



# Worker Training

## PROGRAM GUIDELINES

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# I. Purpose

In accordance with Nebraska Revised Statutes §48-622.02 and 48-622.03 The Nebraska Worker Training and Support Cash Fund is intended to expand the Nebraska workforce by increasing the pool of highly skilled workers in Nebraska. Funds may be used for the following purposes:

- support public and private job training programs designed to train, retrain, or upgrade work skills of existing Nebraska workers of for-profit and not-for-profit businesses;
- train new employees of expanding Nebraska businesses; and
- recruit workers to Nebraska.

For more information about the Nebraska Worker Training Program (WTP), including the grant application portal, board meeting schedules, performance reports and more please visit ([dol.nebraska.gov/ReemploymentServices/EmployerResources/WorkerTrainingProgram](https://dol.nebraska.gov/ReemploymentServices/EmployerResources/WorkerTrainingProgram)).

**NOTE:** These guidelines apply to awards made from the Nebraska Training and Support Cash Fund pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §48-622.03. These guidelines do not apply to federal funds appropriated to the Nebraska Department of Labor under LB 1014 for distribution through the recommendation of the Nebraska Worker Training Board, which are subject to separate guidelines.

# II. Availability

Worker Training Grants (WTG) are awarded subject to the availability of funds appropriated by the Legislature and the discretion of the Commissioner. There is no minimum threshold amount that must be awarded each quarter.

# III. Board Roles and Responsibilities

Nebraska Revised Statute §48-622.03 establishes the Nebraska Worker Training Board (NWTB). The board consists of seven members appointed and serving for terms determined by the Governor.

Members are responsible for reviewing grant awards proposed by the Commissioner of Labor for compliance with these guidelines.

# IV. Eligibility

Eligible applicants include employers, employer or industry consortiums, labor organizations, or other entities providing an apprenticeship training program. At the time of submission, applicants must be current on all combined taxes and quarterly wage reports with the Nebraska Department of Labor under the Nebraska Employment Security Law. Failure to pay taxes or report wages during the period of award may result in revocation of an award.

# V. Allowable Costs

## 1. Training Projects

**Allowable costs for direct training may include:**

1. Tuition and Fees
2. Books and classroom materials
3. Rental costs to secure facilities needed to provide training
4. Reasonable pre-and-post training participant costs for the approved curricula specified in the applicant's training plan if there is not already a course offering at a convenient education institution for which the grant is paying tuition and fees
5. Costs of curriculum design
6. Reasonable costs of instructors and instructional aides
7. In the case of apprenticeship training programs provided by a labor organization to its members - if the training program involves at least six hours of training in a single calendar day, a training stipend for each trainee in an amount not to exceed one-fifth of the maximum weekly unemployment benefit amount available on the date of application (as determined in accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. §48- 624 for each day the worker attends the apprenticeship training program
8. Other reasonable costs relating to the direct training provided

Except as provided in Paragraph 1(7) above, or for good cause is shown as determined by the Commissioner, disallowed costs related to direct training include:

1. The lease, purchase, or construction of facilities
2. The purchase of capital equipment
3. Salaries, wages, or benefits paid to personnel trained, or personnel assigned to manage or report on the project of grant award
4. Mileage, lodging, meals and incidentals
5. Costs incurred for the preparation of the application
6. Costs incurred prior to the submission of the application

The following training courses are considered ineligible, unless good cause is shown as determined by the Commissioner:

1. Safety Training
2. Hazard Identification or Mitigation Training
3. Inspirational or Motivational Speaking

## **2. Recruitment Projects**

Allowable costs for recruitment of candidates are limited to recruitment-related travel expenses for an out-of-state candidate and members of the out-of-state candidate's household. These recruitment-related travel expenses must be incurred by an out-of-state candidate:

1. Traveling to or from Nebraska for an interview or other visit to the facility as part of the pre-employment process; or
2. Relocating to Nebraska to commence employment with employer

Recruitment assistance is limited to workers that reside or work outside of Nebraska, and limited to full-time, permanent positions located in Nebraska.

Allowable costs for recruitment may include:

1. Reimbursement for mileage while using a privately owned vehicle, at rates consistent with United States General Services Administration regulations at the time of travel;
2. Rental vehicle fees;
3. Fare and fees for commercial airline travel;
4. Fees for use of a professional moving service;
5. Lodging expenses;
6. A per diem for meals and incidentals expenses;
7. Retention incentives may be considered an allowable cost, for good cause shown as determined by the Commissioner;
8. Other reasonable costs relating directly to worker recruitment.

Disallowed costs for recruitment include:

1. Costs incurred from the use of contracted marketing vendors;
2. Costs incurred through the purchase of marketing materials;
3. Housing down payments;
4. Temporary housing expenses, other than authorized travel related lodging costs;
5. Non- Economy Class air travel expenses;
6. Lodging expenses that are not reasonable and comparable to the United States General Services Administration and in accordance with Federal Travel Regulations as of the date of travel;
7. Room service or other lodging incidental expenses;
8. Salaries, wages, or benefits paid to personnel recruited, or personnel assigned to manage or report on the project of grant award;
9. Customs and immigration fees;
10. Costs incurred for the preparation of the application;
11. Costs incurred prior to the submission of the application.

## **VI. Application Process**

### **1. Application Development**

Applications must be identified and structured as either training or recruitment projects at the time of

submission. Applicants may apply for either or both during the same quarter. For more information and technical assistance regarding application development, please visit [dol.nebraska.gov/ReemploymentServices/EmployerResources/WorkerTrainingProgram](http://dol.nebraska.gov/ReemploymentServices/EmployerResources/WorkerTrainingProgram).

## 2. Training Applications

1. Applications for training shall clearly state:
  - i. The goal of the proposed training and its alignment with the purposes of the Nebraska Worker Training and Support Cash Fund established by Nebraska Revised Statute §48-622.02
    - a. Applications shall clearly describe how the training will assist the employer and promote the goals of the program
  - ii. A demonstrable reason and need for the training assistance
  - iii. The expected outcome of the training, to include:
    - a. Number of workers trained
    - b. Wage increases for workers trained
    - c. Economic impact of the training
    - d. Measurements and evaluation methods utilized to determine the success of workers trained
2. Applications must describe how the training will be conducted, including:
  - i. Type of training
  - ii. Training provider
  - iii. Training syllabi, course curricula, or other applicable program information
  - iv. Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time- bound goal(s) for training
  - v. Location(s) of training
  - vi. Who is being trained, to include:
    - a. Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time- bound goal(s) for training
    - b. Location(s) of training
    - c. Who is being trained, to include:
  - vii. Proposed dates for training
3. Applications must describe why the proposed training provider was selected and certify the effectiveness of the provider for their own use. Applications that request training to be provided in a location outside of Nebraska must demonstrate a lack of locally available training providers, as determined by the Commissioner.
4. Applications must provide an estimate (budget) of the training and administrative expenses including:
  - i. Specification of direct training costs
  - ii. Specification of administrative costs

- iii. Specification of any matching contributions. Participating businesses must provide matching funds toward Program costs. Apprenticeship training programs do not require an employer match
- iv. Breakdown of what the grant funds, if awarded, will pay for

### 3. Recruitment Applications

#### 1. Applications for recruitment shall clearly state:

- i. The goal of the proposed recruitment and its alignment with the purposes of the Nebraska Worker Training and Support Cash Fund established by Nebraska Revised Statute §48-622.02
  - a. Applications shall clearly describe how worker recruitment will assist the employer and promote the goals of the program
- ii. Demonstratable need for the worker recruitment, including a summary of previous recruitment efforts and outcomes
- iii. The expected outcome of the recruitment, to include:
  - a. Number of workers recruited
  - b. Impact on wages of existing Nebraska workers as a result of recruitment
  - c. Economic impact of the recruitment
  - d. Measurements and evaluation methods utilized to determine the success of workers trained

#### 2. Applications must describe how the recruitment efforts will be conducted, including:

- i. Proposed period of recruitment
- ii. Number of workers to be recruited
- iii. Occupation(s) of workers to be recruited
- iv. Wage of workers to be recruited
- v. Location or worksite(s) where workers will be recruited to
- vi. Recruitment strategy, including methods of recruitment and if/where targeted recruitment will occur
- vii. Retention strategy during the first year of recruited workers employment
- viii. Retention strategy after first year period of recruited workers employment
- ix. Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound goal(s) for recruitment

#### 3. Applications must provide an estimate (budget) of the recruitment expenses including:

- i. specification of recruitment costs
- ii. Specification of any matching contributions. Participating businesses must provide matching funds toward Program costs.
- iii. a breakdown of what the grant funds, if awarded, will pay for

#### 4. Combined recruitment and relocations costs per recruited worker may not exceed \$10,000

# VII. Scoring Methodology

## 1. Scoring Process

- Applications are scored utilizing both set and discretionary points. A team of no less than 2 evaluators, as designated by the Commissioner, independently score applications against the set and discretionary scoring criteria. Final scores are determined by calculating the mean score of each application. The maximum amount of points an application can receive is 300.

### SET POINTS (Max. 240 Points)

POINT CATEGORY	MAXIMUM POINTS
Economic Development Impact	150 pts
Employer Size	25 pts
Employer Award History	15 pts
Employer Match	50 pts

### DISCRETIONARY POINTS (Max. 60 Points)

POINT CATEGORY	MAXIMUM POINTS
Statement of Need	15 pts
Goals and Corresponding Outcomes	15 pts
Budget	15 pts
Innovation	15 pts

## 2. Set Points

### A. Economic Development Impact

#### i. Worker Skills Gap and Shortage

Occupations to be trained or recruited for that reduce workforce skills gaps, as ranked by high wage, high skill, and high demand indicators per region. Although not required for eligibility, projects that train or recruit workers in a high wage, high skill, and high demand (H3) occupation in the projects' respective Nebraska Economic Development Region(s) receive additional set points. (See Economic Development Regions Map on Page 15.) H3 occupation data is available on the NEworks website at [High Wage, High Skill, High Demand \(H3\) Occupations](#). Measured as the number of H3 categories met:



a. High Wage, Skill, Demand (3/3)	100 points
b. High Wage, Skill, Demand (2/3)	75 points
b. High Wage, Skill, Demand (1/3)	50 points
b. High Wage, Skill, Demand (0/3)	0 points

\*WTG staff may utilize other Labor Market Information resources to determine H3 status.

**ii. Household Income**

Percentage of State Average Wage (as calculated in [NEworks.nebraska.gov](http://NEworks.nebraska.gov) under Labor Market Analysis>Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics):

a. 110% or more	50 points
b. 105% to 109%	35 points
c. 100% to 104%	15 points
d. 99% or less	0 points

**B. Employer Size**

It is the intent of the Commissioner that grants be awarded to businesses of all sizes, with points awarded based on the number of employees:

i. Small Employer (50 or less)	25 points
ii. Mid-Small Employer (51-100)	20 points
iii. Mid-Employer (101-250)	15 points
iv. Mid-large employer (251-400)	10 points
v. Large Employer (401 or more)	5 points

**C. Employer Award History**

It is the intent of the Commissioner that applicants who have received few awards receive additional points, with points awarded by the number of grants awarded to the applicant in the past:

i. 1st Time Awardee	15 points
ii. 2nd - 5th Time Awardee	10 points
iii. 6th - 9th Time Awardee	5 points
iv. 10th + Time Awardee	0 points

#### D. Employer Match

The employer match demonstrates the applicant's commitment to and sustainability of the training or recruitment project

i. Employer match at least 3:1	50 points
ii. Employer match at least 2:1	30 points
iii. Employer match at least 1:1	10 points
iv. Employer match less than 1:1	0 points

- Documented in-kind contributions may be considered as part of the employer match. Documentation of in-kind contributions, which are submitted as part of the employer's match must specify the dollar value of facilities; equipment; wages paid to the trainees during training, or wages paid to the workers during recruitment; and dollar value of consumable supplies.
- New equipment utilized only in the project will be valued at cost. Other equipment and facilities will be valued on a pro rata basis for the time used for training consistent with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service depreciation schedules for such assets based on data provided by the employer.

#### E. Outstanding Grants

- Ten (10) points will be deducted for every grant an applicant has outstanding/open at the time of submission

### 3. Discretionary Points

Discretionary scoring represents less points than set scoring. Discretionary criteria scoring captures the completeness of the application and rewards innovative approaches. Members of the application review team document the justification of their scores.

Measure	0 Point	1 10 Points	11 15 Points
<b>1. Statement of Need</b>	Missing, unclear, or not related to grant purpose	Need expressed does not match grant purpose; not tied to relevant industry need	Need is clearly stated and tied to area industry needs strongly
<b>2. Goals and Corresponding Outcomes</b>	Missing, unclear, or not related to grant purpose	Goals and outcomes are included, but they are stated vaguely/ inconclusively with weak correlation	Goals and outcomes are clearly stated, and their correlation is evident and strong
<b>3. Budget</b>	Missing, unclear, or incomplete	Budget lacks details	Budget is clearly detailed
<b>4. Innovation</b>	Description of innovation missing, unclear, or incomplete.	Somewhat innovative, more traditional approach with average potential for impact on workers	Innovative approach with potential for significant impact on workers

## VIII. Grant Award and Performance

### 1. Award Process

- i. The Nebraska Worker Training Board shall review grant applications recommended by the Commissioner for compliance with these guidelines.
- ii. Once scored, applications will be grouped by Congressional District. No District will be eligible for a third grant per quarter until each District has received at least two grants (based on highest score). Once each Congressional District has received at least two grants, the remaining grants will be awarded regardless of location.
- iii. Once the board has reviewed the Commissioner’s award recommendation for compliance with these guidelines, applications are sent to the Governor for final approval.

### 2. Notification

- i. After the Governor has given final approval of the recommended awards, all applicants will be notified of their individual application(s) outcome.

- ii. Successful applicants will receive a written agreement to review, sign, and return to the Department within 30 calendar days of distribution.

### 3. Amendments

- i. Requests to amend active training or recruitment awards must be submitted to the Department at least 30 days prior to the proposed changes are to occur. Any proposed changes cannot occur until the applicant has received approval from the Commissioner, or his/her designee. Amendment requests are categorized and evaluated accordingly:
  - a. Extensions
    1. Requests to extend the performance period of an award for 1 calendar year or less are approved at the discretion of the Director of Reemployment Services, or his/her designee.
    2. Requests to extend the performance period of an award for more than 1 calendar year are approved at the discretion of the Commissioner of Labor.
  - b. Training Provider Changes
    1. Requests to change or utilize a different training provider than originally approved in the grant application, for the same or similar curricula, will be approved at the discretion of the Director of Reemployment Services, or his/her designee.
  - c. Project Modifications
    1. Requests that fundamentally alter or modify the initially approved project plan are approved at the discretion of the Commissioner of Labor.
    2. Common examples of project modification include, but are not limited to:
      - Changes in training course or curricula selections.
      - Repurposing of awarded funds between training and recruitment.
      - Changes in performance goals, measures, outcomes, and evaluation.
- ii. Requests must be submitted using Amendment Form A for extensions and/or changes in training providers, and Amendment Form B for changes in training programs or grant usage. These forms can be found on the internet at [dol.nebraska.gov/ReemploymentServices/EmployerResources/WorkerTrainingProgram](http://dol.nebraska.gov/ReemploymentServices/EmployerResources/WorkerTrainingProgram) and submitted to the [NDOL.WTG@nebraska.gov](mailto:NDOL.WTG@nebraska.gov) email.

### 4. General Reimbursement Requirements

- i. Reimbursement of funds will not occur until the applicant has an approved W-9 on file with Nebraska's State Accounting Division. All reimbursements will occur via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). No paper checks will be issued.
- ii. For successful applications, eligible costs incurred after the date of application submission, as documented in the Worker Training Program application portal, are eligible for reimbursement. For unsuccessful applications, costs incurred between the date of application submission and the date the application denial are considered unrecoverable.

- iii. Reimbursement requests must be submitted as a detailed, itemized invoice with supporting documentation. Non-itemized receipts or invoices for expenses (that are reimbursed at direct cost instead of per diem) will be rejected.
- iv. A detailed trip itinerary include date, time, location, and route of travel must be provided for reimbursement of personally owned vehicle (POV) mileage. Mileage is reimbursed at rates consistent with United States General Services Administration regulations at the time of travel.
- v. Requests for reimbursements will be accepted by the Department no later than 30 days after the date of contract expiration.

## 5. Project-Specific Reimbursement Requirements

### 1. Training Grants

- i. Requests for reimbursement may occur no more frequently than quarterly.
- ii. The employer or apprenticeship training provider must, in addition to an itemized invoice and supporting documentation, submit to the Department the following information through a secure method:
  - a. Employment records for each trainee including name, dates of employment, and full Social Security Number (SSN)
  - b. Class rosters and attendance sheets documenting the trainee's attendance
  - c. Course completion certificates, transcripts, or other validating documents
- iii. If the number of trainees completing training during the life of the grant is less than 85% of the number identified to be trained in the initial or amended contract, the amount of the grant awarded will be calculated accordingly:

$$\text{(Number of Trainees Trained / Number of Trainees Proposed) * Grant Award}$$

### 2. Recruitment Grants

- i. Recruited workers must maintain employment with the employer applicant for 6 months to be eligible for reimbursement.
- ii. Requests for reimbursement may occur no earlier than 1 calendar year (twelve months) after the first date of documented employment. If a recruited worker fails to maintain employment for 12 months (but no less than 6 months) drawdowns may be requested immediately upon exit.
- iii. The employer must, in addition to any itemized invoice and supporting documentation, submit to the Department the following information through a secure method:
  - a. Recruited worker's time sheets/payroll statements documenting:
    - The first pay period of employment
    - The mid-year (6 month) pay period
    - The final (12 month) pay period

- b. In the event a recruited worker maintains employment for no less than 6 months but less than 12 months, the final pay period is to be utilized.
- c. The recruited worker's full Social Security Number (SSN)
- iv. For recruited workers that maintain employment for no less than 6 months but less than 12 months, the Department will reimburse the employer at a pro-rated amount utilizing the following formula:

*(Number of Weeks Worked / 52) \* Total Eligible Expenses Incurred*

## 6. De-Obligation of Funds

- i. The Department shall notify grant awardees via email within 60 days of grant expiration as a reminder to submit final reimbursement requests and completed grant closeout documents in a timely matter. All amendment requested, including extensions, must be submitted to the Department no later than 30 days before award expiration date.
- ii. If the Department has not received completed grant closeout documents by the date of contract expiration, or an amendment proposal is not received within the remaining 30 days of the contract, a final notification will be delivered to the grant recipient.
- iii. Any expenses incurred after the award expiration date are ineligible for reimbursement unless an amendment is proposed and approved.
- iv. If the Department has not received completed grant closeout documents within 30 days of award termination, all remaining funds will be de-obligated and returned to the Nebraska Worker Training and Support Cash Fund for future use.

## IX. Grant Closeout Requirements

Upon completion of a grant award, grant recipients must complete and submit the Department's Grant Closeout Form and other required documentation through a secure data sharing portal, as provided by the Department.

### 1. Additional Documents

#### i. Training Grants

- a. All training records including class rosters, attendance records, certificates and/or transcripts, and participants full SSN
- b. An evaluation of stated training goals and corresponding outcomes, including supporting materials to establish if the goals were met
- c. If goals and outcomes were not met, an evaluation as to whether the goals are still achievable in the future, and reason(s) for not meeting the stated goals

#### ii. Recruitment Grants

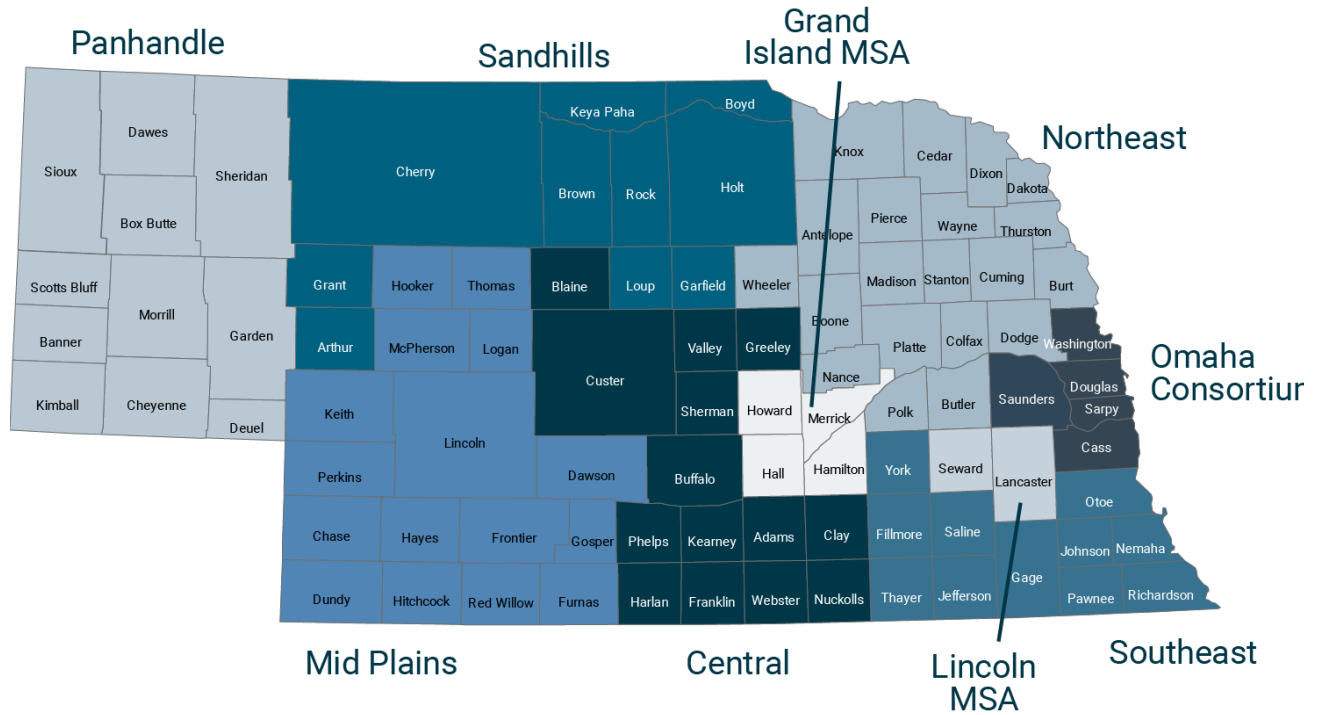
- a. Employment records of all employees recruited, including start dates and, if applicable, end dates of employment, and the recruited workers full SSN

- b. An evaluation of stated recruitment goals and corresponding outcomes, including supporting materials to establish if the goals were met
- c. If goals and outcomes were not met, an evaluation as to whether the goals are still achievable in the future, and reason(s) for not meeting the stated goals

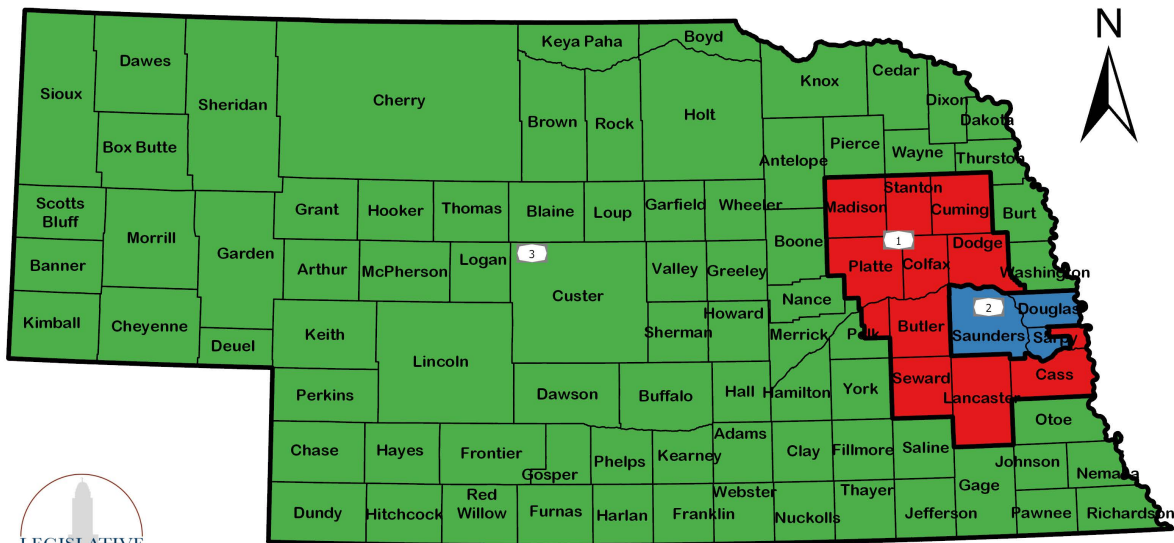
## **X. Project Review, Monitoring and Auditing**

1. The Department may conduct pre-award audits of training or recruitment projects to determine whether the grant recipient can successfully meet the proposed goals and corresponding outcomes.
2. The Department may review performance every six months after the start of a project and continue to audit up to the date of grant expiration as specified by the Department in the grant agreement or approved extension. Such reviews may include:
  - i. Grantee's actual enrollments or recruitments compared with planned enrollments or recruitments at any stage of the award
  - ii. Assessments of the likelihood that the full amount of the award will be expended
  - iii. De-obligation of funds for cause(s) identified during the review will occur at the discretion of the Commissioner of Labor.
3. The Department may schedule periodic on-site visits to the grantee's place of business, or the location of the training program funded by the Commissioner for the purpose of reviewing training activities for compliance with Program guidelines and grant award specifications.
4. The Department may, on a quarterly basis, provide for fiscal and performance audits of a representative sample of completed grant award.
5. The Department may request any documentation necessary for the completion of the audit. The grant recipient shall provide all requested documentation.

# Economic Development Regions



## United States House of Representatives - LB 1 (2021) CONG21-39002



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CONG21-39001 Introduced  
Placed on General File by Committee  
Committee Adoption, 5-4  
Amended by CONG21-39002  
Passed 35-11-3 on Final Reading

District	Deviation
1	0%
2	0%
3	0%

