Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Executive Order to Prioritize Work Experience and Skills Training Over Four-Year Degrees for Certain State Employment Opportunities

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Creates Pathways for New Jerseyans Without College Degrees to Attain High-Paying Jobs

TRENTON – Building on his vision for the Next New Jersey, Governor Phil Murphy, joined by New Jersey Civil Service Commission (CSC) Acting Chair and CEO Allison Chris Myers, today signed Executive Order No. 327 expanding job opportunities for New Jerseyans by prioritizing skills and work experience over college degree requirements for certain State employment opportunities. The Order directs CSC to identify the job classifications that require college degrees and determine which are appropriate to revise in the State's classification plan, prioritizing the practical skills and experiences needed to effectively serve the public over strict educational requirements.

This executive order will open the door to family-sustaining, high-paying jobs, with salaries that can top $120,000 a year, for the hundreds of applicants who are rejected or dissuaded from applying each year to the State's open employment opportunities due to educational requirements. The Executive Order will open employment opportunities for a wide breadth of jobs offered by the State.

"Every American should have the ability to attain a good job with growth opportunities and secure their place in the middle class, regardless of whether or not they have a college degree," **said Governor Murphy.** "Employment qualifications for good-paying jobs in our state workforce should not exclude individuals with qualifying experience, unique skillsets, and diverse backgrounds. Today, we open the door to that opportunity for applicants across our state, and urge other states, as well as private sector employers, to remove barriers to opportunity."

The de-emphasis of higher educational attainment as a requirement for employment has become a national trend for both public and private-sector jobs. With the signing of this executive order, New Jersey will join a diverse group of six states that have de-emphasized college degrees in hiring – including Maryland, Pennsylvania, Alaska, Colorado, North Carolina, and Utah.

"The New Jersey Civil Service Commission is honored to be tasked with implementing such an important initiative," **said Civil Service Commission Acting Chair/CEO Allison Chris Myers.** "Coming from a working-class background myself, Governor Murphy's signing of this Executive Order is meaningful to me, both personally and professionally. This Executive Order recognizes the importance and weight that practical work experience and skills training hold in a society that prioritizes the 4-year degree for many entry level positions. I am excited to witness all of the new opportunities that will open up to New Jersey's residents as a result of this order. This will truly go a long way in achieving Governor Murphy's promise of a stronger and fairer New Jersey."

"With today's action, Governor Murphy continues to demonstrate that New Jersey is a model employer that emphasizes skills-based training, responds to emerging labor market challenges, and makes lasting investments in its workforce," **said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo.** "This forward-thinking Executive Order creates more opportunities for public work and strengthens the state's hand in attracting the most qualified applicants to open positions."

"Nearly 2 million New Jerseyeans are STARs (https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/t.e2ma.net/click/njv9cj/fd1rrbm/rmoxa3__;!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!KuvgbAX6gzUiBiK1IHkI-oFgTThnkiGNZFweCX9pmT-cGdUe_9eUBLw8_6hGUgVlhEMBTIEeIKP6A3uedjC50hLVJWQ$)- workers skilled through alternative routes, rather than through a bachelor's degree," **said Byron Auguste, CEO, Opportunity@Work.** "Governor Murphy's commitment to skills-first hiring will enable the State of New Jersey to benefit from the skills and talents of New Jersey STARs, while creating pathways to good jobs and careers for hard-working New Jersey residents. With this executive order, New Jersey is sending the message 'if you can do the job, you can get the job.'"

This order will take effect immediately, starting with a six-month period allowing the CSC to use its regulatory authority to identify the positions for which a college degree is not a necessity and take the steps needed to ensure that relevant job postings are aligned with this Order.

For a copy of Executive Order No. 327, click here (https://nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-327.pdf).

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