

Illinois Ranked Number One For Workforce Development

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CHICAGO — Illinois has been named the number one leader for workforce development in the Midwest region for 2022, up from number two in 2021. The ranking highlights Illinois’ commitment to providing innovative workforce programs, career training, and employment services that create resources for jobseekers and ensure businesses continue to thrive.

“When we invest in workforce development, we create opportunities for every Illinoisan and establish a more economically prosperous future for our state,” said Governor Pritzker. “Through my administration’s historic investments in education, infrastructure,

and business development, we're creating thousands of good-paying jobs and a skilled workforce that's ready for those jobs. We're keeping our state's best assets — our people — at the forefront of economic progress."

"Under Governor Pritzker's leadership, Illinois has developed a reputation as a national leader in workforce readiness and development," said Acting DCEO Director Kristin A. Richards. "Illinois has made investing in workforce a top priority and earning the top spot reflects the State's commitment to our outstanding workers."

The [ranking](#), announced by *Site Selection* magazine, recognizes "states that performed well in a set of measures that gauge workforce-related aspects of states' overall employment climate." It combines information from CNBC, U.S. News, and other organizations.

The Pritzker administration has consistently invested in workforce training to advance career training opportunities for residents across all industries. From training initiatives and trade programs, Illinois has a sustainable pipeline of qualified workers for every field.

Illinois' workforce development is rooted in equity, innovation, and growth for the future. The state fosters apprenticeship programs at every level and has over 432 Registered Apprenticeship programs. Starting with Illinois's youth, the state is building cohesive programs to ensure every individual that enters the workforce has adequate preparation and the ability to access the resources needed when choosing careers. Illinois' youth apprenticeship programs provide a foundation for students aged 16-24 in high school and postsecondary education to choose between multiple pathways in high school, leading to college, full-time employment, or a combination of both.

In 2021, the [Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program](#) was launched to increase access to good-paying jobs in the trades for historically underrepresented populations. During the first year of the program, nearly \$10 million was awarded to 22 diverse organization across the state, paving the way for 1,024 participants to secure jobs and greater opportunities. This year, Illinois Works has awarded an additional \$30 million to support 30 organizations and nearly 1,400 pre-apprentices. Participation in the program has already increased 40% from its inaugural year.