

ACCD Economic Development – Marketing, Recruitment, and Relocation Initiative

Sec. 1. 3 V.S.A. § 2471e is added to read:

§ 2471e. Economic Development Marketing and Recruitment

There shall be created in the Agency of Commerce and Community Development an economic development marketing and recruitment initiative.

(a) The Agency shall conduct economic development marketing to maximize State marketing resources and to enable Vermont businesses to align their own brand identities with the Vermont brand to enhance the reputations of both the businesses and the State. To increase the amount and effectiveness of its economic development marketing activities, the Agency shall collaborate with public and private sector partners as necessary and desirable. The Agency may match State funds appropriated for that purpose with federal funds, special funds, grants, donations, and private funds.

(b) The Agency shall conduct a recruitment initiative as a mechanism to be responsive to the growth needs of Vermont’s workforce. The Agency shall design and implement the initiative to attract and retain workers and families and increase the number of workers statewide.

Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION

(a) \$2,000,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to implement the Initiative as follows:

(1) \$1,000,000.00 to strategies that identify, recruit, and provide relocation assistance to workers including but not limited to: identification of target audiences, digital and social media targeting; execution of the State’s core Economic Development Marketing Plan with paid, owned, and earned media, utilizing technology, data, and analysis tools; strategies that convert

visitors to residents and grants for regional partnerships to help recruitment efforts at the local and regional levels.

(2) \$1,000,000.00 to incentives that assist those relocating to Vermont including: relocation incentives for out-of-state workers and families to relocate to Vermont.

Reimbursements for those moving to Vermont to work will be paid upon filing a new resident Vermont income tax return. Reimbursements will be tracked through a mechanism created by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development and the Department of Taxes.

(b)\$500,000.00 is appropriated to the Department of Labor to expand relocation incentives for out-of-state workers and families to relocate to Vermont.

As used in this section:

(A) “New worker” means an individual who:

- (i) is a full-time employee of a business with its domicile or primary place of business outside Vermont and performs the majority of his or her employment duties remotely from a home office or a co-working space located in this State; or
- (ii) is a full-time employee of a business located in Vermont, and
- (iii) becomes a full-time resident of this State on or after January 1, 2020.

(B) “Qualifying new worker expenses” means actual documented costs a new worker incurs for one or more of the following:

- (i) relocation to this State;
- (ii) if working remotely, costs that are necessary to perform his or her employment duties remotely, including actual costs a new remote worker incurred for relocation to Vermont and/or one or more of the

following that are necessary to perform his or her employment duties:
computer software or hardware, broadband access or upgrade,
membership in a co-working or similar space.

(4) The Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall design and implement the New Worker Relocation Incentive Program, which shall include a simple certification process to certify new workers and certify qualifying expenses for a grant under this section. A new worker may be eligible for a grant under the Program for qualifying new worker expenses in the amount of not more than \$5,000.00. The Agency shall award grants under the Program, subject to available funding. The Agency shall:

(A) adopt procedures for implementing the Program;

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

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

(5) On or before October 1, 2020, the Agency shall submit a report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs concerning the implementation of this section, including: a description of the procedures adopted pursuant to subdivision (c)(1) of this section; the promotion and marketing of the Program pursuant to subdivision (c)(2) of this section; and any additional recommendations for qualifying new worker expenses or qualifying workers that should be eligible under the Program, and any recommendations for the maximum amount of the grant.

