



# State of North Carolina

**JOSH STEIN**  
GOVERNOR

March 25, 2025

## EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 11

### DIRECTING NORTH CAROLINA'S PROGRESS ON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**WHEREAS**, the State of North Carolina recognizes that workforce development is essential to fuel the state's continued economic growth, ensure employers have the local talent necessary to meet their needs, and expand pathways to careers that support thriving families and communities across our state; and

**WHEREAS**, workforce development is a continuum, requiring collaboration among and across our public school systems, higher education institutions, local workforce development boards, and employer partners, among others; and

**WHEREAS**, the state must offer opportunities across the lifespan of an individual, including a high school student exploring career options in their local community, an incumbent worker seeking additional training to advance to the next level, and a veteran transitioning from military service into a new pathway; and

**WHEREAS** workforce development efforts must reflect and be responsive to both immediate and emerging needs of North Carolina employers; and

**WHEREAS**, the state depends on a skilled workforce to provide safe, effective, and efficient government programs and services to all North Carolinians; and

**WHEREAS**, the Governor understands that a ready and trained workforce is essential to his goal of being the best state in the nation for business and providing economic opportunity for all North Carolinians; and

**WHEREAS**, the Governor has committed that no state will outwork North Carolina on the state's efforts to meet its workforce goals; and

**WHEREAS**, reflecting these efforts and goals, North Carolina's workforce is strong, ready, and able to meet challenges, but the need for continued and strategic development remains; and

**WHEREAS**, collective and collaborative efforts across the workforce development continuum are required to maximize and grow efforts to make North Carolina a leader in workforce development, advancing our economy, supporting our employers, and most importantly, providing for our employees, their families, and their communities; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Article III of the North Carolina Constitution and N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 143A-4 and 143B-4, the Governor is the chief executive officer of the state and is responsible for formulating and administering the policies of the executive branch of state government; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 147-12, the Governor has the authority and the duty to supervise the official conduct of all executive and ministerial officers.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and the laws of the State of North Carolina, **IT IS ORDERED:**

**Section 1. The Governor's Council on Workforce and Apprenticeships.**

**A. Establishment.**

The Governor's Council on Workforce and Apprenticeships ("Council") is hereby established as an advisory council within the NCWorks Commission.

**B. Membership.**

The Council shall be comprised of members representing the breadth of workforce development partners across the state, including existing members of the NCWorks Commission and additional partners. The Council shall include representatives from the following:

- a. North Carolina Department of Commerce
- b. North Carolina Office of State Human Resources
- c. North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
- d. North Carolina Department of Administration
- e. North Carolina Department of Adult Correction
- f. North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
- g. NCWorks Commission
- h. North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
- i. North Carolina Community College System
- j. UNC System
- k. North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities
- l. North Carolina General Assembly
- m. myFutureNC
- n. At least four local leaders across North Carolina, including leadership from a school district, a community college, a workforce development board, and organized labor
- o. At least three employers across North Carolina, including a representative from the ApprenticeshipNC Advisory Council

In addition to the employer members, the Council may confer with other employers across the state, as appropriate.

Council members shall serve a term of one (1) year and may be reappointed to successive terms. Council members serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Governor shall select one or more members to serve as chair or co-chairs of the Council.

**C. Duties.**

The Council shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. Recommend strategic, quantifiable goals that will most meaningfully and holistically grow and prepare North Carolina's workforce development efforts over the next four years. The Council may amplify existing goals and create new goals. For each goal, the Council shall identify responsible Council members. Recommended goals should address, among other topics, the following:
  1. Credential and degree attainment.
  2. Labor market alignment.
  3. Pre- and registered apprenticeships.
  4. Sector-based strategies in emerging areas.
  5. State government employment.
  6. Work-based learning opportunities.
- b. Identify specific strategies to attain each goal. The Council may amplify existing strategies and identify new strategies. For each strategy, the Council shall identify responsible Council members. In identifying the strategies, the Council will specifically consider, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Opportunities to maximize existing efforts.
2. Areas requiring collaboration across the Council membership and other workforce partners.
3. Enhanced industry engagement.

In identifying strategies, the Council shall consider opportunities to support people in rural communities, formerly incarcerated people, people with disabilities, and veterans and their families.

- c. Advance the identified goals and strategies assigned to each Council member.
- d. Provide the following reports to the Governor:
  1. By June 15, 2025, a report highlighting the goals and current status of each goal.
  2. By December 15, 2025, a report highlighting the goals, current status of each goal, and the corresponding strategies to attain each goal.
  3. As requested by the Governor, but at least by December 15, 2026, a report highlighting progress toward achieving each goal, implementation of the corresponding strategies, and action needed to more effectively meet goals.

Such reports shall be presented to the North Carolina Education Cabinet, the NCWorks Commission, and the North Carolina General Assembly.

- e. Evaluate emerging workforce development opportunities to determine the most compelling options and, where directed by the Governor, to act in concert to efficiently take action.

The Council shall provide advice and guidance on any other matter related to workforce development the Governor refers to the Council.

The Council's goals and strategies shall be integrated into the ongoing work of the NCWorks Commission. This shall include annual reports to the Governor by December 15 on the progress toward achieving each goal, implementation of the corresponding strategies, and action needed to more effectively meet goals.

#### **D. Meetings.**

The Council shall meet as a body of the whole at least once a quarter through December 2026 and at other times at the call of the Chair, Co-chairs, or the Governor. The Council may conduct meetings using electronic conferencing or other electronic means. The Council's meetings shall be governed by the North Carolina Open Meetings Act, N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-318.9, *et seq.*

Consistent with the bylaws of the NCWorks Commission, a simple majority of the Council members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting the business of the Council.

#### **E. Administration.**

The North Carolina Department of Commerce ("Commerce") shall serve as staff for the Council, with support provided by the North Carolina Business Committee for Education.

Members shall serve without compensation but may receive necessary travel and subsistence expenses in accordance with state law and policies and regulations of the Office of State Budget and Management.

### **Section 2. Focus on Apprenticeships.**

The NCWorks Commission shall develop an additional performance accountability factor regarding apprenticeship to be included in the next required Workforce Innovation and Accountability Act (WIOA) State plan as permitted by Section 116(b)(2)(B) of WIOA and reflect such, including additional details such as definitions and enforcement provisions as needed, in a Commission Policy Statement. The goal of such performance factor should be that 6% of Title I Youth and Adult funds be spent on pre-apprenticeships or apprenticeships starting in Program Year 2025. The Division of



Workforce Solutions within Commerce will provide technical assistance to support the implementation of this policy by local workforce development boards.

**Section 3. Innovation in State Employment.**

The Office of State Human Resources (“OSHR”) shall continue efforts, as directed by Executive Order No. 278, which was issued by Governor Cooper, to make as many state job classifications as possible eligible for qualification by work experience as a substitute for degrees. Where educational degrees are required by occupational licensing boards, OSHR is encouraged to contact occupational licensing boards to determine whether those educational requirements are necessary, or whether experience can substitute for those requirements.

In addition, OSHR shall provide, in coordination with other state agencies, programs to recruit displaced workers, including without limitation, workers impacted by Hurricane Helene and federal workers who may be interested in employment opportunities with the state.

Further, OSHR shall, as part of its program to attract and retain public employees, expand state training and development programs for public managers and state employees, and make state employee training and certification programs available generally to the people of the state without cost.

In addition, each Cabinet agency shall explore opportunities to provide apprenticeship or other work-based learning opportunities within its agency and shall provide, as requested, a listing of such opportunities to OSHR.

**Section 4. Savings Clause.**

If any provision of this Executive Order or its application to any person or circumstances is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, this invalidity does not affect any other provision or application of this Executive Order, which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application. To achieve this purpose, the provisions of this Executive Order are declared to be severable.


**Section 5. No Private Right of Action.**

This Executive Order is not intended to create, and does not create, any individual right, privilege, or benefit, whether substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the State of North Carolina, its agencies, departments, political subdivisions, or other entities, or any officers, employees, or agents thereof, or any other person.

**Section 6. Effect and Duration.**

This Executive Order is effective immediately. Section 1 shall remain in effect until December 31, 2026, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 147-16.2, or until rescinded. The remainder of the Executive Order shall remain in effect unless repealed, replaced, or rescinded by another applicable Executive Order.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed my name and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in the City of Raleigh, this 25th day of March in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-five.

  
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Josh Stein  
Governor

ATTEST:

  
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Elaine F. Marshall  
Secretary of State

