

ASSEMBLY, No. 5016

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED NOVEMBER 19, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Assemblywoman ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT

District 31 (Hudson)

Assemblyman JOSEPH V. EGAN

District 17 (Middlesex and Somerset)

Co-Sponsored by:

**Assemblyman Benson, Assemblywomen Murphy, Reynolds-Jackson,
Chaparro and Quijano**

SYNOPSIS

Establishes Water Apprenticeship, Training, and Resources Pilot Program in DOLWD.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/10/2020)

1 AN ACT establishing a Water Apprenticeship, Training, and
2 Resources (“WATER”) Pilot Program and supplementing
3 P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-1 et seq.).
4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:
7

8 1. a. There is established in the Department of Labor and
9 Workforce Development a five year Water Apprenticeship,
10 Training, and Employment Resources (“WATER”) Pilot Program,
11 which shall provide grants to support funding for adult
12 apprenticeship programs in water infrastructure, water utilities, and
13 other water-related sectors, focusing on underserved and
14 underrepresented communities. A grant may extend beyond one
15 year in duration. To be eligible for the grant, the apprenticeship
16 program shall be accredited and approved by the United States
17 Department of Labor, or shall be in the process of obtaining that
18 accreditation. The program shall be administered by the Office of
19 Customized Training in the department.

20 b. To apply for the grant, an organization shall submit an
21 application to the Office of Customized Training, which shall
22 include documentation that the apprenticeship which the
23 organization is sponsoring is or will be accredited and approved by
24 the United States Department of Labor. Any organizational sponsor
25 of an apprenticeship program is eligible to receive the grant,
26 including:

- 27 (1) businesses;
28 (2) labor organizations;
29 (3) colleges;
30 (4) workforce training providers; and
31 (5) non-profit organizations.

32 c. No later than July 1, 2021, the department shall begin
33 accepting grant applications to be awarded no later than January 1,
34 2022 from funds allocated to the program. The department shall
35 rank eligible applicants for grants based upon:

- 36 (1) each applicant’s potential to:
37 (a) reach a broad audience through its recruitment and outreach
38 efforts;
39 (b) significantly increase enrollment and completion of the
40 apprenticeship program, including enrollment by underserved and
41 underrepresented communities; and
42 (c) fill existing needs for skilled workers in the market; and
43 (2) the applicant’s partnership with an industry for which
44 apprenticeship programs targeted at training and providing skilled
45 workers who have the ability to perform jobs in that industry have
46 demonstrated positive outcomes.

47 d. An eligible applicant is required to demonstrate that it
48 intends and is prepared to contribute its own financial resources to

1 the apprenticeship program and has secured an industry partner or a
2 monetary or in-kind contribution, including conditional job
3 placement guarantees, from an industry partner. Moreover, each
4 eligible applicant shall provide documentation of:

- 5 (1) the apprenticeship program's curriculum, location, and skills
6 to be taught;
- 7 (2) the recruitment efforts for the apprenticeship program, and
8 projected enrollment with and without receipt of grant funds;
- 9 (3) a description of how the grant funds will be utilized;
- 10 (4) information on specific industry needs or gaps in the
11 workforce that will be addressed by the apprenticeship program;
- 12 (5) costs to operate the apprenticeship program; and
- 13 (6) any other information the department requires.

14 An eligible applicant shall partner with schools, utilities, water
15 purveyors, and other water employers to effectively market these
16 opportunities; strengthen local hiring preferences in support of more
17 minority and women business enterprises, and hold an annual water
18 summit where prospective workers, employers, and community
19 partners can connect.

20 e. An eligible applicant who is selected by the department for
21 receipt of a grant for the purpose of funding an apprenticeship
22 program in accordance with P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before
23 the Legislature as this bill), shall, on an annual basis for so long as
24 the grant is provided, make an annual report to the commissioner
25 detailing the enrollment in the program, the number of participants
26 completing the program, the number of participants obtaining
27 employment as a result of the program, and any other information
28 as the commissioner may require.

29 f. Beginning January 1, 2022, and each year thereafter for the
30 duration of the pilot grant program, the Commissioner of Labor and
31 Workforce Development shall submit to the Governor, and to the
32 Legislature, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-
33 19.1), a report that evaluates the results of the program and its
34 effectiveness in preparing individuals to meet existing and
35 burgeoning workforce needs and addressing gaps in skills in the
36 workforce. The report shall include a recommendation regarding
37 whether to renew the WATER Pilot Program, and if renewal is
38 recommended, if the program should be expanded or otherwise
39 enhanced. The report shall include:

- 40 (1) The number of grants awarded in the prior year, including
41 the amount, recipient, and duration of each grant;
- 42 (2) The number of individuals who enrolled in and completed an
43 apprenticeship program offered by each grant recipient;
- 44 (3) The number of individuals who obtained employment in a
45 position that uses the skills for which they were trained by a grant
46 recipient, or in a position for which the completion of the
47 apprenticeship program was a condition of employment; and

1 (4) All relevant information provided by grant recipients as to
2 measurable outcomes of participants.

3 g. Funds from grants provided in accordance with P.L. , c.
4 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill) shall not be
5 used:

6 (1) for any activities which replace, supplant, compete with, or
7 duplicate in any way existing approved apprenticeship programs;

8 (2) to induce, encourage, or assist any displacement of
9 currently-employed workers by trainees, including partial
10 displacement by means such as reduced hours of currently
11 employed workers; any replacement of laid-off workers by trainees;
12 or any relocation of operations resulting in a loss of employment at
13 a previous workplace; or

14 (3) to impair existing contracts for services or collective
15 bargaining agreements, except that activities which would be
16 inconsistent with the terms of a collective bargaining agreement
17 may be undertaken with the written concurrence of the collective
18 bargaining unit and the employer or employers who are parties to
19 the agreement.

20 h. As used in P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the
21 Legislature as this bill):

22 “Eligible applicant” means a business, labor organization,
23 college, workforce training provider, non-profit organization, or any
24 other entity that offers or plans to offer an apprenticeship program
25 that is accredited and approved by the United States Department of
26 Labor and that has partnered with an industry to offer or fund the
27 apprenticeship program.

28 “Department” means the Department of Labor and Workforce
29 Development.

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31 2. There is established in the Department of the Treasury a
32 special non-lapsing fund to be known as the WATER Fund. The
33 fund shall consist of: all monies appropriated by the Legislature for
34 inclusion in the fund, investment earnings of the fund, and moneys
35 contributed to the fund by private sources, to be used for the
36 purposes of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as
37 this bill). The moneys in the fund shall be invested and reinvested
38 by the Director of the Division of Investment in the Department of
39 the Treasury. The department shall solicit grants from interested
40 public or private sources for the fund.

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42 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

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45 STATEMENT

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47 This bill creates a five-year Water Apprenticeship, Training, and
48 Employment Resources (“WATER”) Pilot Program in the

1 Department of Labor and Workforce Development to provide grants
2 to support funding for newly-established adult apprenticeship
3 programs in the water infrastructure, clean energy, and digital
4 utilities sectors, focusing on underserved and underrepresented
5 communities. Any organizational sponsor of an apprenticeship
6 program is eligible to receive the grant, including businesses, labor
7 organizations, colleges, workforce training providers, and non-
8 profit organizations, provided that they have secured an industry
9 partner or a monetary or in-kind funding contribution.

10 The grant applications shall be accepted starting July 1, 2021,
11 and the grants shall be awarded no later than January 1, 2022. The
12 department shall rank eligible applicants for grants based upon each
13 applicant's potential to reach a broad audience through its
14 recruitment and outreach efforts, significantly increase enrollment
15 and completion of the apprenticeship program, including among
16 members of underserved and underrepresented communities, and
17 fill existing needs for skilled workers in the market.

18 Beginning January 1, 2022, and each year thereafter for the
19 duration of the pilot grant program, the Commissioner of Labor and
20 Workforce Development shall submit to the Governor, and to the
21 Legislature, a report that evaluates the results of the program and its
22 effectiveness in preparing individuals to meet existing and
23 burgeoning workforce needs and addressing gaps in skills in the
24 workforce.

25 The bill creates the WATER Fund in the Department of the
26 Treasury to solicit, collect, and invest moneys to be used for the
27 purposes of the bill.