

1
2
3
4
5
6
7

8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20

S.62

Introduced by Senators Sirotkin, Balint, Clarkson, Hooker and Lyons
Referred to Committee on
Date:
Subject: Commerce and trade; economic development
Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to create a New Vermont Employee Incentive Program.

An act relating to creating a New Vermont Employee Incentive Program

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

Sec. 1. 10 V.S.A. chapter 1 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

* * *

§ 4. NEW VERMONT EMPLOYEE INCENTIVE PROGRAM

(a) The Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall design and implement a New Vermont Employee Incentive Program to award incentive grants to qualifying new employees as provided in this section and subject to the policies and procedures the Agency adopts to implement the Program.

(b) A qualifying new employee may be eligible for a grant under the Program for qualifying expenses, subject to the following:

1 (1) A base grant shall not exceed \$5,000.00.

2 (2) The Agency may award an enhanced grant, which shall not exceed
3 \$7,500.00, for a qualifying new employee who becomes a resident in a labor
4 market area in this State in which:

5 (A) the average annual unemployment rate in the labor market area
6 exceeds the average annual unemployment rate in the State; or

7 (B) the average annual wage in the State exceeds the annual average
8 wage in the labor market area.

9 (c) The Agency shall:

10 (1) adopt procedures for implementing the Program, which shall include
11 a simple certification process to certify qualifying new employees and
12 qualifying expenses;

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

16 (3) award grants to qualifying new employees on a first-come, first-
17 served basis beginning on January 1, 2021, subject to available funding; and

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

20 (d) Annually, on or before December 15, the Agency shall submit a report
21 to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the

1 Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs
2 concerning the implementation of this section, including:

3 (1) a description of the policies and procedures adopted to implement
4 the Program;

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

6 (3) an analysis of the utilization and performance of the Program.

7 (e) As used in this section:

8 (1) “New relocating worker” means an individual who on or after
9 January 1, 2021:

10 (A) becomes a full-time resident of this State;

11 (B) becomes a full-time employee of a business domiciled or
12 authorized to do business in this State;

13 (C)(i) is employed in an occupation identified by the Department of
14 Labor in its 2016–2026 Long Term Occupational Projections as one of the top
15 occupations at each level of educational attainment typical for entry; or

16 (ii) the Agency determines should otherwise receive an incentive
17 grant under the Program because the worker possesses exceptional education,
18 skills, or training or due to other extraordinary circumstances; and

19 (D) receives gross wages for the position that equal or exceed:

20 (i) 160 percent of the State minimum wage; or

1 (ii) if the employer is located in a labor market area in which the
2 average annual unemployment rate is higher than the average annual
3 unemployment rate for the State, 140 percent of the State minimum wage.

4 (2) “New remote worker” means an individual who:

5 (A) is a full-time employee of a business with its domicile or primary
6 place of business within or outside Vermont;

7 (B) becomes a full-time resident of this State on or after January 1,
8 2021; and

9 (C) performs the majority of his or her employment duties remotely
10 from a home office or a co-working space located in this State.

11 (3) “Qualifying expenses” means:

12 (A) for a new relocating worker, the actual costs the new relocating
13 worker incurs for one or more of the following:

14 (i) relocation expenses, which may include closing costs for a
15 primary residence, rental security deposit, first month’s rent payment, and
16 other expenses established in Agency guidelines; and

17 (ii) expenses necessary for a new worker to perform his or her
18 employment duties, including connectivity costs, specialized tools and
19 equipment, and other expenses established in Agency guidelines; and

1 (B) for a new remote worker, the actual costs the new remote worker
2 incurs for one or more of the following that are necessary to perform his or her
3 employment duties:

4 (i) relocation to this State;

5 (ii) computer software and hardware;

6 (iii) broadband access or upgrade; and

7 (iv) membership in a co-working or similar space.

8 (4) “Qualifying new employee” means:

9 (A) a new relocating worker; or

10 (B) a new remote worker.

11 * * *

12 Sec. 2. IMPLEMENTATION; FUNDING; TRANSITION

13 (a) It is the intent of the General Assembly to consolidate into a single
14 program:

15 (1) the funding and activities of the New Remote Worker Grant Program
16 created in 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 197, Sec. 1, as amended by 2019 Acts
17 and Resolves No. 80, Sec. 15; and

18 (2) the funding and activities of the New Worker Relocation Incentive
19 Program created by 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 80, Sec. 12.

20 (b) Consistent with subsection (a) of this section, the Agency of Commerce
21 and Community Development may use any remaining funds appropriated to it

1 for the New Remote Worker Grant Program and the New Worker Relocation

2 Incentive Program to:

3 (1) award incentives to new remote workers and new workers who
4 qualify for an incentive under either of those programs until July 1, 2021; and

5 (2) award incentives to qualifying employees under the New Vermont
6 Employee Incentive Program created by this act on or after July 1, 2021.

7 Sec. 3. REPEAL

8 The following are repealed:

9 (1) 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 197, Sec. 1, as amended by 2019 Acts
10 and Resolves No. 80, Sec. 15 (New Remote Worker Grant Program); and

11 (2) 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 80, Sec. 12 (New Worker Relocation
12 Incentive Program).

13 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

14 This act shall take effect on passage.