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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 4, 2024

TRENTON – The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) has expanded its Cultivating Access, Rights, and Equity (CARE) grant program and released \$2.2 million in new funding.

First launched in [March 2022](#), the CARE grant funds outreach, education, and technical assistance programs to increase equitable access to New Jersey's worker benefits and protections, including paid leave and Unemployment Insurance.

This year, workers' rights under state Wage and Hour law have been added to the program, including wage theft, misclassification, and the newly enacted Temporary Workers Bill of Rights.

"I'm excited to announce we're expanding the CARE grant to cover more work rights," said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo. "Partnering with community organizations has proven to be a valuable resource for reaching focused worker populations who may not know, understand or utilize all their work rights. This grant helps us reach directly into communities to increase education, awareness and access."

In its first year, CARE grantees directly reached more than [46,000 workers](#) through community events, one-on-one outreach, counseling and workshops, and many more through social media, mass messaging, and hyper-local advertising.

The grant program seeks partners that can provide community-centered, culturally relevant, and language-specific programming. CARE aims to reach workers who need increased access to their work rights, and employers who require information about their obligations and compliance.

Focus populations include low-wage workers, workers of color, immigrants, women, refugees, survivors of domestic/sexual violence, young workers, small businesses, immigrant-owned businesses, and other employers that need helpful resources and assistance.

The program aims to build the capacity of community organizations and agencies to share information and support to a diverse range of workers and employers and enhance collaboration between NJDOL and CARE partners.

"The CARE Grant has allowed us to seamlessly incorporate Unemployment Insurance and Earned Sick Leave assistance and education into our existing community engagement programs, including outreach visits and drop-in hours, reaching hundreds of community members." Ally Blumenfeld and Emily Dalton, Hoboken Public Library.

Here are some of the work rights the CARE grant helps workers learn about and utilize:

- [Paid family and medical leave benefits](#), also known as New Jersey Temporary Disability and Family Leave Insurance, are available to eligible employees who need to care for themselves or a loved one, during pregnancy and childbirth recovery, to bond with a new child, or to cope with domestic or sexual violence.
- The [NJ Earned Sick Leave Law](#) covers nearly all workers and requires employers of all sizes to provide up to 40 hours per year of paid sick time so employees can care for themselves and loved ones, cope with domestic or sexual violence, or attend a meeting at their child's school.
- [New Jersey Wage and Hour Law](#) provides additional labor protections related to minimum wage and overtime, wage theft and payment, employee misclassification, and the provisions under the [Temporary Workers Bill of Rights](#).
- [Unemployment Insurance](#) provides partial wage replacement to people who lose their jobs through no fault of their own.

Eligible grant applicants must demonstrate their role as a trusted resource within their focus communities, as well as their capacity, experience, and history of success providing outreach, education, technical assistance and/or support. Public and private nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, state-recognized tribal governments with 501(c)(3) status, and state and local government entities may apply. Applicants can submit proposals as individual organizations or as a collaborative with a lead agency.

CARE grant awards are expected to range between \$50,000 and \$200,000, but NJDOL may consider applications above or below this range where appropriate justification is provided.

Key dates:

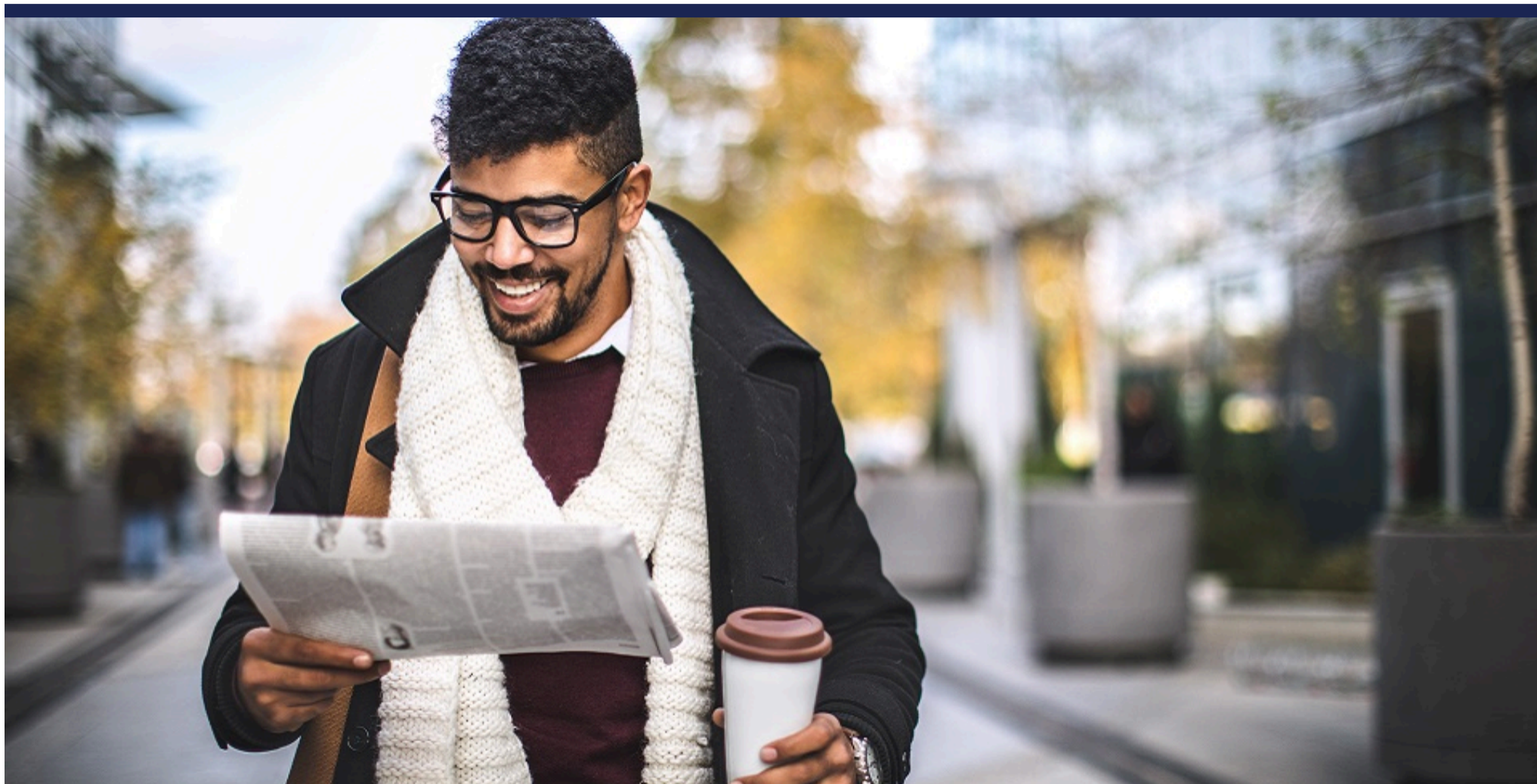
- **March 11, 5:30 - 7:00 pm** and **March 12, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm**: Information sessions ([Registration required](#); Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend).
- **April 1 by 11:59 pm**: [Application Interest Form](#)

- **April 3 by 11:59 pm:** Applications due.

View complete details and the full Notice of Grant Opportunity [here](#).

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