

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED NINTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 363

Introduced by Ibach, 44.

Read first time January 16, 2025

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 8 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 to increase the number
7 of Nebraska businesses willing to offer apprenticeships to Nebraska
8 workers.

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

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

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

16 (3) Department means the Department of Labor;

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

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

25 (6) SNAP Next Step Program has the same meaning as in section
26 68-1017.02.

27 **Sec. 4.** (1) A business is eligible for a grant to assist in
28 providing an apprenticeship if:

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

31 (b) The apprentice participates in the SNAP Next Step Program or

1 programs affiliated with the Nebraska Workforce Innovation and
2 Opportunity Act;

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

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

9 (2) A business seeking a grant under this section shall apply to the
10 department on a form prescribed by the department.

11 (3)(a) The department may award grants to businesses under this
12 section to reimburse the costs for:

13 (i) Wages for apprentices; or

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

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

18 (4) A business may apply for no more than one grant for the same
19 apprentice and shall not be awarded more than five grants total in any
20 twelve-month period.

21 (5) The department shall, to the extent possible, ensure that the
22 distribution of grants under this section provides equitable access to
23 the grants by all geographic areas of the state.

24 (6) The department shall not award more than four million dollars of
25 grants under this section in any one fiscal year.

26 (7) The department shall develop a qualified action plan by January
27 1 of each even-numbered year. The plan shall, at a minimum, set forth the
28 department's priorities and selection criteria for awarding grants for
29 apprenticeships under this section. The department shall submit the plan
30 to the Governor for approval.

31 (8) The department shall execute a memorandum of understanding with

1 the Department of Health and Human Services before December 31, 2025, to
2 ensure the exchange of data regarding registered apprenticeship programs
3 and the SNAP Next Step Program. The memorandum of understanding shall
4 require the Department of Health and Human Services to provide de-
5 identified data concerning the number of Supplemental Nutrition
6 Assistance Program recipients that find self-sufficient employment and
7 the estimated savings to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

8 (9) The department shall submit an annual report to the Governor and
9 the Legislature on or before October 1, 2026, and on or before October 1
10 of each year thereafter which includes, but is not necessarily limited
11 to, a description of the demand for apprenticeship grants under this
12 section from all geographic regions in Nebraska, a listing of the
13 recipients and amounts of apprenticeship grants awarded under this
14 section in the previous fiscal year, the number of apprentices that were
15 employed by grant recipients upon the completion of an apprenticeship in
16 the previous fiscal year, and de-identified data regarding the number of
17 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients that find self-
18 sufficient employment and the estimated savings to the Supplemental
19 Nutrition Assistance Program. The report submitted to the Legislature
20 shall be submitted electronically. The department may require recipients
21 to provide periodic performance reports to enable the department to
22 fulfill the requirements of this subsection. The report shall contain no
23 information that is protected by state or federal confidentiality laws.

24 **Sec. 5.** (1) An apprentice may apply to the department for a grant
25 to pay for child care costs while training as an apprentice in a building
26 or construction trade. To qualify for such grant, the apprentice shall
27 be:

28 (a) Represented by an organization described in section 501(c)(5) of
29 the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

30 (b) Employed by a redeveloper, contractor, or subcontractor that is
31 participating in a registered apprenticeship program with a training

1 facility located in Nebraska.

2 (2)(a) The department may award grants to apprentices who qualify
3 under subsection (1) of this section.

4 (b) The maximum grant awarded to any apprentice under this section
5 is thirty-seven thousand dollars.

6 (3) The department shall recover any grant awarded to an apprentice
7 under this section if such apprentice does not complete the
8 apprenticeship in which the apprentice was participating at the time of
9 receiving the grant.

10 **Sec. 6.** The department may adopt and promulgate rules and
11 regulations to govern the award and disbursement of grants pursuant to
12 the Apprenticeship Grant Act.

13 **Sec. 7.** (1) The Apprenticeship Nebraska Cash Fund is created. The
14 fund shall be used to carry out the Apprenticeship Grant Act. The fund
15 shall consist of money transferred to the fund by the Legislature and
16 money donated as gifts, bequests, or other contributions from public or
17 private entities. Any money in the fund available for investment shall be
18 invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital
19 Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.

20 (2) The department may use up to five percent of any appropriation
21 to carry out the Apprenticeship Grant Act for administrative expenses.

22 **Sec. 8.** The Apprenticeship Grant Act terminates on June 30, 2031.
23 The State Treasurer shall transfer any unobligated money remaining in the
24 Apprenticeship Nebraska Cash Fund on such date to the General Fund.