

# **Massachusetts's Gov Baker announces federal grant for apprenticeships, promotes job-training investments**

The Baker-Polito Administration today announced a \$4 million federal grant from the US Department of Labor to expand Massachusetts' apprenticeship programs, with a focus on connecting women, people of color, and individuals with disabilities with these training and employment opportunities. The Administration also highlighted its \$240 million proposal to provide additional funding to apprenticeships and other job-training programs as part of its \$2.9 billion plan to invest a portion of Massachusetts' federal funds from the American Rescue Plan Act into urgent priorities. With federal pandemic-era enhanced unemployment benefits slated to expire for over 300,000 workers the first week of September, the Administration urged action on these workforce investments and also highlighted an upcoming free, statewide virtual Job Fair that will be held August 16-20 at [mass.gov/JobFair](https://mass.gov/JobFair).

Governor Charlie Baker and Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Rosalin Acosta made the announcements at a visit to Cengage that highlighted the company's successful apprenticeship programs, run in partnership with Apprenti. The new federal grant awarded to Massachusetts will connect an additional 500 individuals to employment through apprenticeship opportunities over the next 4 years, with a focus on high-demand fields like health care, clean energy, IT, and advanced manufacturing. These fields were also identified in the Administration's recently-published Future of Work Report as areas of growth for Massachusetts over the next decade, with upwards of 300,000-400,000 workers potentially needing to transition to different occupations or

occupational categories. These economic changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic underscore the importance of the Administration's \$240 million plan to scale up proven job-training programs like apprenticeships.

"Our Administration has long seen the value of apprenticeships, launching a program several years ago to expand this model in the technology space, and this new federal grant is an affirmation of Massachusetts' approach to promoting access to these training and employment opportunities," said Governor Charlie Baker. "Through our plan to invest \$240 million in funding from the American Rescue Plan Act into apprenticeships and other proven job-training programs, we're proposing to do even more to connect workers with high-demand fields and good-paying jobs."

"The COVID-19 pandemic changed the Commonwealth's economic landscape, and our recently-published Future of Work Report concluded that upwards of 300,000 to 400,000 workers may need to transition to new occupations or occupational categories over the next decade, and apprenticeships are one of the tools we can use to facilitate those transitions," said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. "That's why we're proposing \$240 million to scale up these proven job-training models using funds from the American Rescue Plan, which would also enable us to connect unemployed workers with job opportunities with federal pandemic-era unemployment benefits expiring in September."

"The \$4 million grant from the US Department of Labor will enable partners like Apprenti and Cengage to access additional training funds for apprenticeship programs in the tech sector," said Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Rosalin Acosta. "Increased training opportunities for high-demand jobs like software developers, Cybersecurity analysts, and IT Business Analysts are essential to provide workers with transformational opportunities in the tech industry. The Administration's proposal of a \$240 million workforce investment will help 52,000 unemployed and

underemployed workers through our existing programs, which will provide real and lasting consequences in creating a more equitable and resilient economy.”

The new federal grant from the US Department of Labor will help Massachusetts expand Registered Apprenticeship Opportunities for occupations in-demand by employers in health care, hospitality, education, clean energy, IT and advanced manufacturing. It will especially target populations that the pandemic has hit the hardest like women, working moms, people of color, youth, and individuals with a disability. With \$4 million over 4 years, this grant will connect 500 individuals to employment through apprenticeship opportunities. The Administration has prioritized expanding apprenticeships for the past several years, launching a partnership with Apprenti in 2018 to expand this model in the technology sector.

With federal enhanced unemployment benefits set to expire the week of September 4, the Administration is also immediately working to connect unemployed workers with open job opportunities. The Administration’s statewide virtual Job Fair is scheduled for August 16-20, and the Commonwealth recently launched a promotional campaign to encourage people to attend the job fair. The campaign is running on TV and digital platforms, and the Department of Unemployment Assistance is also reaching out to current claimants via email.

The job fair is free for both employers and job-seekers, and the Commonwealth is partnering with employer organizations including AIM, the Massachusetts Business Roundtable, the Massachusetts Competitive Partnership, the Providers’ Council, and a number of regional employer associations. Learn more about the Job Fair at [mass.gov/JobFair](https://mass.gov/JobFair).