

Illinois Tops Workforce Development Rankings

by Submitted by Gov. Pritzker's Office
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CHICAGO – For the second consecutive year, Illinois has been named the number one leader for workforce development in the Midwest region. The top ranking highlights the State of Illinois’ commitment to expanding access to innovative workforce programs and making critical investments through legislation and programming to reduce barriers to good-paying jobs in order to create a thriving business ecosystem for jobseekers, employees and employers.

“The hardworking people of Illinois are at the forefront of our state’s economic progress, making us the top state in the Midwest for workforce development for the second consecutive year,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “Since day one, my administration has been committed to making Illinois the best place to live. That’s why we’ve made transformative investments in workforce development, education, and our businesses—ensuring that every Illinoisan has an opportunity to thrive.”

“Illinois’ greatest asset is its people, and through a variety of pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship and workforce development programs throughout the state, DCEO is opening the doors to opportunities to join the state’s top-ranked workforce,” **said DCEO Director Kristin Richards**. “Under Governor Pritzker’s leadership, the State of Illinois will continue to provide resources and programs to support the number one workforce in the Midwest.”

The Site Selection magazine [ranking](#) 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 400 Registered Apprenticeship programs for more than 20,000 active apprentices. Starting with Illinois' 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. Since the launch of Illinois Works, more than \$40 million has been awarded to 36 diverse organizations across the state, paving the way for over 4,100 participants to secure jobs and greater opportunities in construction and the trades.