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/ New Jersey Department of Labor Announces the Availability of \$5 Million in Grant Funding for Training and Employment Support Services for Opioid-Impacted New Jerseyans

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 14, 2025

**TRENTON** – The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) announced the availability of an additional \$5 million in grant funding for organizations to provide training, employment, and retention services for residents who have been impacted by the opioid crisis. The [Pathways to Recovery Initiative](#) provides funding to organizations across the state to enhance workforce readiness and help New Jerseyans make the transition from opioid recovery to employment.

Since its inception, the program has established over 1,550 employer partnerships and served more than 4,150 participants.

Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations, for-profits, governmental entities, and institutions of higher education in the Garden State that have connections to mental health and opioid use disorder treatment centers. The program is expected to grant selected organizations up to \$1 million to provide support over a 24-month period that begins June 1.

“Pathways to Recovery is helping New Jerseyans impacted by the opioid crisis get back on their feet by supporting local opportunities for job training and support,” **said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo**. “By investing in employment support services for individuals in recovery, we are enhancing the state’s workforce readiness and empowering residents with the dignity and respect that comes from having a job and rebuilding their lives.”

The Pathways to Recovery program, [launched in 2019](#) as part of Governor Murphy’s whole-of-government strategy to combat New Jersey’s opioid crisis, initially focused on the six hardest-hit counties before expanding statewide last year.

“The Pathways to Recovery program has transformed the lives of individuals who have been impacted by the opioid epidemic in New Jersey’s Southern Region,” said Merilee Rutolo, President & Chief Strategy Officer at Center For Family Services. “With the support of the NJDOL, our team has successfully connected individuals to employment and supported their personal and economic stability through job readiness, skill-building, and industry recognized credentials.”

“Workforce Advantage is honored to be an NJDOL Pathways to Recovery Grant grantee,” said Gilberto Romero, Director, Workforce Advantage. “This grant has empowered us to provide essential support and resources to individuals on their journey to recovery. Through our programs we have offered training, education, job coaching, support services, and professional development opportunities crucial for rebuilding lives affected by addiction.”

In collaboration with Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School’s Division of Addiction Psychiatry, Pathways to Recovery has worked to bridge gaps between employers and grantees, facilitating recovery-friendly employment for individuals impacted by the opioid crisis.

“Pathways to Recovery is a transformative initiative, provided by the New Jersey Department of Labor Workforce & Development (NJDOL), which expands access to critical resources for a diverse range of New Jersey residents”, said John E. Harmon, Sr., IOM, Founder, President and CEO, African American Chamber of Commerce of NJ (AACCNJ). “Through this strategic partnership, AACCNJ is empowering individuals, strengthening New Jersey’s workforce, and strengthening the state’s economic competitiveness.”

Applications for Round 2 grants must be submitted online by April 25, 2025, following the submission of a Letter of Intent by March 26, 2025. A mandatory technical assistance session will be held on March 27, 2025.

For more information on the Pathways to Recovery Initiative and application instructions, visit <https://www.nj.gov/labor/research-info/grants.shtml> or contact [Pathways2Recovery@dol.nj.gov](mailto:Pathways2Recovery@dol.nj.gov).

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