

GROWING WORK-READY KENTUCKIANS

OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE THE BUSINESS CLIMATE

Adequately funded, effective workforce training and support services are critical, yet many employers continue to struggle to find quality talent with the right skills needed to fill in-demand roles. Kentucky has an opportunity to bolster its economy by providing adequate workforce resources to training and supportive services aligned with current and future jobs with Kentucky employers that proactively support the success and upward mobility of its workers.

APPROACH TO TACKLE THE ISSUE

Kentucky's workforce system is notably complex, with multiple layers, differing agency responsibilities, and funding sources, each with its own accountability and compliance requirements. Each of Kentucky's unique regions must be able to respond effectively and quickly to local economic and business community needs. Lessening bureaucratic regulation at the state level, allowing flexibility with available dollars to clearly align with specific regional workforce needs, and encouraging more innovation and customer satisfaction among employers and job seekers in workforce system design are critical to supporting effective local workforce development response.

WHY DOES IT MATTER TO MY BUSINESS

Workforce is the number one priority for Kentucky businesses. The ability to deliver quality, on-time, customized workforce solutions based on real-time data and future workforce projections is the key to Kentucky's economic prosperity.

WHAT WE ARE ASKING AN ELECTED OFFICIAL TO DO

The NKY Chamber of Commerce supports efforts to allow greater flexibility in regional workforce programming and funding, with the understanding that each region has a unique set of challenges. These efforts should serve to improve workforce outcomes throughout the state and focus on the following goals:

- Deploy regional workforce development resources to align with regional employer and job seeker needs.
- Ensure collaboration between state and local agencies and nonprofit and private sector partners to eliminate redundancy and duplicative efforts.
- Allow local workforce development leaders to adjust programs and services quickly and efficiently to best align with unique community workforce needs, including funding and systems improvement for affordable, attainable workforce housing, transportation, access to quality childcare, and health care support services.
- Invest in staffing, technology, and training to improve the customer service experience of employers and job seekers.
- Maximize utilization of federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding and other workforce transitional benefit programs to address the benefits cliff that can be a barrier for low-income families.
- Dedicate additional resources for job seekers faced with barriers to employment, including language education services and workforce support for individuals with histories of justice involvement and substance abuse disorders.