

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 993

Introduced by Ibach, 44; Bostar, 29; DeBoer, 10; Dungan, 26.

Read first time January 05, 2024

Committee: Business and Labor

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to apprenticeships; to adopt the
- 2 Apprenticeship Grant Act.
- 3 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. Sections 1 to 6 of this act shall be known and may be
2 cited as the Apprenticeship Grant Act.

3 Sec. 2. The purpose of the Apprenticeship Grant Act is to provide
4 underemployed and unemployed individuals with job training and classroom
5 instruction opportunities in order to earn a livable wage and reduce
6 their reliance on economic assistance programs and increase the number of
7 Nebraska businesses willing to offer apprenticeships to Nebraska workers.

8 Sec. 3. For purposes of the Apprenticeship Grant Act, unless the
9 context otherwise requires:

10 (1) Apprentice means any person who participates in an
11 apprenticeship;

12 (2) Apprenticeship means supervised on-the-job training with
13 technical classroom instruction on subjects related to the apprentice's
14 chosen occupation;

15 (3) Department means the Department of Economic Development;

16 (4) Economic assistance program includes aid to dependent children;
17 aid to the aged, blind, and disabled; the Supplemental Nutrition
18 Assistance Program; medicaid; child care; emergency assistance; energy
19 assistance; social services block grants; and other similar programs
20 administered by the Department of Health and Human Services;

21 (5) Registered apprenticeship program means an apprenticeship
22 program registered under the National Apprenticeship Act, 29 U.S.C. 50 et
23 seq.; and

24 (6) SNAP Next Step Program has the same meaning as in section
25 68-1017.02.

26 Sec. 4. (1) A business may apply to the department for a grant to
27 assist in providing an apprenticeship if:

28 (a) The business certifies that the apprenticeship is part of a
29 registered apprenticeship program;

30 (b) The apprentice participates in the SNAP Next Step Program or
31 programs affiliated with the Nebraska Workforce Innovation and

1 Opportunity Act;

2 (c) The business intends to offer the apprentice full-time
3 employment upon the successful completion of the apprenticeship that
4 includes a wage sufficient to reduce participation in economic assistance
5 programs; and

6 (d) The apprenticeship will be completed within the State of
7 Nebraska.

8 (2)(a) The department may provide grants for apprenticeships to any
9 business to reimburse the costs for:

10 (i) Wages for apprentices; or

11 (ii) Tuition for apprentices to participate in classroom instruction
12 at institutions of higher education.

13 (b) The maximum grant award per apprentice is thirty-seven thousand
14 dollars.

15 (3) A business may apply for no more than one grant for the same
16 apprentice and shall not be awarded more than one hundred grants total in
17 any twelve-month period.

18 (4) The department shall, to the extent possible, assure that the
19 distribution of grants under the Apprenticeship Grant Act provides
20 equitable access to the grants by all geographic areas of the state.

21 (5) The department shall not award more than four million dollars of
22 grants under this section in any one fiscal year.

23 (6) The department shall develop a qualified action plan by January
24 1 of each odd-numbered year. The plan shall, at a minimum, set forth the
25 department's priorities and selection criteria for awarding grants for
26 apprenticeships. The department shall submit the plan to the Governor for
27 approval.

28 (7) The department shall execute memorandums of understanding with
29 the Department of Labor and the Department of Health and Human Services
30 before December 31, 2024, to ensure the exchange of data regarding
31 registered apprenticeship programs and the SNAP Next Step Program. The

1 memorandum of understanding with the Department of Health and Human
2 Services shall require the Department of Health and Human Services to
3 provide de-identified data concerning the number of Supplemental
4 Nutrition Assistance Program recipients that find self-sufficient
5 employment and the estimated savings to the Supplemental Nutrition
6 Assistance Program.

7 (8) The department shall submit an annual report to the Governor and
8 the Legislature on or before October 1, 2025, and on or before October 1
9 of each year thereafter which includes, but is not necessarily limited
10 to, a description of the demand for apprenticeship grants under the
11 Apprenticeship Grant Act from all geographic regions in Nebraska, a
12 listing of the recipients and amounts of apprenticeship grants awarded in
13 the previous fiscal year, the number of apprentices that were employed by
14 grant recipients upon the completion of an apprenticeship in the previous
15 fiscal year, and de-identified data regarding the number of Supplemental
16 Nutrition Assistance Program recipients that find self-sufficient
17 employment and the estimated savings to the Supplemental Nutrition
18 Assistance Program. The report submitted to the Legislature shall be
19 submitted electronically. The department may require recipients to
20 provide periodic performance reports to enable the department to fulfill
21 the requirements of this subsection. The report shall contain no
22 information that is protected by state or federal confidentiality laws.

23 (9) The department may enter into a contract with a Nebraska-based
24 nonprofit entity for the purposes of carrying out any or all of the
25 provisions of the Apprenticeship Grant Act.

26 Sec. 5. The department may adopt and promulgate rules and
27 regulations to govern the award and disbursement of grants pursuant to
28 the Apprenticeship Grant Act.

29 Sec. 6. (1) The Apprenticeship Nebraska Cash Fund is created. The
30 fund shall be used to carry out the Apprenticeship Grant Act. The fund
31 shall consist of money transferred to the fund by the Legislature and

1 money donated as gifts, bequests, or other contributions from public or
2 private entities. Any money in the fund available for investment shall be
3 invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital
4 Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.

5 (2) The department, or any entity with which the department
6 contracts for such purpose, may use up to five percent of any
7 appropriation to carry out the Apprenticeship Grant Act for
8 administrative services.