



# Building the SC Talent Pipeline... One Day at a Time

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Governor Haley declared workforce a top priority as she began her second term in office. South Carolina continues to recruit new businesses and see expansions in existing industries at a high rate. One of our goals at DEW is to address the almost 70,000 unfilled jobs in our state and provide a highly skilled workforce to new and existing employers in the state. There are short and long-term solutions to this issue.

## State Jobs Database

In the short-term, are you utilizing the State Jobs Database to post your jobs? The State of SC invests in a State Jobs database that can serve as a virtual meeting place between business/industry and potential job seekers. It is an available and free resource for all South Carolinians, with the potential to allow users to “cast a wider net” in the job recruitment process. Getting set up to post your jobs is as easy as 1-2-3, but SC DEW can take it a step further by having one of our local recruiters come to you, at your facility, and get you signed up and post your jobs right away. You never have to leave the office.



## SC Work Ready Communities

Another short term solution you can utilize is the SC Work Ready Communities (SCWRC) which is a tool used to measure the quality and capability of a county's workforce. Businesses across the country report they are overwhelmed by stacks of applications for jobs. Sorting through applications is time-consuming and frustrating. The National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) is a solution.

South Carolina has invested in the National Career Readiness System, which helps job seekers know what skills employers require and help local educators prepare students for success. Individuals can earn the NCRC by completing three ACT WorkKeys assessments: Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information. These assessments measure real world skills that are critical for job success.

Businesses can recognize and have an understanding of the NCRC and, even more importantly, require that a candidate have earned an NCRC. If a business requires the NCRC for its hiring, it must have that job position profiled. As part of the SCWRC initiative, businesses can receive a job profile at no cost. The State Workforce Development Board, acting on behalf of Governor Haley, approved \$150,000 to offset the cost of Job Profiles to businesses this year, depending on company size. Since the average cost of a Job Profile averages \$2,000.00, this could result in significant savings for eligible and participating businesses.

Currently, over two-thirds of our counties are certified as Work Ready. DEW can help you connect with the certified work force. You can influence the quality of the workforce and your employees by supporting SCWRC through job profiling and using WorkKeys and the NCRC as part of your selection, hiring, training and development process.

## Let SCWorks Play Matchmaker and Save You Money!

The SC Works System has a portfolio of incentive programs that can match you with a qualified candidate, offset the costs associated with a new hire, and save you money on your bottom line. There are several tax credits and direct reimbursement incentives that are available for your business. DEW works hard to listen to your needs and customize a solution specific to your hiring need and facilitate not only recruiting the right potential employee for your company, but also coordinating the paperwork to ensure you receive your incentives, whether tax credits or direct reimbursement. We would welcome the opportunity to sit down with you and determine how to help you mitigate the new hire risk and place qualified employees in your jobs.

Registered Apprenticeship is a time tested strategy for employee development that combines supervised on-the-job training with job-related classroom education. Apprenticeship Carolina is a nationally recognized program offered through SC State Technical College System at no cost to employers. They provide consultants, at no cost to you, to guide you through the process to register your program. Benefits to employers include a highly skilled and productive workforce; standardized training for all employees; reduced turnover; increased productivity; and a reliable plan for

the future. Eligible businesses can also receive a SC tax credit of \$1,000 per apprentice per year for up to four years.

If your business has a registered apprenticeship, it may lead to direct wage and salary reimbursements of 50-90% to businesses to compensate for costs associated with training new employees. We will work directly with you to determine your needs and develop a customized plan. If you already have a registered apprenticeship, that will can count as your On the Job Training (OJT) training plan. The percentage and length of the reimbursement varies by the size of your company, specific skills to be acquired and the local workforce area.

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The Work Opportunity Tax Credit is a federal tax credit program that provides an incentive to businesses that hire new employees who may be unemployed veterans, ex-offenders, individuals receiving vocational rehabilitation services, to name a few. The tax credit can reduce your federal income tax liability by providing your business with a 40% tax credit on eligible employees from \$2,400 to \$9,600, depending on the individual.

If you are a business that believes in giving second chances to someone who may have a blemish in their background, the Federal Bonding Program can insurance protection to you at no cost to cover the first six months of the new hire's employment and protect you against possible damages or issues. Bonds are typically issued for \$5,000 coverage.

The good news is DEW is on standby to provide confidential consultation and planning to assist your understanding and use of the incentives that are available. We will come to your job location, so the visit is convenient and hassle-free, all on your terms.

## Longer Term Solutions

South Carolina's talent pipeline is a complex system that requires public and private coordination to bring numerous programs into a single, integrated customer-focused network at the state and local level. A key issue will be actively engaging businesses to not only use the services offered through workforce service agencies, but for you to take advantage of the many benefits that exist from utilizing your state workforce system. The system can only work if businesses drive the process. Make your voice heard by using the system and providing feedback.

DEW is working to align various agency databases to streamline availability of information, while protecting vital personal information at the same time. We are partnering with sister agencies to merge data to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the state workforce system and to obtain performance measure across multiple realms. DEW will be implementing business intelligence



tools to make performance measures and business analytics easier to develop, view, and use for implementation of program improvements.

We will also explore how to make existing online programs, specifically the State Jobs Database, to be more user-friendly to the end-users or look for better, more affordable interface options in order to improve the case management processes. Additionally we are working to improve the State Jobs Database capacity to serve more levels of business needs and reach more job seekers through better technology.

South Carolina partners will also be working closely to re-design the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to provide meaningful information to job seekers, business and industries, and to provide relevant performance metrics on all eligible providers. This activity will involve all training providers, but specifically Commission for Higher Education and the State Technical College System.

### Creative Problem Solving and Collaboration

There are some noteworthy partnerships that are ongoing that demonstrate the commitment amongst agencies to transform the workforce system in pilots around the state. First, DEW and the South Carolina Department of Corrections are working closely together to find jobs for ex-offenders by offering job placement services "behind the fence" prior to release to maximize their chances of obtaining employment upon release. The initial pilot has been extremely successful and the agencies will continue looking for a way to expand this service to other facilities. A behind-the fence job fair held this past June was well attended by ex-offender friendly businesses and thirteen inmates were offered jobs prior to leaving prison. It changes one's perspective to know a job is waiting on the other side of the fence to reduce the chance of recidivism.

SC State Technical College System and DEW strategically partnered to provide job placement services for their SC Manufacturing Certificate Program. This program provided 200-hours of a nationally recognized industry credential and DEW went to the classrooms to assist with resume writing and interviewing skills, as well as register students in the state jobs database to improve their chances for gaining employment as soon as training ended. The success of this effort indicates it would be productive to work with all higher education institutions to use a similar process of registering upcoming graduates in our system before graduation so they can improve their chances of being employed in South Carolina.

We are working closely with many other agencies, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, Able SC, and Commission for the Blind to not only improve the services we offer, but also minimize duplications of service, and work toward great collaboration to serve and find relevant employment for all our citizens.

### Summary

DEW has a number of strategic actions to ensure an effective talent pipeline that cohesively aligns the needs of business and industries, as well as other agencies. It is our intent that by working collaboratively with all our workforce partners and directly with you, we will develop a blueprint for transforming the workforce system in South Carolina.

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