cycle:	One-time grant with funding issued in two distinct rounds.
Description:	Serves people whose previous employment has not continued in the post-pandemic economy, as well as those who were not attached to or were not successful in the labor market prior to the pandemic, by offering subsidized employment and skills training opportunities with local employers and/or training providers. Round 1 of the WAI grants built on the success of current transitional job programs in the state through a statewide effort to provide subsidized work opportunities to over 4,000 individuals. Round 2 of the WAI grants will leverage the best practices learned during Round 1 to provide similar services to approximately 1,000 additional individuals.

Target Population:	Individuals presumptively impacted or disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency or its negative economic impacts.
Program Requirements:	Subsidized employment and skills training opportunities with local employers and/or training providers. Round 2 of the WAI grants also requires mandatory direct-to-participant cost-of-living stipends and/or incentives for achievement of program related goals.
Funding Stream(s):	American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Funds were awarded to each of Wisconsin's 11 workforce development boards, effective October 1, 2021, to operate a variety of projects.
Lead DWD Division:	Employment and Training
DWD Contact:	Michele Carter, Employment and Training Administrator michele.carter1@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Mobile Career Lab	
Program Name:	Mobile Career Lab
Program Type:	N/A
Funding Cycle:	N/A
Description:	The Mobile Career Lab, operated by employment and training specialists, delivers Job Center Services anywhere in Wisconsin. This new tool is equipped with computers and display screens that can be used as a classroom for training and employment workshops or as a resource room for resume and job application assistance.
Target Population:	Businesses and job seekers
Program Requirements:	To reserve the Mobile Career Lab for a recruitment or training event, job fair, as an employment resource, or for other workforce-related occasions, please fill out DWD's reservation form. Reservation Form.
Funding Stream(s):	The Mobile Career Lab is funded in part by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and State of Wisconsin workforce funds.
Lead DWD Division/Bureau:	Employment and Training
Resources:	Mobile Career Lab reservation form: jobcenterofwisconsin.com/Presentation/Email/EmailDWD.aspx
DWD Contact:	Michele Carter, Employment and Training Administrator michele.carter1@dwd.wisconsin.gov
DVR Career Pathways Advancement Initiative	
Program Name:	DVR Career Pathways Advancement Initiative
Program Type:	One-time competitive federal grant awarded to DWD.
Funding Cycle:	Five years, ending in 2026.
Description:	To create resources and opportunities to support vocational rehabilitation consumers to advance in a career in one of four fields: healthcare, digital/information technology, construction, and manufacturing.
Target Population:	Former and current DVR consumers and individuals with disabilities who have an interest in one of the four career fields.

Program Requirements:	DVR will be contacting former DVR consumers with a closed case that indicated an interest in one of the four career fields. Current DVR consumers will be apprised of this service. Individuals with disabilities, seeking employment, and with an interest in these four fields can apply for vocational rehabilitation services.
Funding Stream(s):	US Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration competitive grant.
Lead DWD Division:	Vocational Rehabilitation
DWD Contact:	Meredith Dressel, DVR Administrator meredith.dressel@dvr.wisconsin.gov
Rapid Response Annual Allotment Grants	
Program Name:	Rapid Response Annual Allotment Grants
Program Type:	Grants to Workforce Development Areas
Funding Cycle:	Annual (July 1 through June 30)
Description:	Funding for local rapid response teams so they can respond to business closures and workforce reductions resulting in permanent job loss. The goal of Rapid Response is to prevent or minimize the negative impacts of layoffs on employees, businesses/organizations, and communities.
Target Population:	Employees who are permanently laid off as a result of a facility closure or workforce reduction.
Program Requirements:	The local Rapid Response teams are required to comply with certain terms and conditions, including offering services based on the number of impacted employees associated with the dislocation event.
Funding Stream(s):	DOL formula grant
Lead DWD Division:	Employment and Training
DWD Contact:	Michele Carter, Employment and Training Administrator michele.carter1@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Adult Program	
Program Name:	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Adult Program
Program Type:	Grants to Workforce Development Areas
Funding Cycle:	Annual (July 1 through June 30)
Description:	Funding for occupational skills training, supportive services, and other employment and training services focused on improving the economic outlook of eligible individuals by helping them gain the skills needed to become employable, find employment, and improve employment. Funding also supports business service activities to help employers connect with program participants to fill critical skills needs.
Target Population:	Individuals Age 18+ who are legally authorized to work in the United States. Veterans and eligible spouses, individuals who are low-income, and individuals who are basic skills deficient receive priority of service.
Program Requirements:	Individuals must be determined eligible.
Funding Stream(s):	DOL formula grant

Lead DWD Division:	Employment and Training
DWD Contact:	Michele Carter, Employment and Training Administrator michele.carter1@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Dislocated Worker Program	
Program Name:	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Dislocated Worker Program
Program Type:	Grants to Workforce Development Areas
Funding Cycle:	Annual (July 1 through June 30)
Description:	Funding for occupational skills training, supportive services, and other employment and training services focused on upskilling individuals who have become dislocated from employment to reduce the period of unemployment.
Target Population:	Individuals who meet the definition of a dislocated worker in at least one of six categories. (Individual/small group layoff, business closure/mass layoff, separating/separated members of the U.S. Armed Forces, self-employed but has become unemployed due to general economic conditions or natural disaster, displaced homemaker, and trailing military spouse).
Program Requirements:	Individuals must be determined eligible.
Funding Stream(s):	DOL formula grant
Lead DWD Division:	Employment and Training
DWD Contact:	Michele Carter, Employment and Training Administrator michele.carter1@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Youth Program	
Program Name:	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Youth Program
Program Type:	Grants to Workforce Development Areas
Funding Cycle:	Annual (July 1 through June 30)
Description:	Funding for 14 program elements aimed at supporting the educational attainment and occupational skills development of youth and young adults. Program elements include tutoring, secondary school services, work experience, occupational skills training, education, leadership development, mentoring, financial literacy education, and more.
Target Population:	In-school youth ages 14-21 who are low-income and have at least one barrier to employment. Out-of-school youth ages 16-24 who have at least one barrier to employment.
Program Requirements:	Individuals must be determined eligible.
Funding Stream(s):	DOL formula grant
Lead DWD Division:	Employment and Training
DWD Contact:	Michele Carter, Employment and Training Administrator michele.carter1@dwd.wisconsin.gov

Department of Workforce Development (DWD)
Boards, Councils, and Committees
(updated June 2025)

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON MIGRANT LABOR

Website: dwd.wisconsin.gov/jobservice/MSFW/migrant-labor-council-description

Description: The Council on Migrant Labor advises the Governor on issues affecting migrant seasonal farm workers. Duties of the Council include advising DWD on matters affecting migrant workers, ascertaining working conditions of migrants, ensuring coordination of federal and state statutes regarding migrant workers, and reviewing rules submitted by the Department. Members meet quarterly and meetings are open to the public.

Membership: The Governor's Council on Migrant Labor consists of six employer representatives, six migrant representatives, and four legislators. Members serve three-year terms and are appointed by the Governor, except for the legislative members. Legislative members must be appointed by their respective Caucus.

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE INVESTMENT

Website: cwi.wisconsin.gov

Description: The Governor's Council on Workforce Investment (CWI) is the federally mandated entity under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) that assists the governor in developing innovative and dynamic approaches to develop Wisconsin's workforce. CWI is charged with aiding Wisconsin employers in finding the workers they need and providing resources to enable workers to access training for in-demand careers with the goal of moving Wisconsin's economy forward.

CWI works closely with DWD to craft a comprehensive workforce development strategy that anticipates employer labor needs while building and strengthening Wisconsin's workforce; supports the development of a highly skilled labor force; and empowers individuals to pursue and retain good paying careers. CWI also leverages the strong partnerships that exist within Wisconsin's workforce development system to lay the foundation for continuing enhancements that will benefit Wisconsin businesses and workers.

Membership: Members include a majority of business leaders, as well as state legislators and local elected officials, representatives from educational institutions, community-based organizations, and labor representatives from throughout the state.

HEALTH CARE PROVIDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Website: dwd.wisconsin.gov/wc/councils/wcac/hcpac/

Description: The Health Care Provider Advisory Committee (HCPAC) was created by 2005 Wisconsin Act 172 that went into effect on April 1, 2006. The purpose of the HCPAC is to update worker's compensation treatment guidelines that are to be considered by impartial health care services review

organizations in rendering opinions to resolve necessity of treatment disputes under Wis. Stats. s. 102.16(2m) and s. DWD 80.73 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code.

Membership: The HCPAC is comprised of health care experts to advise DWD on any contemplated rulemaking related to amending the worker's compensation treatment guidelines in ch. DWD 81 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. Members are appointed by the DWD Secretary.

SELF-INSURERS COUNCIL

Website: dwd.wisconsin.gov/wc/councils/self-insured/

Description: The 1913 Wisconsin Statutes contained a provision that allowed the Department to exempt employers from their duty to purchase worker's compensation insurance if the employer could demonstrate that they had the financial ability to pay all claims arising from injuries occurring in their workplace. This provision created the self-insurance program, and subsequently the Self-Insurers Council (SIC). SIC plays an instrumental role in ensuring that those employers applying for self-insurance are financially viable. SIC also monitors, in conjunction with the Worker's Compensation Division, the financial status of employers that are approved for self-insurance.

Membership: The Self-Insurers Council is comprised of five members who represent self-insured employers. Members are appointed by the DWD Secretary.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Website: dwd.wisconsin.gov/uibola/uiac/

Description: The Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council (UIAC) was created to advise the Legislature and DWD on matters concerning Wisconsin's Unemployment Insurance (UI) program, and to recommend changes to improve the state's UI laws. Recommendations of the UIAC reflect interests of employers who pay contributions or reimburse benefit payments and workers who depend on unemployment benefits in times of economic hardship. The UIAC's diverse opinions, perspectives, and knowledge of the program are key to ensuring a balanced representation of the interests of both workers and employers is maintained in Wisconsin's UI program.

During each regular session of the legislature, the UIAC submits its recommendations with respect to amendments to Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 108 and reports its views on any pending bill relating to this chapter to the proper legislative committee. DWD presents to the UIAC proposals initiated by the department for changes in this chapter and seeks the council's concurrence with the proposals. DWD considers every proposal submitted by the UIAC for legislative or administrative action and reviews each legislative proposal for possible incorporation into departmental recommendations. Pursuant to Wis. Stats. s. 16.48, DWD prepares a biennial report for the UIAC regarding projections of UI operations including benefit payments, tax collections, borrowing or debt repayments/ and amounts of interest charges. The report also provides secretary's recommendations and an explanation for such recommendations, including specific proposed changes, if any, in the laws relating to unemployment insurance financing, benefits, and administration.

Membership: UIAC membership is comprised of five labor (employee) representatives, five management (employer) representatives, and one non-voting chairperson (Bureau of Legal Affairs Director).

WISCONSIN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Website: dwd.wi.gov/waewdc

Description: The Wisconsin Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council (WAEWDC) was created to increase the hiring and retention of well-qualified employees in industries related to agriculture, food, and natural resources; promote the coordination of educational systems to develop, train, and retrain employees for current and future careers related to agriculture, food, and natural resources; develop support for employment in fields related to agriculture, food, and natural resources; and recommend policies and other changes to improve the efficiency of the development and provision of agricultural education across educational systems.

In addition, WAEWDC advises state agencies on matters related to integrating agricultural education and workforce development systems, including the coordination of programs, exchange of information related to educational and workforce development needs, and monitoring and evaluation of programs. Annually, WAEWDC prepares a report that identifies the criteria for evaluating its activities, reports on the success of its activities, and includes reviews regarding the status of agricultural education programs in primary and secondary schools, the technical college system, and the University of Wisconsin System including UW-Extension.

Membership: WAEWDC is a function of DWD and consists of agency leaders or their designee from DWD, the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection, Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, and Department of Natural Resources; institutional leaders or their designee from the Wisconsin Technical College System, UW-System, and UW-Extension; K-12 administrators, teachers, guidance counselors, and other representatives from agricultural education entities; representatives from all facets of agricultural and natural resources industries and associations; and four legislators representing standing committees on education and agriculture.

WISCONSIN APPRENTICESHIP ADVISORY COUNCIL

Website: dwd.wisconsin.gov/apprenticeship/advisory-council.htm

Description: The Wisconsin Apprenticeship Advisory Council's (WAAC) mission is to advise the Department of Workforce Development on matters involving the Wisconsin Apprenticeship System, including the enactment of laws, rules, and standards.

All members of WAAC must be familiar with and involved in the apprenticeship system. Employee and employer members serve three-year terms and are nominated by statewide trade associations, employers or employer groups, the state labor organization, and community-based organizations in the apprenticeship system. Only designated members of the Council are authorized to vote. The Council meets at least four times a year or more often, as needed.

Membership: WAAC membership is comprised of nine employer representatives and nine employee representatives who are appointed by DWD's Secretary; one representative appointed by the State Superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction; one representative from the Wisconsin Technical College System appointed by the System's President; two public members appointed by the DWD Secretary; and the DWD Director of the Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards serves as the nonvoting chair.

WISCONSIN REHABILITATION COUNCIL

Website: dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/partners/wrc/

Description: The Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council (WRC) was re-created by Governor Tony Evers in 2023 under Executive Order #182. Its purpose is to advise and assist DWD's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation as required by Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended).

WRC works on behalf of Wisconsin residents with disabilities to review, analyze, and advise DVR regarding the performance of its responsibilities in providing quality services to people with disabilities. WRC endeavors to build partnerships among people with disabilities, providers of service, advocacy organizations, and other groups; reach out to people with disabilities throughout the state; hear and respond to concerns and issues raised by people with disabilities; and encourage trust and cooperation with DVR and advocacy organizations to optimize the use of scarce resources.

Membership: WRC members are appointed to staggered three-year terms by the Governor. The Administrator of DVR serves as an ex-officio member. Members of WRC consist of individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory, and mental disabilities; parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or authorized representatives of people with disabilities who have difficulty in representing themselves or are unable due to their disabilities to represent themselves; and current or former DVR applicants or recipients.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Website: dwd.wisconsin.gov/wc/councils/wcac/

Description: The Wisconsin Worker's Compensation Advisory Council (WCAC) was created to advise the Department and Legislature on policy matters concerning the development and administration of the worker's compensation (WC) law, Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 102. One of the most important and enduring principles of the WCAC is maintaining the overall stability of the worker's compensation system without regard to partisan changes in the legislative or executive branches of government. The WCAC provides a vehicle for labor and management representatives to play a direct role in recommending changes in the worker's compensation law to the Legislature.

During each regular session of the legislature, the WCAC submits its recommendations with respect to amendments to Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 102 and reports its views on any pending bill relating to this chapter to the proper legislative committee. At the request of the chairpersons of the senate and assembly committees on labor, DWD schedules meetings with the WCAC and with the members of the senate and assembly committees on labor to review and discuss matters of legislative concern related to WC.

Membership: The composition of the WCAC is reflective of key players within the worker's compensation system. WCAC membership is comprised of five voting representatives from employees, five voting representatives from management, three non-voting representatives from the insurance industry, and one representative from DWD, who serves as chairperson. Members are appointed by the DWD Secretary.

Are you interested in serving on any of DWD's boards, councils, or committees?

Contact Julia Halopka, DWD deputy legislative director and tribal liaison to learn more.

You can reach Julia at julia.halopka@dwd.wisconsin.gov or 608-405-4573.

Additional Resources

- [DWD Agency Overview](#)
- [Wisconsin Fast Forward for Businesses](#)
- [Wisconsin Fast Forward for Schools and Nonprofits](#)
- [Apprenticeship Overview](#)
- [DWD Business Services](#)
- [DWD Division of Vocational Rehabilitation \(DVR\) Process](#)
- [DVR Tribal Liaison Staff Directory](#)
- [DWD Labor Market and Workforce Development Update](#)



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

2025 DWD Tribal Consultation

The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is a state agency charged with building and strengthening Wisconsin's workforce in the 21st century and beyond.

DWD's primary responsibilities include providing job services, training and employment assistance to people looking for work, while aiding employers in the search for the necessary workers to fill current job openings.

DWD offers a wide variety of employment programs that help connect employers and job seekers, secure jobs for people with disabilities, and assist people with low-incomes and the long-term unemployed in achieving sustainable employment outcomes. The department promotes employment in the state through Wisconsin Job Centers, links youth with jobs of tomorrow, protects and enforces worker's rights, processes unemployment claims, and ensures worker's compensation claims are paid in accordance with the law.



Food + Farm Exploration Center of Plover



Fincantieri Marine of Marinette

MISSION

DWD efficiently delivers effective and inclusive services to meet Wisconsin's diverse workforce needs, and advocates for the protection and economic advancement of all Wisconsin workers, employers, and job seekers.

VISION

DWD envisions a thriving Wisconsin economy in which:

- ♦ All workers are treated fairly, with dignity and respect;
- ♦ Employers, government, educational institutions, and workers collaborate to ensure workforce programs meet current and future needs; and
- ♦ Every job provides the wages and benefits necessary to support workers' basic needs, invest in their future, and actively engage with their families and communities.

DWD Divisions

DIVISION OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING (DET)

Mission: Provide a seamless continuum of services accessed by employers and members of the workforce and their families with the following results:

- ♦ Employers have the talent they need, and
- ♦ Individuals and families achieve economic independence by accessing job search, training, and related services, making sound employment decisions, and maximizing their workforce potential.

Overview: DET oversees the majority of workforce services administered by DWD, including the state labor exchange system and Job Center of Wisconsin, analyzes and distributes labor market information, monitors migrant worker services, manages the Wisconsin Fast Forward grant program, and operates the state's apprenticeship programs.



UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE DIVISION (UI)

Mission: To facilitate financial stability and a prosperous Wisconsin economy by delivering high quality, innovative, customer-driven unemployment services.

Overview: The UI program is financed by federal and state taxes paid by employers who are subject to federal and state UI laws. In 1932, Wisconsin was the first state to enact a UI law to mitigate the adverse effects of the Great Depression. UI's primary roles are to provide:

- ♦ Temporary economic assistance to individuals who find themselves unemployed through no fault of their own and who are actively seeking work.
- ♦ Economic stability in the community during periods of economic downturn.

DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (DVR)

Mission: To obtain, maintain, and improve employment for people with disabilities by working with consumers, employers, and other partners. DVR serves:

- ♦ Individuals with disabilities, assisting them to maximize their employment opportunities by helping them develop the skills that today's businesses are seeking in the workforce of the future; and,
- ♦ Wisconsin businesses, offering employers access to a pool of qualified job candidates with disabilities and disability-related information and resources to help them meet their workforce needs.

Overview: DVR is a federal/state program designed to obtain, maintain, and advance employment for people with disabilities by working with DVR consumers, employers, and other partners.

- ♦ DVR helps individuals with disabilities achieve their employment potential – including finding a job, keeping a job, or getting a better job – by providing services and supports to overcome employment barriers. Services to job seekers with disabilities include career guidance and counseling, job search and placement assistance, information and referral services, job supports, and vocational training.
- ♦ DVR works closely with Wisconsin employers, providing free assistance to help them effectively recruit, hire, and retain workers with disabilities. This work is carried out by 12 DVR business services consultants positioned throughout the state. Services to businesses include recruitment of qualified candidates, retention strategies for disabled employees, access to financial incentives, accessibility assistance, and education related to disability and employment.



EQUAL RIGHTS DIVISION (ERD)

Mission: To protect the rights of all people in Wisconsin under the civil rights and labor standards laws we administer, to achieve compliance through education, outreach, and enforcement by empowered and committed employees, and to perform our responsibilities with reasonableness, efficiency, and fairness.

Overview: One of the most productive fair employment practices agencies in the nation, ERD investigates, mediates, and adjudicates complaints under 40 different laws, including laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations, and the state's family and medical leave law. ERD also enforces laws pertaining to minimum wage, overtime pay, timely payment of wages, employment of minors, and notification of business closings or mass layoffs.



WORKER'S COMPENSATION DIVISION (WC)

Mission: To promote a healthy, safe work environment by maintain a balanced system of services to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Wisconsin Worker's Compensation Act. The Division's work to ensure compliance includes, among other efforts, advancing worker protections and providing exceptional customer service – both of which are areas of focus in DWD's current long-term strategic planning efforts.

Overview: WC manages the Wisconsin worker's compensation claims program and administers programs designed to advance worker protections by ensuring that injured workers receive prompt payment of required benefits from private insurance companies or self-insured employers. WC also encourages rehabilitation and reemployment for injured workers, and promotes the reduction of work-related injuries, illness, and deaths.



ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION (ASD)

Mission: Provide strategic vision, leadership, and solutions with our business partners to empower clients and customers.

Overview: ASD provides management and program support to DWD's divisions, including budget, facilities, finance, information technology, purchasing and procurement, lean government, project management services and solutions, and incident management and continuity of operations. In addition, ASD provides IT support to the Labor & Industry Review Commission, and batch monitoring support to the State of Wisconsin Investment Board and certain statewide programs administered by the Department of Health Services and the Department of Children and Families. Additionally, ASD works closely with the Department of Administration and the Division of Personnel Management in the delivery of human resource services to the department.

Contact DWD

Submit a constituent inquiry: [DWD Constituent Webform](#), constituentinquiries@dwd.wisconsin.gov

Legislative Liaison: Rachel Harvey, 608-405-4537 rachel.harvey1@dwd.wisconsin.gov

Deputy Legislative Liaison: Julia Halopka, 608-405-4573 julia.halopka@dwd.wisconsin.gov

WISCONSIN FAST FORWARD PROGRAM

The Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) grant program offers funding opportunities for businesses in all industry sectors, Wisconsin school districts, and other stakeholders. WFF grants* fund innovative training programs and equipment to support statewide economic growth. The standard WFF program awards funds to businesses to reimburse the costs of customized occupational training. The expanded WFF program funds projects that focus on providing key resources to support the future growth and evolving needs of the Wisconsin workforce.

**Funds are released on a cost reimbursement basis for all WFF grants.*

WFF Program Benefits

Trainees:

- Transferrable Skills
- Employment/Wage Increase
- Career Development
- Certifications

Wisconsin Businesses:

- Skilled Workforce
- Competitive Advantage

State of Wisconsin:

- Reimbursable Grants
- Return on Investment to Taxpayers
- Transparent and Accountable

WFF Program Statistics

Over \$54 million in WFF standard grant contracts have been issued to date, supporting more than 440 worker training projects benefiting hundreds of employers and thousands of workers across Wisconsin.

- More than 34,000 employees have gained enhanced skills.
- \$1,461 average cost per trainee.
- \$1.15 average hourly wage increase after training.

Through the expanded WFF program, WFF has awarded 212 Advanced Manufacturing Technology Education Equipment grants for more than \$6.2 million and seven Teacher Training and Recruitment grants for a total of \$2.9 million.*

**Statistics do not include all expanded WFF grant awards.*

WFF Application Process

Grant applications for the Standard WFF program are submitted by applicants online, using the WFF website. Expanded WFF applications are submitted via email.



WFF Program Budget

- WFF is funded with state General Purpose Revenue funds and has an annual budget of approximately \$4.25 million for Industry Sectors Worker Training Grants.
- \$1 million annually for Advanced Manufacturing Technical Education Equipment Grants.
- \$1 million for Teacher Training and Recruitment Grants (biennial appropriation).



Grants for Businesses and Private Organizations

STANDARD WISCONSIN FAST FORWARD GRANTS (Industry Sectors Worker Training Grants)

The objective of the **WFF standard grant program** is to award funds to businesses to reimburse the costs of customized occupational training for unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers.* WFF helps employers and communities thrive by investing in training to help workers qualify for full-time employment, higher level employment, or increased wages.

Award information:

- ♦ Awards range from \$5,000 to \$400,000 per grantee. A grantee serving as an applicant for a consortium of employment placement partners may apply for more than \$400,000.
- ♦ Short- to medium-term in nature, lasting no more than 12 months.
- ♦ Does not replace existing, routine business training nor ongoing training that has been previously funded by other sources.
- ♦ Includes at least one Wisconsin employer with trainees based out of a Wisconsin location.
- ♦ Cash or in-kind match equal to 50% of the amount of the grant award is required.

*Employers must be in business for at least two years to be eligible for a WFF grant.

In State Fiscal Year 2024, 22 organizations received a total of \$3.9 million in WFF standard grants serving 49 businesses to provide training to 2,133 individuals.

There are **nine different industry sectors** that applicants can apply for funding through:

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| ♦ Agriculture | ♦ Financial Services | ♦ Manufacturing |
| ♦ Construction | ♦ Health Care | ♦ Small Business |
| ♦ Customer Service | ♦ Information Technology | ♦ Transportation |

Eligible Applicants:

- ♦ A public agency.
- ♦ A private organization.
- ♦ A consortium of placement partners with the lead public or private organization serving as the applicant.

Grant Rubric:

Projects are scored based on project need, capacity building, equity and economic opportunity, economic impact, training outcomes, and training design and implementation.

Visit the WFF website to view the full grant rubric.

Deliverables:

- ♦ Completion of training – 85%
- ♦ Placed into employment – 65%
- ♦ Increased wages – 75%
- ♦ Received industry recognized credential(s) – 75%

Successful Training Completion Results:

- ♦ Hiring unemployed workers to fill vacant or new positions;
- ♦ Improving employment for underemployed workers (seasonal to temporary/permanent or part-time to full-time); or
- ♦ Obtaining higher wages, more hours, and/or more permanent employment by incumbent employees.



Grants for Schools and Nonprofit Organizations

EXPANDED WISCONSIN FAST FORWARD GRANTS

Expanded WFF grants are specialized projects focused on providing key resources to support the future growth and evolving needs of the Wisconsin workforce.

Current opportunities include:

- ♦ Advanced Manufacturing Technical Education Grants
- ♦ Teacher Training and Recruitment Grants

Advanced Manufacturing Technical Education Equipment Grant

The purpose of this grant is to reimburse school districts for the **purchase and installation costs of technical education equipment** used in vocational training and technical education in advanced manufacturing fields, including costs for equipment operation software and instructional materials to train students.

- ♦ Open to Wisconsin school districts.
- ♦ Grant awards range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 per grantee.
- ♦ Cash or in-kind match equal to 200% of the amount of the grant award is required. (\$2 match for each \$1 WFF award)

The Technical Education Equipment grants give high school students **the opportunity to train in advanced manufacturing fields** to help address Wisconsin's skilled worker shortage. The program is also intended to **accelerate the transition of students into the workforce** by preparing them for stable careers.

Eligible applicants should visit the Wisconsin Fast Forward website to view the full rubric.

Since the program launched in 2018, WFF has awarded 212 Advanced Manufacturing Technology Education Equipment grants for more than \$6.2 million. For grants closed during state fiscal year 2024, 39 school districts provided 207 courses related to equipment purchased with grant funds which served 9,224 students with 1,236 students earning certifications.

Teacher Training and Recruitment Grant

The purpose of this grant is to **recruit, train, and prepare individuals to teach in low-income or urban Wisconsin schools**, which may include licensing teachers to meet Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction standards.

- ♦ Open to 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) nonprofit organizations.
- ♦ Grant awards may be up to \$500,000 per grantee.

Since 2018, the Department of Workforce Development's Office of Skills Development has awarded seven Teacher Training and Recruitment grants to nonprofit organizations for total of \$2.9 million to train a proposed 339 individuals to become teachers in low-income or urban school districts.

The goal of the Teacher Training and Recruitment Grant program is to **increase the number of teachers working toward a teacher's license** and increase the number of licensed teachers in eligible Wisconsin schools.

FastForward

✉ WisconsinFastForward@dwd.wisconsin.gov

🌐 WisconsinFastForward.com



WHAT IS APPRENTICESHIP?



Apprenticeship is a system of work-based learning that fulfills the needs of industry by preparing workers for skilled occupations, including trades, IT, healthcare, and service industry positions by combining on-the-job learning with classroom instruction. Apprenticeship combines supervised, structured on-the-job learning with related instruction and is sponsored by employers, employer associations or labor/management groups that can hire and train in a working environment. With the cooperation of industry, labor, government, and education, apprenticeship programs assist in the development of a highly skilled workforce capable of meeting industry needs and helping employees maintain a high standard of living.¹

BOTH EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS BENEFIT FROM APPRENTICESHIP

Apprentices

- ♦ Earn while they learn.
- ♦ Receive practical on-the- job learning in a wide selection of programs.
- ♦ Obtain industry recognition and credentials.
- ♦ Pave the way to a fulfilling, long-term career.
- ♦ Have an entry point into a career that would often otherwise be closed due to lack of experience.
- ♦ Experience enhanced economic security and a path for upward mobility.

Employers

- ♦ Attract better applicants.
- ♦ Become more competitive.
- ♦ Have more loyal employees.
- ♦ Experience reduced turnover.
- ♦ Gain a more knowledgeable workforce.
- ♦ Benefit from skilled workers.
- ♦ Increase safety.
- ♦ Instill company values.
- ♦ Increase productivity.
- ♦ Earn a return on their investment.

History of Apprenticeship

Wisconsin has a long and proud tradition of apprenticeship training. In 1911, Wisconsin passed the country's first apprenticeship law. With safeguards for both the apprentice and the employer, Wisconsin's law became a model for other states and for the federal government in developing their own systems.

WISCONSIN APPRENTICESHIP EXPANDS, REACHES NEW MILESTONES

Wisconsin **Youth Apprenticeship** set a participation record in 2024 with 11,344 participants and 7,400 employer sponsors. 99% of Wisconsin schools participate in the program. DWD launched four new occupational pathways: law enforcement, fire protection, project management, and barbering/cosmetology.

In 2024, Wisconsin **Registered Apprenticeship** reached a record 17,089 apprentices and 3,053 employers participating. New offerings include the nation's first respiratory therapist pilot, teacher pilot, and early childhood educator programs.



Apprenticeship Programs

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP



Registered Apprenticeship is a post-secondary education model, like a college or technical school, but there's a big difference. Apprentices learn only a portion of their skills in a traditional classroom. They receive most of their training on-the-job, while working for an employer who pays a good wage. The employment is the primary requirement for an apprenticeship – a job must exist in order for the apprentice to be trained. Classroom instruction is usually provided through the Wisconsin Technical College system or training centers throughout the state.

There are **more than 180 career pathways** across **9 occupations** in Registered Apprenticeship:

- ♦ Agriculture
- ♦ Construction
- ♦ Finance
- ♦ Healthcare
- ♦ Industrial Manufacturing
- ♦ Information Technology
- ♦ Service
- ♦ Transportation
- ♦ Utilities

YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP



Youth Apprenticeship is a highly successful talent acquisition strategy in which employers hire high school juniors or seniors for a one- or two-year apprenticeship. Apprenticeship integrates school and work-based learning to instruct students in employability and occupational skills. Local programs provide training based on statewide youth apprenticeship curriculum guidelines, endorsed by business and industry. Students are instructed by qualified teachers and skilled worksite mentors.

There are **over 80 occupational pathways** in **16 Youth Apprenticeship program areas**:

- ♦ Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
- ♦ Architecture and Construction
- ♦ Arts, Audio Visual Technology, and Communications
- ♦ Business Administration
- ♦ Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)
- ♦ Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics
- ♦ Government and Public Administration
- ♦ Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security
- ♦ Education
- ♦ Finance
- ♦ Health Services
- ♦ Hospitality and Tourism
- ♦ Information Technology
- ♦ Manufacturing
- ♦ Marketing
- ♦ Human Services

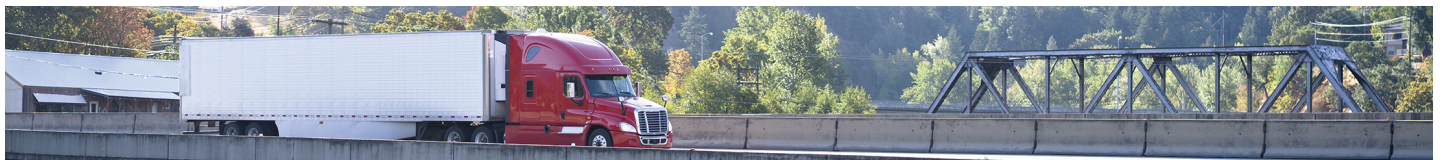
CERTIFIED PRE-APPRENTICESHIP



Certified Pre-Apprenticeship prepares qualified entry-level workers for Registered Apprenticeship while contributing to the development of a diverse and skilled workforce. Certified Pre-Apprenticeship programs can provide a bridge to career opportunities for students and new workers; prepare underrepresented populations for high-quality employment opportunities; and increase diversity and equity through the registered apprenticeship and workforce systems.

Wisconsin has **39 Certified Pre-Apprenticeship programs** across **25 program providers**. Industries represented in Certified Pre-Apprenticeship include:

- ♦ Arboriculture
- ♦ Construction
- ♦ Education
- ♦ Information Technology
- ♦ Manufacturing
- ♦ Service
- ♦ Transportation





Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

BUSINESS SERVICES

Looking to discover the Wisconsin workforce solutions available to your business?

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) business services team is here to help serve employers and connect you with workforce partners to further assist in meeting your business needs. DWD business services can help you recruit, train, and retain talent and plan for your future workforce through innovative and strategic solutions to your workforce needs.

We're Here to Help

The DWD business services team includes team members who can assist with:

- General business services.
- Apprenticeship training.
- Vocational rehabilitation business services.
- Local veterans' employment.
- Workforce board business engagement.
- Regional labor market information.

Recruit, Train, and Retain Talent

- Access online tools available through JobCenterofWisconsin.com
- Connect with additional talent pools including people with disabilities, veterans, and youth workers.
- Explore talent development programs including Youth Apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship, and Certified Pre-Apprenticeship.
- Apply for funding to launch your own workforce training program through Wisconsin Fast Forward.

Plan Your Future Workforce

- Improve accessibility for new and existing employees through ability-focused workforce strategies and solutions.
- Utilize hiring incentives and tax credits to attract and train talent and gain a competitive edge.
- Access labor market and economic data to make informed business and employment decisions.

Contact your local team and learn more at
dwd.wisconsin.gov/business-services



DWD is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you have a disability and need assistance with this information, please dial 7-1-1 for Wisconsin Relay Service. Please contact the Division of Employment and Training at 888-258-9966 and press 6 to request information in an alternate format, including translated to another language.

ADM-19760-P (N. 03/2024)

THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROCESS AND CHOICES IN THE PROCESS

This guidance piece is funded by Rehabilitation Services Administration WI. Client Assistance Program Grant H161A040054. (R. 2/2019)

Title 34 Code of Federal Regulation 370.2 This document complies with Wis. Stat. §75

Eligibility and VR Waiting List:	Gather Information on Jobs & Disability	Plan for Employment (IPE)	Employment & Follow up	Closure - End VR Services (at this time)
<p><u>Eligibility:</u></p> <p>You are eligible if your disability is stopping you from getting or keeping a job that uses your skills and abilities. AND</p> <p>You require VR services to deal with your disability limitations so you can reach your job goal.</p> <p><u>Waiting List:</u></p> <p>When VR does not have enough funding, VR must use a waiting list process called Order of Selection. An eligible person will be placed on the waiting list and contacted by VR when VR can work with them.</p> <p>As people get jobs, VR contacts the next names on the waiting list.</p> <p><u>Choices:</u></p> <p>Bring your disability information to VR or sign release forms so VR can get disability records.</p> <p>Ask VR to pay for a disability evaluation if you do not have complete or current disability information.</p> <p>Timeframe: 60 days</p>	<p><u>Questions to Answer:</u></p> <p>Do you know what types of jobs match your skills?</p> <p>Do you know if those jobs are available where you plan to live and work?</p> <p>If you receive disability benefits: 1. Do you want a job that pays enough to replace some or all of your benefits?</p> <p>2. Do you know how many hours and the rate of pay you can earn before it affects your benefits?</p> <p>How can the limitations caused by your disability or disabilities be addressed?</p> <p>Do you need your disability assessed by an expert who can answer those questions?</p> <p><u>Choices:</u></p> <p>Find the answers to these questions and share them with your VR counselor.</p> <p>Work with your VR Counselor to find the answers.</p> <p>Select service providers who can help you find the answers.</p>	<p>The Plan Lists the Services <u>You Will Receive from VR</u></p> <p>When writing your employment plan, you and VR need to agree on the job goal and what you and VR need to do to reach goal.</p> <p><u>Questions to Answer:</u></p> <p>What will you need to do address the limitations of your disability or disabilities?</p> <p>What will you do to learn the skills for your job goal? (Examples: schooling, work-experience, on-the-job training?)</p> <p>Do you need new assessments to answer these questions?</p> <p><u>Choices:</u></p> <p>Write the Plan with VR help, by yourself, or with help from someone else.</p> <p>Work with your VR Counselor to find the answers.</p> <p>Select service providers who can help you find the answers</p> <p>Timeframe: 90 days</p>	<p><u>Seeking Employment:</u></p> <p>You are ready to apply for jobs or change jobs if your current job is not suited to your skills.</p> <p>Do you know how to use Job Center resources to find jobs?</p> <p>What type of help do you need for your job search?</p> <p><u>Job Follow Up Activities:</u></p> <p>When you are hired, keep in touch with VR to let your VR counselor know how it is going.</p> <p>If you find there are things you cannot do, contact your counselor right away.</p> <p>Follow along for at least 90 days.</p> <p><u>Choices:</u></p> <p>You can extend the 90-day follow along if you are having problems on the job.</p>	<p><u>When Active VR Services Stop, Your VR File is Closed</u></p> <p>VR should not close your case until you and your VR Counselor discuss it.</p> <p>If you cannot be reached, VR will close your case. This allows VR to serve people on the waiting list.</p> <p><u>Reasons to Close Your Case:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You are working at a job related to your job goal 2. Your disability or personal matters are keeping you from working with VR at this time 3. You cannot risk losing your disability benefits such as your health care benefit. 4. You cannot get a job that replaces your benefits. <p><u>Choices:</u></p> <p>You can reapply to VR at any time. Your VR case will be closed when you are successfully employed or when you are not able to actively work on reaching your job goal.</p>

TRIBAL LIAISON STAFF DIRECTORY

DVR Tribal Services Statewide Leads

Tom Draghi
WDA 7 and 8 Director
715-415-2985
thomas.draghi@dwd.wisconsin.gov

Anna Eggebrecht
Bureau of Consumer Services Deputy Director
920-461-0026
anna.eggebrecht@dwd.wisconsin.gov

DVR Tribal Liaisons

**BAD RIVER BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR
TRIBE OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS**
McKenzie Benton, VR Counselor
715-499-1597
mckenzie.benton@dwd.wisconsin.gov

FOREST COUNTY POTAWATOMI
Natalia Graf, VR Counselor
715-679-5566
natalia.graf@dwd.wisconsin.gov

**HO-CHUNK NATION (ADAMS, MARATHON,
PORTAGE, AND WOOD COUNTIES)**
Melanie Kasun, VR Specialist
715-315-0178
melanie.kasun@dwd.wisconsin.gov

**HO-CHUNK NATION (BUFFALO, CRAWFORD,
JACKSON, JUNEAU, LA CROSSE, MONROE &
VERNON COUNTIES)**
Lee Balko, VR Counselor
608-405-4115
lee.balko@dwd.wisconsin.gov

HO-CHUNK NATION (DANE COUNTY)
Arlene Elias-Miller, VR Counselor IT
608-405-4434
arlene.eliasmiller@dwd.wisconsin.gov

HO-CHUNK NATION (SAUK COUNTY)
Lisa Masciola, VR Counselor
608-405-4455
lisa.masciola@dwd.wisconsin.gov

**LAC COURTE OREILLES BAND OF LAKE
SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA INDIANS**
Gadeen Taylor-Duke, VR Counselor
715-699-4345
gadeen.taylorduke@dwd.wisconsin.gov

**LAC DU FLAMBEAU BAND OF LAKE
SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA INDIANS**
Deb Soulier-Ramsey, VR Counselor-Advanced
715-679-5568
debra.soulierramsey@dwd.wisconsin.gov

MENOMINEE INDIAN TRIBE OF WISCONSIN
Marissa Lautenbach, VR Counselor
920-677-8855 or 920-404-6893
Marissa.lautenbach@dwd.wisconsin.gov

MILWAUKEE NATIVE AMERICAN SERVICES
Amber Lindstrum, VR Counselor
414-250-6557
amber.lindstrum@dwd.wisconsin.gov

ONEIDA NATION OF WISCONSIN
Matt Maloney, VR Counselor-Advanced
920-930-6538
matthew.maloney@dwd.wisconsin.gov

**RED CLIFF BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR
CHIPPEWA**
McKenzie Anderson, VR Counselor
715-499-1597
mckenzie.anderson@dwd.wisconsin.gov

**SOKAOGON CHIPPEWA COMMUNITY MOLE
LAKE BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA**
Natalia Graf, VR Counselor
715-679-5566
natalia.graf@dwd.wisconsin.gov

**ST. CROIX CHIPPEWA INDIANS OF
WISCONSIN**
Gadeen Taylor-Duke, VR Counselor
715-699-4345
gadeen.taylorduke@dwd.wisconsin.gov

**STOCKBRIDGE-MUNSEE COMMUNITY BAND
OF MOHICAN INDIANS**
Marissa Lautenbach, VR Counselor
920-677-8855 or 920-404-6893
Marissa.lautenbach@dwd.wisconsin.gov



LABOR MARKET AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Spring 2025

Wisconsin's Labor Market is Delivering Historic Results



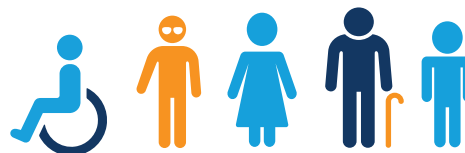
Wisconsin's unemployment rate, at **3.3%** in April 2025, reached a **RECORD LOW** of 2.6% in December 2022 through April 2023.



Total nonfarm jobs reached a **RECORD HIGH** of **3,055,200** in March 2025.



Total employment reached a **RECORD HIGH** of **3,087,565** in October 2024.



Disability employment reached a **RECORD HIGH** of **189,194** working age individuals with disabilities employed in Wisconsin (reported in 2024, based on ACS 2023 data).

Wisconsin's record-breaking performance has been accompanied by a labor market quantity challenge, driven by demographic trends that have been building for decades:

- Aging and retirement of the Baby Boomers, further exacerbated by the pandemic.
- Lower birth rates among younger generations.

Wisconsin is not alone in facing the worker quantity challenge. The gap is being felt throughout the Midwest, our nation as a whole, Europe and China.

Workforce Development Helps Wisconsin Thrive

Under the leadership of Gov. Tony Evers, DWD is implementing innovative and effective workforce strategies to drive results.

● Removing Workforce Barriers:

The Evers Administration's historic \$158 million commitment of American Rescue Plan Act funding to the Workforce Solutions Initiative focuses on:

- Innovative, regional solutions led by partnerships among workforce development boards, employers, academic institutions, and community organizations.
- Investments to reduce barriers to employment through in-demand skill training, increased access to child care, transportation support, and affordable housing.
- Establishment of new networks to connect people with jobs, including use of job coaches to support those who have struggled to obtain or retain employment.



● Connecting with Underused Labor Pools:

DWD's Business Service Teams, funded through WIOA/Wagner-Peyser and Department of Education formula grants, connect employers with key underutilized labor pools including:

- **Veterans:** DWD is committed to advancing employment opportunities for Wisconsin veterans through targeted business engagement, service, and commitment to the veteran community. Wisconsin's workforce development services rank **fourth in the country** for successfully helping veterans find employment.
- **People with Disabilities:** DWD's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation works with job seekers and employers to help people with disabilities find a job, keep a job, or get a better job. In 2023, a record high **178,337** working age individuals with disabilities were employed in Wisconsin.
- **Justice-involved individuals:** Each year, more than 6,000 people leave correctional care. DWD supports these individuals pre-release through job training and employment coaching in **15** correctional job labs.



● Delivering Effective Training:

DWD and its partners ensure workforce skills meet employer needs through training programs that include Apprenticeship, the Career Pathways Advancement Initiative, and Wisconsin Fast Forward.

- **Wisconsin Apprenticeship:** Apprenticeship is a system of work-based learning that fulfills the needs of industry by preparing workers for skilled occupations, including trades, IT, healthcare, and service industry positions by combining on-the-job learning with classroom instruction. Using the earn-while-you-learn model, youth and job seekers gain on-the-job skills through Youth Apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship,⁹ and Certified Pre-Apprenticeship. Wisconsin's leadership in apprenticeship is demonstrated by record-breaking participation in both Youth and Registered Apprenticeship programs.
- **Wisconsin Fast Forward:** The Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) program funds innovative training programs and equipment to support statewide economic growth. Through Standard and Expanded Grant programs, WFF has awarded more than \$54 million to support Wisconsin businesses and schools.
- **Career Pathways Advancement Initiative:** The Career Pathways Advancement Initiative helps individuals with disabilities advance their careers in healthcare, IT, construction, and manufacturing. The program is supported by more than \$20 million in grant funds from the U.S. Department of Education.



● Supporting Labor Force Stability and Promoting Workforce Participation:

DWD improves labor force stability and promotes workforce participation by:

- Effectively delivering **unemployment insurance** benefits.
 - Unemployment insurance benefits promote stability by supporting skilled workers who have lost jobs through no fault of their own as they transition to new employment.
 - To obtain benefits, claimants must actively search for work.
- Managing a sound **worker's compensation** system, which helps retain skilled workers as they recover from injuries suffered on the job.
- Leveling the playing field for all employers by combating **worker misclassification**. In 2023, DWD launched a worker misclassification awareness campaign that resulted in more than **400,000** social media impressions and a **21%** engagement rate for Spanish language digital display advertisements.
 - The Equal Rights Division strengthens Wisconsin as a fair and just place for all people to live and work.
- Maintaining a robust network of **28 Job Centers** and business service staff to connect people with jobs.

