



Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

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State of Illinois Celebrates National Apprenticeship Week Nov. 14-20

SPRINGFIELD – The State of Illinois today kicked off the eighth annual National Apprenticeship Week. To celebrate the occasion, Governor JB Pritzker issued [a proclamation](#) highlighting the importance of apprenticeships in expanding career opportunities for Illinoisans of all backgrounds. Throughout the week, more than 50 events will be hosted through DCEO, other state agencies, and workforce partners across the state. Visit Illinois' National Apprenticeship Week page to learn more about events and ways to get involved during National Apprenticeship Week: [Apprenticeship Illinois Apprenticeship Week - November 14 - 20, 2022 \(illinoisworknet.com\)](#)

“Illinois is home to one of the most well-qualified and talented workforces in the country,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “During National Apprenticeship Week, we are proud to celebrate this workforce and raise awareness about the critical importance of apprenticeships and the pathways they create to good-paying careers for our people.”

“Apprenticeships equal good-paying, stable jobs and with a strong commitment to equity, the state is working to ensure more people of color and women have access to these opportunities,” **said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton**. “During National Apprenticeship Week we are excited to celebrate all of the hard-working apprentices and workforce partners who work to expand opportunities across Illinois.”

The Pritzker administration has prioritized expanding access to apprenticeship programs, making critical investments through legislation and programming to reduce barriers to high-wage jobs. This includes expanding the Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship program, making significant capital investments in new training centers across the State, and significant investments to develop new statewide training programs – including apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs - through the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA).

“Apprenticeship programs provide a great way for Illinois workers to earn while they learn and start on career paths that help spur economic mobility for them and their families while also providing Illinois employers with access to a highly qualified workforce,” **said DCEO Director Sylvia I. Garcia.** “During National Apprenticeship Week, I encourage Illinoisans and Illinois employers to take advantage of the many opportunities to learn more about the benefits of apprenticeship programs.”

Apprenticeship Illinois, which serves as a one-stop-shop for information and resources on apprenticeships in Illinois, has 543 U.S. Department of Labor registered apprenticeship programs, with more than 18,000 active apprentices, and nearly 4,000 new apprenticeships in the second quarter of this year. For fiscal year 2021, Illinois had the fourth highest number of apprentices complete programs in the U.S. Additionally, the state’s inaugural Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship program class has made significant strides in its efforts to create a diverse workforce pipeline, with 70 percent of participants identifying as African American (compared to 9 percent of IL apprentices) and 21 percent identifying as women (compared to 5 percent of IL apprentices).

“Apprenticeships provide job training that is critical to our economy in Illinois and nationwide. For many workers, an apprenticeship training program can be a pathway to a good-paying, quality jobs and a lifelong career,” **said Illinois Department of Labor Acting Director Jane Flanagan.** “Through apprenticeships, workers can learn and refine those skills and crafts necessary to meet the workforce demands of current employers in our State, and to attract new businesses here. Apprenticeships also teach workplace safety skills that help protect workers in dangerous jobs, so that they return home every night to their families.”

As part of the agency’s workforce and training efforts, DCEO has established a strong network of providers across the state to recruit, prescreen, and provide training so individuals can take advantage of apprenticeship opportunities. Apprenticeship funding and training assistance supports Illinois businesses and employers by providing well-qualified and long-term apprentices to join their payroll in mutually advantageous relationships.

To learn more about how to get involved this National Apprenticeship Week, please visit the [U.S. Department of Labor’s website](#) or [Apprenticeship Illinois’ website](#).