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Commissioner
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ADDITIONAL GRANT FUNDS FOR NEW REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIPS NOW AVAILABLE

**Up to \$3,500 per apprentice to
expand programs in high demand industries via HIRED Fund**

Richmond, VA – Virginia Secretary of Labor, Jessica Looman, along with Virginia Works today announced \$157,500 in additional funding through the HIRED (Highlight, Include, Recruit, Engage, Deliver) Apprenticeship Fund's next round of funding. These grant funds are available to employers across the Commonwealth who create new Registered Apprenticeship programs or scale already established programs in high demand industries.

Employers headquartered and operating in the Commonwealth of Virginia are encouraged to apply for **up to \$7,000 in reimbursement (\$3,500 per apprentice)** for essential training and supportive services as sponsors of established or new Registered Apprenticeship programs.

"Registered Apprenticeships are one of our most effective strategies for building a strong workforce and a resilient economy," **said Virginia Secretary of Labor Jessica Looman.** "This investment reflects our commitment to creating pathways to good jobs while helping employers meet essential workforce needs in high-demand industries. By investing in quality Registered Apprenticeship programs, we are not only supporting businesses but also empowering workers, especially those in rural and underserved communities, to gain the skills and opportunities they need to thrive."

The HIRED Apprenticeship Fund is part of Virginia's effort to strengthen workforce development through Registered Apprenticeships. This round of funding is 100% funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration under the National Apprenticeship Act.

Targeted industries include, but are not limited to:

- Education
- Information Technology
- Care Economy
- Service Trades
- Manufacturing
- Maintenance and Repair

Employers are strongly encouraged to recruit apprentices from underserved populations, including women, veterans, dislocated workers, youth (ages 18–24), and individuals with disabilities. Employers located in rural areas will receive priority consideration during the application review process.

"We know that Registered Apprenticeship works – it's the gold standard of work-based learning in the Commonwealth and nationwide and produces proven outcomes for both the individual and the employer in terms of wage growth for apprentices, retention for employers, and more," **said Nicole Overley, Commissioner of Virginia Works.** "The HIRED Fund continues to offer opportunities to grow Registered Apprenticeship programs across the Commonwealth – opportunities that we highly encourage employers to take part in."

Applications will be accepted beginning February 18, 2026, and must be submitted by March 18, 2026, at 5:00 PM ET. For more information or to apply, please visit <https://viriniaworks.gov/hired-apprenticeship-fund>. Award announcements will be made on or before April 8, 2026.

HIRED funds are provided through the State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) Grant through the United States Department of Labor.

For more information about Registered Apprenticeships, a proven “earn while you learn” model and Virginia’s oldest work-based learning approach to workforce development, as well as the full range of workforce services offered by Virginia Works, please visit www.virginiaworks.gov.

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Virginia Works, the Commonwealth’s Department of Workforce Development and Advancement, is dedicated to serving both job seekers and employers with a wide range of workforce services and talent strategies. Virginia Works is an equal opportunity employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. VRC/TDD VA Relay 711.

Virginia Works is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) through the use of a State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) grant award, Apprenticeship USA Grants Award FAIN #25A60AP000164, totaling \$1,129,005.00. The dollar amount of Federal funds for this project equals \$157,500 which constitutes 100 percent of the project cost.