

Governor Pritzker Announces Open Applications For The Illinois Works Bid Credit Program

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CHICAGO - Today, Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) announced that contractors can now apply for the Illinois Works Bid Credit Program. The program is part of the state's multipronged effort to increase equity and opportunity in capital construction jobs through the Illinois Works (ILW) Jobs Program.

"We're opening doors and breaking down barriers for our Illinois Works Pre-apprenticeship graduates," said Governor JB Pritzker. "With this new incentive, my

administration is encouraging eligible contractors to hire apprenticeship graduates from historically disinvested communities in good-paying jobs in the construction trades.”

“The Illinois Works Bid Credit Program will provide new opportunities for contractors, create jobs for apprentices, and uplift underrepresented communities in the trades,” said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton. “There is work to be done and Illinois has a talented and skilled workforce. It's a win-win all around.”

The Illinois Works Bid Credit Program is designed for contractors working on or interested in working on State of Illinois-funded capital projects. The program offers eligible contractors the opportunity to earn bid credits by hiring and retaining Illinois Works Pre-apprenticeship Program graduates.

Bid credits are virtual dollars contractors can earn when they hire and retain an ILW Pre-apprenticeship Program graduate who is enrolled in a U.S. Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship Program (DOL RAP) and works on both state-funded capital projects or any construction project. Once these bid credits are earned, contractors can submit the credits to bid on future state-funded public works projects. Eligible contractors can request ILW Pre-apprenticeship Program graduates from DCEO’s Illinois Works Career Services Team using the [Illinois Works Employer Form](#). The Illinois Works Career Services Team will identify program graduates who meet contractor needs and requirements.

“The Illinois Works Bid Credit Program is a great example of what is possible when we invest in our state’s workforce,” said DCEO Director Kristin Richards. “This program will not only provide opportunities for contractors across Illinois, but it will ensure ILW Pre-apprenticeship graduates have the opportunity to obtain long term employment and good paying jobs across the state.”

Through the ILW Bid Credit Program, contractors can earn up to six years of bid credits for each hired and retained ILW Pre-apprenticeship Program graduate, depending on their trade of choice. This will increase contractors' competitiveness when submitting future bids for state capital projects. This program also allows contractors to pool their bid credits with other contractors to strengthen their bids.

Enrolling in this program gives contractors access to the various skilled and certified graduates of the ILW Pre-apprenticeship Program. Besides being eligible to generate bid credits through the Bid Credit Program for contractors that hire them, graduates will also help contractors maintain compliance with state apprenticeship requirements, which includes the 10% apprenticeship goal of the Illinois Works Apprenticeship Initiative.

To view application information and apply for the Bid Credit Program, please visit the [DCEO website](#).

The Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program launched in 2021 with the goal of increasing diversity and access to apprenticeship programs. Comprehensive pre-apprenticeship programs help participants gain admission to apprenticeship programs, which provide a greater opportunity to obtain employment in the construction trades and secure a lifelong career.

“The Illinois Works Bid Credit Program will allow the state to build on the success of the Illinois Works Jobs Program,” said Rep. William “Will” Davis (D-East Hazel Crest). “This program is essential to our continued efforts to increase equity and opportunity within our capital construction jobs across Illinois.”

“I am thrilled to see the continued support and expansion of the Illinois Works Jobs Program,” said Sen. Mattie Hunter (D-Chicago). “The Bid Credit Program will provide countless opportunities for ILW Pre-apprenticeship graduates and contractors across the state.”

“Illinois’ greatest asset is its people, and through the Bid Credit Program, the State of Illinois is providing incentives to contractors who hire within our world-class workforce,” said Sen. David Koehler (D – Peoria Heights). “The Illinois Works Jobs Program is essential to promoting diversity and increasing opportunity for Illinoisans throughout the state.”

Signed into law in 2019, the Illinois Works Jobs Program Act is designed to promote diversity, inclusion, and use of apprentices in state-funded capital projects. The Act created three major programs: the Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program, the Illinois Works Apprenticeship Initiative, and the Illinois Works Bid Credit Program. Together these three programs aim to create a talent pipeline of skilled and diverse candidates to fill new job opportunities created by the \$45 billion Rebuild Illinois capital plan.