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Federal Grant Allows NJ to Expand Efforts to Help Ex-Offenders, Individuals in Recovery Re-enter the Workforce

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 13, 2021

TRENTON – The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) has been awarded a \$100,000 grant from the US Department of Labor to support employers who hire justice-involved individuals who are recovering from substance abuse.

The grant provides for expansion of NJDOL's Federal Bonding program, which secures the employment of people with criminal records or poor credit histories to include those whose justice involvement stems from opioid abuse. Federal bonds act as cost-free insurance policies for employers to protect against theft and other unlawful actions on the part of the newly hired worker. Historically in NJ, the bonds almost never have to be cashed.

"People who have made mistakes or poor decisions in the past need our support to successfully reenter the workforce," said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo. "This grant helps provide peace of mind to employers willing to give ex-offenders who are in recovery the opportunity to hold a job that pays a living wage – and the sense of dignity and purpose that comes with a steady paycheck."

New Jersey was one of eight states, territories and jurisdictions to receive the Fidelity Bonding Demonstration Grant, which awarded a total of \$750,000 in funding to help at-risk adults overcome barriers to employment. The others are: Hawaii, Indiana, Minnesota, South Dakota, West Virginia, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.

Administered by the USDOL's Employment and Training Administration, the Federal Bonding program provides bonds to employers that last at least six months, with a minimum of \$5,000 and maximum of \$25,000 per eligible new hire. The Federal Bonding program also assists individuals lacking work history, with poor personal credit, or who were dishonorably discharged from the military.

Fewer than one percent of the bonds issued have been utilized by employers to recover losses since the start of the program in 1966, according to the USDOL, and no bonds were used by employers to cover losses in the last year.

For more information on the NJDOL's Federal Bonding program, please visit: <https://www.nj.gov/labor/career-services/special-services/federal-bonding/>

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NJ adds jobs in July; 7th consecutive months of gains. [nj.gov/labor/lwdhome/...](https://www.nj.gov/labor/lwdhome/)

Aug 19, 2021



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As of the latest reporting, more than \$33 billion in unemployment benefits have been sent to Garden State workers. With federal benefits set to expire on September 4, we encourage everyone to check your email and visit [MyUnemployment.nj.gov](https://www.nj.gov/labor/lwdhome/) for updates and available resources.



Department of Labor and Workforce Development

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