

Can CARES Act Funding Help You During COVID-19?

Indiana is the recipient of additional federal funding to support Gov. Eric Holcomb's Next Level Jobs program. The \$50 million, allocated through the CARES Act, will expand the Workforce Ready Grant and the Employer Training Grant. A portion of the money will support the development of career coaching initiatives, skills training, and recognition of prior learning and experience. The increased funding caps will be available through Dec. 30, 2020.

The Workforce Ready Grant, administered by the Commission for Higher Education, offers individuals free job training for jobs in high-demand fields. Here's how the grant works:

- Hoosiers with two- and four-year degrees are temporarily eligible to receive full tuition reimbursement for short-term Workforce Ready Grant-eligible programs through December 30. (Costs incurred beyond that point will not be reimbursed.)
- Nearly 50 new certificate programs have been approved. Examples of certificate programs that temporarily qualify for the Workforce Ready Grant include Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Commercial Driver's License (CDL), Phlebotomy and CNC Machining. Individuals can enroll in some of the new certificate programs now at NextLevelJobs.org, with additional programs available for enrollment on the site in the coming weeks.
 - Certificate programs have been selected based on meeting immediate, regional, and emerging workforce needs. Ivy Tech, Vincennes, and the Department of Workforce Development all added programs to the list.
- The funding cap per individual has been raised from \$5,500 to \$10,000 to cover high-quality programs that cost more than \$5,500 (with program cost frozen at its current level).

The Employer Training Grant, administered by the Department of Workforce Development, helps employers to train new employees and upskill or reskill current workers. The Employer Training Grant will be temporarily expanded in the following ways:

- The maximum amount of funding available to an employer has been raised from \$50,000 to \$100,000.
- \$5 million will be allocated specifically for minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses.

To get more information and enroll in Next Level Jobs, visit NextLevelJobs.org. Individuals looking to connect with education, employment, and financial resources available in Indiana are encouraged to visit Indiana's Rapid Recovery hub, YourNextStepIN.org. Free one-on-one assistance helping Hoosiers navigate the Workforce Ready Grant is available through [INvestEd](https://INvestEd.org) by calling (317) 715-9007.