



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

GOVERNOR NED LAMONT

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Governor Lamont Launches Initiative Providing Connecticut Residents With Career Resources and Workforce Upskilling Following COVID-19 Pandemic

CT Back to Work Initiative Will Help Workers and Businesses Recover from the Economic Fallout of the Public Health Emergency

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Ned Lamont today announced that as the state prepares to enter phase 2 of its reopening efforts resulting from the global COVID-19 pandemic, he is launching a new resource – the [CT Back to Work Initiative](#) – that will provide workers and businesses in Connecticut with high-quality, user-friendly career tools to assist those who have been impacted by the economic fallout from the public health emergency. To start, the state is partnering with several private-sector employment services, including the job search engine Indeed, and the workforce training providers Metrix Learning and 180 Skills.

“Whether you are a worker looking for a job, seeking to upgrade your career skills or change careers, or if you’re an employer looking to hire, this initiative will provide residents and businesses with helpful resources at no cost,” **Governor Lamont said.** “While this crisis has disrupted the lives of countless workers and businesses across the state, Connecticut is committed to offering meaningful and lasting support so that the state emerges from this crisis stronger than ever.”

All of the components of the initiative can be accessed online by visiting the State of Connecticut’s coronavirus website – ct.gov/coronavirus – and clicking the link labeled “*CT Back to Work Initiative*.”

It was developed by the Governor’s Workforce Council – the state’s workforce board, which Governor Lamont revamped late last year and tasked with recommending and overseeing improvements to Connecticut’s education and training ecosystem and pipeline so that all residents are able to access high-quality training and education that are aligned to the needs of businesses.

Custom Connecticut job portal from Indeed

The first component includes a custom jobs portal for Connecticut jobseekers and employers through Indeed. Connecticut is the first state in the nation to partner with Indeed to create a jobs portal that is customized for the state’s residents and companies. This new portal complements the state’s current [CTHires jobs portal](#) by providing additional resources and opportunities to businesses and job seekers.

The state is also partnering with Indeed to [host a virtual hiring event](#) from June 16 to 18, during which companies hiring in Connecticut will host virtual interviews and meet and greet events. Nearly 40 employers from across the state are participating. In addition, Indeed is offering a free webinar on June 15 to help prep job seekers for virtual interviews.

“Connecticut has been a great home to Indeed and our employees for over 15 years, and we are happy to support the state and the economy in this time of need,” **Dave O’Neill, chief operating officer of Indeed and a member of the Governor’s Workforce Council, said.** “Our mission is to help people get to jobs, and our job services platform is uniquely situated to safely connect residents to hiring businesses – a critical function needed to get people back to work as the state begins its phase 2 reopening.”

Free upskilling from Metrix Learning and 180 Skills

Another component includes online workforce training courses provided by Metrix Learning and 180 Skills.

In early May, Connecticut launched the *SkillUp CT* [program](#), which provides Connecticut residents who have qualified for unemployment insurance with free access to more than 5,000 online courses offered by Metrix focused on information technology, business analysis, project management digital literacy, and other fields directly tied to the needs of Connecticut employers, as well as hundreds of skill tracks and a robust library of high-quality industry certification programs from featured employers such as Amazon, Google, and Microsoft. To date, more than 9,000 people in the state have signed up for *SkillUp CT* services.

To expand *SkillUp CT* further, 180 Skills is adding its services to the program, giving those seeking workforce development services access to even more tools. Customized learning paths have been built for individuals interested in joining Connecticut’s manufacturing sector or improving their general employability skills. Individuals who have filed for unemployment insurance are eligible for a 12-month 180 Skills license at no cost. While the program is initially only being offered to individuals who have filed for unemployment insurance, customized 180 Skills pathways will be available later in the summer to students at Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, as well as for upskilling current workers at manufacturing companies across the state.

“Connecticut already has one of the strongest, most innovative, and productive workforces in the country,” **Governor Lamont said.** “These resources will not only help residents get back to work, but also return to the workforce armed with new skills and abilities that will help them advance in their careers, be more productive, and help our economy grow overall.

In addition to the Governor’s Workforce Council, the governor thanked the Connecticut Workforce Development Council, the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development and its Tech Talent Fund, the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority, the Connecticut Department of Labor, and the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services for their efforts to build these career resources for Connecticut residents during this emergency crisis.

Garrett Moran, chair of the Governor’s Workforce Council, said, “Work as we know it is changing. We must set all job seekers up for success by equipping them with the most relevant and important skills sought by employers in Connecticut today. The Connecticut Department of Labor has already done a great job of offering career resources through its CTHires platform, and these new resources will add onto this strong foundation. Providing Connecticut with high-quality, outcome-based and market-driven training options is a top priority for Governor Lamont and the Governor’s Workforce Council. We will continue to refine our online offerings in the coming months and years. The CT Back to Work initiative is a terrific start.”

Kurt Westby, commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Labor, said, “Over the past three months, the Labor Department has received nearly 610,000 unemployment applications – it’s clear people are hurting and need every resource we can provide to help them get back to work. These partnerships are vital connections between a talented workforce and the employers who need their skills. We applaud Governor Lamont and all of the organizations here whose commitment will help people improve skills, find jobs, and regain a sense of normalcy.”

Glendwyn Thames, deputy commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, said, “Workforce development is a key pillar of an economic development strategy in any climate, and certainly even more critical during the global health and economic crisis we’re experiencing today. We know in order to get our economy growing again we need to provide our residents every opportunity to develop new skills for in-demand jobs that are available now and in the future. In partnership with the Governor’s Workforce Council, DECD views these investments as rapidly meeting the evolving needs of a new economy.”