

1 Introduced by Committee on Commerce and Economic Development
2 Referred to Committee on
3 Subject: Commerce and trade; economic development
4 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to adopt
5 proposals concerning workforce recruitment and relocation.

6 An act relating to workforce recruitment and relocation

7 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

8 Sec. 1. 3 V.S.A. § 2476 is amended to read:

9 § 2476. DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM AND MARKETING

10 * * *

11 (c) Economic development marketing. The Department shall be responsible
12 for the promotion of Vermont as great place to live, work, and do business in
13 order to increase the benefits of economic development marketing, including:

14 (1) attracting additional private investment in Vermont businesses;

15 (2) recruiting new businesses;

16 (3) attracting more innovators and entrepreneurs to locate in Vermont;

17 (4) attracting, recruiting, and growing the workforce to fill existing

18 vacancies in growing businesses and to retain workers and their families; and

19 (5) promoting and supporting Vermont businesses, goods, and services.

20 * * *

1 (e) The Department may conduct direct marketing activities pursuant to this
2 chapter or 10 V.S.A. chapter 27, and shall work to increase marketing
3 activities conducted in partnership with one or more private sector partners to
4 maximize State marketing resources and to enable Vermont businesses to align
5 their own brand identities with the Vermont brand, enhancing the reputations
6 of both the business and the State.

7 (f) Building on established, successful collaboration with private partners in
8 travel and tourism, agriculture, and other industry sectors, the Department shall
9 have the authority to extend its marketing and promotional resources to include
10 partners in the arts and humanities, as well as other partners that depend on
11 tourism for a significant part of their annual revenue.

12 (g) The Department shall expand its outreach and information-gathering
13 procedures to allow Vermont businesses and other interested stakeholders to
14 comment on the design and implementation of its tourism marketing and
15 economic development marketing initiatives and also to provide ongoing
16 feedback to the Department on the effectiveness of its initiatives.

17 Sec. 2. NEW WORKER RELOCATION INCENTIVE PROGRAM

18 (a) The Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall design
19 and implement the New Worker Relocation Incentive Program, which shall
20 include a simple certification process to certify new workers and certify
21 qualifying expenses for a grant under this section.

1 (b) A new worker may be eligible for a grant under the Program for
2 qualifying new worker expenses in the amount of not more than \$5,000.00,
3 consistent with the following limitations, and subject to available funding and
4 procedures the Agency adopts to implement the program:

5 (1) A base award for relocation to any area in Vermont shall be
6 \$2,500.00.

7 (2) An award for relocation to a designated labor market area may be
8 enhanced, not to exceed \$5,000.00.

9 (3) The Agency shall assess applications on a rolling basis and give first
10 priority, at any point in the application process, to workers in identified priority
11 sectors, which may include healthcare, early child care and learning, lodging
12 and restaurant industry, manufacturing, technology, and construction trades.

13 (4) A new worker may apply for an incentive payment beginning
14 January 1, 2020, and shall be paid when proof of residency and income tax
15 liability reaches the equivalent of the amount claimed.

16 (5) A remote worker may apply for an award under the Program when
17 all funds from the New Remote Worker Grant Program created in 2018 Acts
18 and Resolves No. 197, Sec. 1, are encumbered.

19 (6) As used in this section, “new worker” means an individual who:

20 (i)(I) is a full-time employee of a business with its domicile or
21 primary place of business outside Vermont and performs the majority of his or

1 her employment duties remotely from a home office or a co-working space
2 located in this State; or

3 (II) is a full-time employee of a business located in Vermont,
4 and

5 (iii) becomes a full-time resident of this State on or after January 1,
6 2020.

7 (c) The Agency shall:

8 (1) adopt procedures for implementing the Program;

9 (2) promote awareness of the Program, including through coordination
10 with relevant trade groups and by integration into the Agency's economic
11 development marketing campaigns; and

12 (3) adopt measurable goals, performance measures, and an audit strategy
13 to assess the utilization and performance of the Program.

14 (b) On or before October 1, 2020, the Agency shall submit a report to the
15 House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate
16 Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs
17 concerning the implementation of this section, including:

18 (1) a description of the procedures adopted to implement the Program;

19 (2) the promotion and marketing of the Program;

20 (3) any additional recommendations for qualifying new worker expenses
21 or qualifying workers that should be eligible under the Program, and

1 (4) any recommendations for the maximum amount of the grant.

2 Sec. 3. APPROPRIATIONS; WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT

3 In fiscal year 2020 the amount of \$2,000,000.00 is appropriated from the
4 General Fund to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to
5 design and implement a New Worker Relocation Incentive Program as
6 follows:

7 (1) The Agency shall use not more than \$1,000,000.00 to identify,
8 recruit, and provide relocation assistance to workers, including:

9 (A) identifying target audiences,

10 (B) targeting through digital and social media;

11 (C) executing the State’s core Economic Development Marketing
12 Plan through paid, owned, and earned media, utilizing technology, data, and
13 analysis tools; and

14 (D) implementing strategies that convert visitors to residents and
15 awarding grants for regional partnerships to help recruitment efforts at the
16 local and regional levels.

17 (2) The Agency shall use not more than \$1,000,000.00 to provide
18 incentives that assist workers and families relocating to Vermont under the
19 New Worker Relocation Incentive Program created in Sec. 2 of this act.

20 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

21 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.