

Governor Phil Murphy

Murphy Administration Pilots Lifelong Learning Program to Empower Unemployed, Chronically Underemployed NJ Residents to Succeed in the Labor Market

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New Grant Program Helps Build Stronger, Fairer Economy for All

TRENTON – In partnership with the Office of Governor Phil Murphy, the Office of Innovation and the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOLE) have teamed up to fund a two-year pilot program to provide job-coaching, training, and employment support to jobless and chronically underemployed residents who do not have college degrees or workplace credentials.

The novel Lifelong Learning Accounts (LiLA) program ([https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/zofm0i/fd1rrbm/r6fg31_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtba!JDRmVQwsuS-V0cK8swXRd6F5LP9cKsPk8306LUCbV7p19g03Yt_tczEwnpfoWsNiFtD5i1IPTAyMe6LEEys-9sC8FgY\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/zofm0i/fd1rrbm/r6fg31_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtba!JDRmVQwsuS-V0cK8swXRd6F5LP9cKsPk8306LUCbV7p19g03Yt_tczEwnpfoWsNiFtD5i1IPTAyMe6LEEys-9sC8FgY$)) – part of Governor Murphy's Future of Work initiative – is built on the idea of empowering participants to drive their own career development, helping them secure the training and supportive services they need to find and keep sustainable employment. The LiLA Grant program, managed by NJDOLE, will provide funding to organizations who will recruit and deliver services to LiLA participants.

"The barriers to family-sustaining employment are well known, but here in New Jersey – with this grant and other forward-thinking initiatives – we are creating life-changing opportunities for underserved residents," **said Governor Murphy**. "This is what it means to build a stronger, fairer economy for all."

The \$10 million program was conceived to promote equitable opportunities, upward mobility, and economic fairness. It is designed to help participants overcome barriers to gainful, permanent employment in part by making stipends for wrap-around services such as child care and transportation available to those who need them in order to complete a training course or succeed at work. The integration of career coaching, professional mentoring, and up-to-date information on labor market trends provide critical support to participants as they advance their careers. Participants' career plans will be tailored to their individual goals and needs.

"The pandemic disproportionately hurt those who were already struggling economically, but we strongly believe this program will help permanently uplift this population," **said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo, whose agency is administering the grant**. "We're thankful for this new initiative as we continue to develop the skills and talents of our workforce with a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion, preparing our workers for sustaining jobs as we recover into a stronger and more resilient New Jersey."

"New Jersey's workers told us they wanted more flexible ways to develop the skills to obtain the jobs of tomorrow," **said Beth Simone Noveck, New Jersey State Chief Innovation Officer and Chair of the Future of Work Task Force**. "We listened. I am delighted that New Jersey is moving forward to create this first-of-its-kind Lifelong Learning Account that will provide flexible support to help workers make informed decisions about the training they want and they choose. Thanks to the members of the Task Force for their vision and leadership."

"Lifelong Learning Accounts will help chronically underemployed and unemployed individuals obtain the training they need to succeed in a fast-changing economy. Comprehensive services, flexibility and coaching are essential for individuals who struggle to manage the demands of work and family while also preparing for better jobs," **said Carl Van Horn, Ph.D. Director, Heldrich Center for Workforce Development and Distinguished Professor, Rutgers University**.

The two-year pilot program starts in March and ends in 2025.

Eligible applicants for the LiLA Grant can be a non-profit or for-profit entity, a government agency, or an institute of higher education. Grantees are expected to identify and serve at least 100 low-income adults who have been unemployed for six months or more or are significantly underemployed, but are willing and able to complete training and obtain work.

Approved grantees will receive up to \$750,000 per year contingent upon meeting the grant's performance goals and expenditures. Each resident accepted into the program will receive a lifelong learning account of \$9,600 that they can use for training, career development, childcare, and other expenses related to gaining meaningful employment.

Important dates associated with the LiLA grant:

Application due date: March 10

Technical Assistance Workshop: February 15

Grants Awarded: March 31

Performance Period: April 1, 2023 - March 31, 2025

View the full Notice of Grant Opportunity here ([https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/zofm0i/fd1rrbm/7ygg31_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtba!JDRmVQwsuS-V0cK8swXRd6F5LP9cKsPk8306LUCbV7p19g03Yt_tczEwnpfoWsNiFtD5i1IPTAyMe6LEEys-5c8_mXAS\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/zofm0i/fd1rrbm/7ygg31_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtba!JDRmVQwsuS-V0cK8swXRd6F5LP9cKsPk8306LUCbV7p19g03Yt_tczEwnpfoWsNiFtD5i1IPTAyMe6LEEys-5c8_mXAS$)).



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[Boards, Commissions & Authorities \(/governor/admin/bca/\)](/governor/admin/bca/)

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[Governor's Fellows Program \(/governor/admin/fellows/\)](/governor/admin/fellows/)

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[Economy & Jobs \(/governor/initiatives/#Economic\)](/governor/initiatives/#Economic)

[Education \(/governor/initiatives/#Education\)](/governor/initiatives/#Education)

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[Law & Justice \(/governor/initiatives/#Justice\)](/governor/initiatives/#Justice)

[Transportation \(/governor/initiatives/#Transportation\)](/governor/initiatives/#Transportation)

[Public Addresses \(/governor/news/addresses\)](/governor/initiatives/#PublicAddresses)

[Executive Orders \(/governor/news/addresses\)](/governor/news/addresses/)

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[Direct Appointments \(/governor/news/appointments\)](/governor/news/addresses/)

[Advice and Consent \(/governor/news/appointments\)](/governor/news/addresses/)

[Appointments \(/governor/news/acappointments\)](/governor/news/addresses/)

[Legislation \(/governor/news/statements/approved/statements_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/addresses/)

[Administration Reports \(/governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/addresses/)

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[Press Kits \(/governor/news/press\)](/governor/news/addresses/)

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