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Workforce and Skills Legislation at the Capitol

The following bills in the 2026 Colorado General Assembly focus on some issues related to skills training for adult Colorado workers. Copies of the full bills, fiscal notes and scheduled hearings are available at leg.colorado.gov/.

Updated 3/30/2026

STRONGLY SUPPORT

House Bill 26-1010

Older Adult Support & Representation in the Workforce

Representatives Jenny Willford (D), Jamie Jackson (D) and Senator Jessie Danielson (D)

The bill increases participation, representation, and support for individuals 55 years old or older in the Colorado workforce and in organizations related to employment and the workforce by:

- Requiring the state work force development council, the Colorado commission on the aging, and other entities to meet twice a year, collect data, and work collaboratively on issues related to individuals in the workforce who are 55 years old or older;
- Requiring the department of labor and employment and the department of human services to jointly submit a report compiling the data collected by the council, the Colorado commission on the aging, and other entities to the general assembly and requiring the department of labor and employment, during the department's annual "SMART Act" hearings, to summarize the report to certain legislative committees; and
- Requiring that the council, the state apprenticeship council, and advisory committee to the commission on higher education, or their successor entities, each have at least one member serving on their governing entity that is at least 55 years old and either is actively involved in or has interest, knowledge, or experience in advocating for the interests of individuals who are 55 years old or older as related to the functions of each entity.

It was amended in House Business Affairs & Labor to lower age cutoff to 55 instead of 60.

Fiscal Note: No appropriation is required.

Status: Senate Business, Labor, & Technology

House Bill 26-1143

Non-Employment Educational Opportunities Background Check Information

Representatives Naquetta Ricks (D), Junie Joseph (D) and Senator Mike Weissman (D)

The bill prohibits an entity from requiring an individual to provide a social security number for a background check for a non-employment-based educational opportunity unless the entity also accepts an individual taxpayer identification number in lieu of a social security number, including in clinical educational experiences for health-related academic programs, subject to certain exceptions.

The attorney general is authorized to bring a civil action to enforce the provisions of the bill.

Fiscal: No appropriation is required. The bill increases workload to the Department of Law and increases expenditures in certain higher education institutions by up to \$100,000 per year starting in FY 2026-27.

Status: House Appropriations

SUPPORT

House Bill 26-1093

College Opportunity Fund Working Group

Representative Matthew Martinez (D)

The bill creates a working group to make findings and recommendations concerning how to implement the college opportunity fund for persons who are incarcerated in Colorado, including whether fee-for-service contracts for participating institutions of higher education need to be modified. The bill requires the working group to report its findings and recommendations to the education committees of the house of representatives and the senate on or before December 1, 2026.

Fiscal: No appropriation is required.

Status: **POSTPONED INDEFINITELY (KILLED) AT REQUEST OF SPONSOR**

In the time between introduction and House Education Committee vote, two actions have happened which make the bill unnecessary:

- 1. The State Board of Higher Education vote to clearly authorize incarcerated students to be eligible to receive the College Opportunity Fund allocation which generally covers what Pell grants don't cover. Incarcerated students were ineligible for Pell Grants for about 20 years, becoming eligible again July 1, 2023, as authorized by the FAFSA Simplification Act of 2020.*
- 2. To work on other issues, such as the impact on higher education funding formula and time rates for completion, etc. The Department of Higher Education wrote a memo establishing a working group mirroring the one envisioned in the bill.*

House Bill 26-1207

Disclosure of Demographic Workforce Data

Representatives Jamie Jackson (D), Jennifer Bacon (D) and Senators Cathy Kipp (D), Jessie Danielson (D)

The bill requires a private entity conducting business in the state that employs 100 or more workers to include demographic workforce data collected through the United States equal employment opportunity commission's "Employer Information Report" (EEO-1 data) in periodic reports to the secretary of state. An employer is required to provide the EEO-1 data to the secretary of state even if the federal government repeals or discontinues the federal requirement to submit the EEO-1 data to the United States equal employment opportunity commission.

Fiscal Note: No appropriation is required. The bill increases state expenditures in the Department of State by about \$58,000 in FY 2027-28, and by \$34,000 in FY 2028-29 and future years.

Status: Senate Business, Labor, & Technology

MONITOR

[House Bill 26-1317](#)

Unified Postsecondary Talent Development System

Representatives Julie McCluskie (D), Rick Taggart (R) and Senators Jeff Bridges (D), Lisa Frizell (R)

The bill creates the postsecondary talent development system transition advisory committee (transition committee) to integrate oversight of higher education and workforce development programs (transition plan). The transition committee shall begin meeting by July 1, 2026, and shall submit the transition plan to the joint budget committee by November 1, 2026. The transition plan must include recommendations about the structure of the department of higher education (department), including a recommendation to rename the department, and recommendations about transitioning various offices, agencies, programs, and functions to the department or other state agencies.

Effective July 1, 2028, the executive director of the Colorado commission on higher education is renamed the executive director of the department. The governor appoints, with the consent of the senate, the executive director.

Fiscal: The bill requires an appropriation of \$16,250 the Governor's Office in FY 2026-27; however, the bill requires all expenditures to be funded within existing appropriations.

Status: House Appropriations

NO POSITION

EDUCATION AND SKILLS TRAINING

[Senate Bill 26-067](#)

Tuition Waiver for Dependents of Qualified Veterans

Senator Tom Sullivan (D) and Representative Clifford (D)

The bill creates a tuition waiver for qualified dependents of disabled veterans to attend state colleges and universities.

Fiscal Note: For FY 2026-27, the bill requires an appropriations of \$140,661 to the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs and will increase state expenditures by about \$167,000 in FY 2027-28 and future years.

Status: Senate Appropriations

Senate Bill 26-080

Cradle to Career Grant Program Creation

Senators James Coleman (D), Cleave Simpson (R) and Representative Meghan Lukens (D)

The bill creates the cradle to career grant program (grant program) in the state department of human services (state department) to provide grants that promote coordinated community-based supports and services that open opportunities for economic mobility from poverty. The grant program must connect children and youth with high-quality educational and extracurricular programming and families with key health and social services in order to improve prenatal and early childhood outcomes, student achievement, and workforce readiness. A local government, local education provider, state institution of higher education, Indian tribe or tribal organization, or community-based nonprofit or not-for-profit organization (eligible entity) is eligible for a grant award.

The bill creates an advisory board to approve the state department's potential grant recipients and to collaborate with the state department to develop grant program guidelines and criteria for awarding grants.

To receive a grant, an eligible entity must submit an application that includes an economic mobility needs assessment and a comprehensive proposal to address the needs within its designated service area. The application must identify community partners as prospective subcontractors. Each grant recipient must annually report to the state department on a set of performance indicators assessing the economic mobility outcomes and impacts associated with the grant award. The state department must make a related report to the general assembly each year.

The state department may seek, accept, and expend gifts, grants, and donations for grant-program-related purposes. The state department is not required to implement the grant program until sufficient money is available to adequately fund grant program operations. The general assembly shall not appropriate general fund dollars for grant program operations in its first year. General fund appropriations for grant program operations in subsequent years are limited to 50% of the gifts, grants, and donations that the program received in the prior calendar year.

Fiscal Note: The bill is expected to increase state revenue from gifts, grants, and donations to the Cradle to Career Program Cash Fund. The fiscal note assumes that \$1.5 million is required in FY 2026-27 and \$1.6 million is required in FY 2027-28 and ongoing to cover administration expenses and grant awards.

Status: Senate Appropriations

House Bill 26-1006**Thriving Institutions Designations for Higher Education**

Representatives Elizabeth Velasco (D), Matthew Martinez (D) and Senator Dylan Roberts (D)

The bill requires the department of higher education (department) to:

- Identify institutions of higher education (institutions) that meet the definition and outcome standards to be designated as a thriving institution;
- Notify each institution that meets the outcome standards to be designated as a thriving institution and request the institution to respond within 10 calendar days with the institution's decision of whether to be recognized as a thriving institution;
- Post on the department's website the names of the institutions that earn a thriving institution designation and agree to be listed as a thriving institution; and
- Notify the general assembly of the names of the institutions that are recognized as thriving institutions.

The bill requires the department to establish an advisory committee to provide input to the department on the outcome and recognition standards, and continuous improvements set by the department to identify institutions that meet the requirements for one or more thriving institution designations.

The bill requires the advisory committee to submit a report to the department summarizing the outcome standards for thriving institution designations determined by the advisory committee, practices and continuous improvement efforts, and recommendations for policy or resource alignment to support the state's attainment and workforce goals. The department is required to include this report as part of its "SMART Act" hearing and submit the report to the Colorado commission on higher education and to each institution of higher education's governing board.

Fiscal Note: No appropriation is required.

Status: Passed the House, onto the Senate

House Bill 26-1029**Student Representation on Commission on Higher Education**

Representative Eliza Hamrick (D) and Senator Janice Marchman (D)

The bill enhances student representation in higher education by expanding the Colorado commission on higher education (commission) from 11 to 13 voting members by adding 2 student members who are enrolled at a state-supported institution of higher education (student members). The bill adds:

- One student member from a graduate research university or a 4-year institution of higher education; and
- One student member from a community college, local district college, or area technical college.

The bill shrinks the advisory committee to the commission from 13 to 12 members by removing the advisory committee member designated to represent the students of the state.

Fiscal: No appropriation is required. Reimbursement expenses in the Colorado Department of Higher Education by \$3,460 annually beginning July 1, 2027.

Status: House Appropriations

SUPPORT SERVICES

House Bill 26-1016

Continuation of Open Educational Resources Program

Representative Jacque Phillips (D)

The bill continues the Open Educational Resources Council and Grant Program for five years, through November 1, 2031. The council and grant program are currently scheduled to repeal on November 1, 2026. The bill also continues program reporting requirements for five years, through December 1, 2031.

In addition, the bill expands the council from 12 to 15 members and modifies the requirements for the annual open educational resources report completed by the Department of Higher Education to include the portion of courses that have zero textbook cost for Students.

Fiscal Note: The bill increases state expenditures by about \$758,000 in FY 2026-27; \$1.1 million per year in FY 2027-28 through FY 2031-32.

Status: House Appropriations

House Bill 26-1046

Regulate Earned-Wage Access Services

Representatives Sean Camacho (D), Monica Duran (D) and Senators Lisa Frizell (R), Kyle Mullica (D)

The bill requires a person to obtain a license to provide earned-wage access services (provider) but allows current providers to continue providing the services without a license until a license is issued or denied. The licensing, administrative, and disciplinary functions of the regulation of providers are performed by the assistant attorney general (administrator) who administers the "Uniform Consumer Credit Code". The administrator is given several powers, including adopting rules, related to this regulation.

License application and issuance standards and procedures are established. A provider is issued a license if the administrator finds that the financial responsibility, character, and fitness of the applicant and of the applicant's members, managers, partners, officers, and directors are sufficient to demonstrate that the applicant will operate the business honestly and fairly and in compliance with the bill.

The license fee is set by the administrator to cover the cost of regulating providers. Administrative procedures are established. A license is valid for one year, and to renew a license, a licensee must file a renewal form annually. If a licensee fails to pay the prescribed renewal fee on or before May 1 of each year, the licensee must pay a penalty of \$5 per day per license until the license is renewed, but if a licensee fails to pay the appropriate renewal and penalty fees by May 15, the licensee's license automatically expires.

The administrator may deny an application for a license or take disciplinary action against a licensee for failing to meet the standards set in the bill.

To discipline a provider, the administrator may deny an application for licensure, revoke the license, suspend the license, issue a cease-and-desist order, impose a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 per violation, bar the person from applying for or holding a license for 5 years after a revocation, issue a letter of admonition, or impose a penalty of \$200 per day for records violations. A respondent aggrieved by an action or order of the administrator may obtain judicial review of the action or order in the Colorado court of appeals.

A licensee is required to maintain records in conformity with the bill, rules adopted under the bill, and generally accepted accounting principles and practices in a manner that will enable the administrator to determine if the licensee is complying with the bill. A licensee shall give the administrator free access to the records in the licensee's storage location. A licensee need not preserve records pertaining to an earned-wage access services transaction for more than one year. Standards are set for this access.

A licensee must file an annual report that includes all relevant information that the bill and the administrator reasonably require concerning the business and operations conducted during the preceding calendar year. Standards are set for the report. The administrator must keep the report confidential and not open it to the public for inspection pursuant to the "Colorado Open Records Act". If a licensee fails to file an annual report by April 15, the administrator may impose a penalty of \$5 per day until the report is filed, but if the licensee fails to file the report and pay this penalty by May 1 of the same year, the licensee's license automatically expires.

After the administrator has examined a licensee's records, the administrator shall provide a report of the examination to the licensee and may require the licensee to take corrective action. The licensee shall take the corrective action and provide proof that the corrective action was taken. The administrator is prohibited from disclosing the name or identity of a person whose acts or conduct is under investigation or examination or the facts disclosed in the investigation or examination, except for disclosures in actions or enforcement proceedings.

A provider has the duty to:

- Develop and implement policies and procedures to respond to questions raised by consumers and address complaints from consumers;
- If the provider offers a consumer the option to receive proceeds for a service fee (proceeds), offer to the consumer at least one reasonable option to obtain proceeds at no cost to the consumer and clearly explain how to elect the no-cost option;
- Make certain disclosures about the earned-wage access services to the consumer;
- Inform the consumer before implementing material changes to the terms and conditions of the earned-wage access services agreement;
- Allow the consumer to cancel use of the earned-wage access services at any time without incurring a cancellation fee;
- Provide proceeds to a consumer by the means mutually agreed upon by the consumer and the provider; and
- To be repaid for outstanding proceeds or payment of service fees or other amounts owed in connection with earned-wage access services from a consumer's account at a depository institution, comply with federal law and reimburse the consumer for the full amount of any overdraft or insufficient funds fees imposed on the consumer that were caused by the provider attempting to seek payment on a date before the date or in an amount different from the amount disclosed to the consumer.

A provider shall not:

- Share with an employer a portion of a service fee that was received from or charged to a consumer for earned-wage access services;
- Require a consumer's credit score provided by a consumer reporting agency to determine the consumer's eligibility for earned-wage access services;
- Accept payment of outstanding proceeds or service fees from a consumer by means of a credit card or charge card;
- Charge a consumer a late fee, a deferral fee, interest, or any other penalty or charge for failure to pay outstanding proceeds or service fees;
- Report to a collection agency or to a debt collector information about a consumer regarding the inability of the provider to be repaid outstanding proceeds or service fees;
- Impose a service fee in excess of \$5 for an advance of proceeds in an amount less than \$75 or \$7 for an advance of proceeds in an amount more than \$75; except that the fee may be increased for inflation;
- Enter into an agreement with an employer that would require a consumer who is an employee of the employer to use earned-wage access services as a necessary condition of receiving payment of wages;
- Compel a consumer to pay outstanding proceeds or service fees to the provider through a lawsuit, the use of a third party to pursue collection from the consumer, or the sale of outstanding proceeds to a third-party collector or debt buyer. The collection limitations do not apply to the act of compelling payment of outstanding proceeds paid through fraudulent or other unlawful means or to pursuing an employer for breach of its contractual obligations to the provider.
- Solicit a tip, gratuity, or donation during the time between when a consumer requests proceeds and when the provider confirms that a transfer of proceeds has been approved and provides a listing of the fees that will be charged.

The administrator may bring a civil action to recover a civil penalty of up to \$5,000 for willfully violating the bill, and, if the court finds that the defendant has engaged in a course of repeated and willful violations, the court may assess a civil penalty of up to \$10,000 per violation. In addition, the administrator may recover reasonable costs of the investigation and action and may request an order for reimbursement of reasonable attorney fees.

Fiscal Note: The bill increases state revenue to the Consumer Credit Unit Cash Fund by about \$228,000 in FY 2026-27, and by about \$380,000 in FY 2028-29 and future years. This revenue increase is from license fees paid by earned-wage access service providers.

Status: House Appropriations

JOB QUALITY

Senate Bill 26-081

Increase Agricultural Employee Overtime Protections

Senator Jessie Danielson (D) and Representative Elizabeth Velasco (D)

The bill increases overtime protections for agricultural employees by requiring that agricultural employees be paid at an overtime rate for any work performed in excess of:

- 40 hours per workweek;
- 12 hours per workday; or
- 12 consecutive hours.

Fiscal Note: For FY 2026-27, the bill requires an appropriation of \$32,536 to the Department of Labor and Employment.

Status: POSTPONED INDEFINITELY (KILLED) in House Business, Labor, & Technology

Senate Bill 26-121

Overtime Threshold for Agricultural Employees

Senators Robert Rodriguez (D), Cleave Simpson (R) and Representatives Matthew Martinez (D), Ty Winter (R)

Beginning January 1, 2027, the bill requires an agricultural employer to pay certain agricultural employees overtime pay for time worked in excess of 56 hours in a workweek. By repealing and reenacting the section, the bill repeals the authority of the director of the division of labor standards and statistics to adopt rules concerning overtime pay for agricultural employees.

Fiscal Note: No appropriation is required.

Status: House Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources

Senate Bill 26-127

Family Medical Leave Insurance Duration Extensions

Senator Jeff Bridges (D) and Representative Yara Zokaie (D)

With regard to the family and medical leave insurance (FAMLI) program, the bill:

- Defines a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) for the duration extension that applies to a covered individual who has a child receiving care in a NICU; and
- Extends the duration of paid FAMLI leave for claims arising on or after January 1, 2027, up to an additional 2 weeks, following the death of a family member for whom a covered individual cared for while using such leave.

Fiscal Note: TBD

Status: Senate Business, Labor, & Technology

Senate Bill 26-1005

Worker Protection Collective Bargaining

Representatives Javier Mabrey (D), Jennifer Bacon (D) and Senators Jessie Danielson (D), Iman Jodeh (D)

The bill makes the following changes to the "Labor Peace Act":

- Specifies that employees' right to bargain collectively includes the right to bargain collectively concerning any mandatory subject of bargaining;
- Eliminates the requirement for a second election to negotiate a union security agreement clause in the collective bargaining process;
- Declares that it is not an unfair labor practice for an employer to refuse to agree to a lawful proposal made by the exclusive representative of the employees, or for the exclusive representative of the employees to refuse to agree to a lawful proposal made by the employer, concerning a mandatory subject of bargaining if the refusing party has bargained in good faith with the other party; and
- Requires employers and employees, through their exclusive representative, to bargain in good faith.

Fiscal Note: The bill reduces state expenditures in the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment by about \$27,000 in FY 2026-27 and \$40,000 in FY 2027-28 and ongoing years.

Status: Senate Appropriations

[**House Bill 26-1054**](#)

Protections for Worker Safety

Representatives Manny Rutinel (D), Elizabeth Velasco (D)

Section 1 of the bill requires an employer to ensure the employer's workplace is free from recognized hazards, as interpreted consistent with the federal occupational safety and health administration's interpretation of the general duty clause of the "Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970" (OSH Act) as of September 1, 2025. Additionally, employers have the general duty to:

- Ensure that each workplace is constructed, equipped, arranged, operated, and conducted as to provide reasonable and adequate protection to the lives, health, and safety of all individuals employed or working in the workplace; and
- Comply with standards for workplace health and safety adopted by rule by the division of labor standards and statistics in the department of labor and employment (division).

The bill authorizes the following actions to address workplace health and safety concerns:

- The attorney general or the division may refer workplace health and safety concerns to relevant state or local authorities;
- The attorney general, the division, a labor organization, or a person aggrieved by a violation of the bill may file a civil action;
- For each violation of the bill or of rules adopted pursuant to the bill, a court may order the person that violates the bill or rules to pay statutory damages to a person aggrieved by the violation; and
- A court may order a person that violates the bill or rules adopted pursuant to the bill to pay a penalty to the attorney general for each violation.

The bill creates the workplace health and safety fund (fund) into which penalties collected pursuant to the bill are credited. The money in the fund may be used by the division for specified purposes.

The bill authorizes the division to adopt rules:

- To replace any requirement of the OSH Act that is repealed, revoked, or amended in any manner that results in the federal protections of workers' rights or worker safety becoming less stringent
- To define standards for workplace health and safety if there is no standard in effect under the OSH Act; and
- As necessary to implement the bill.

Sections 2 through 8 make conforming amendments.

Fiscal Note: No appropriation is required. The bill conditionally increases state expenditures in the CDLE by about \$185,000 in the first fiscal year following the modification of the OSH Act and by about \$85,000 in the second fiscal year and ongoing.

Status: House Appropriations

House Bill 26-1210

Prohibit Surveillance Price & Wage Setting

Representatives Jennifer Bacon (D), Javier Mabrey (D) and Senators Mike Weissman (D), Iman Jodeh (D)

Surveillance data is defined in the bill as data that is obtained through observation, inference, or surveillance of consumers or workers and that is related to personal characteristics, behaviors, or biometrics of an individual or group. The bill prohibits discrimination against a consumer or worker through the use of automated decision systems used to engage in:

- Individualized price setting based on surveillance data regarding a consumer; or
- Individualized wage setting based on surveillance data regarding a worker.

An automated decision system is defined in the bill and includes, in part, information derived from any technology, software, program, machine-based system, or computational process that uses artificial intelligence or other data processing techniques to assist, inform, or replace human decision-making.

The bill also specifies activities that are not prohibited as individualized price or wage setting based on surveillance data regarding a consumer or worker.

The attorney general or a district attorney may bring a civil action on behalf of the state against a person that violates the prohibition against individualized price or wage setting based on surveillance data to seek the imposition of civil penalties. In addition, a person aggrieved by a violation of the prohibition specified in the bill may bring a civil action on behalf of themselves or a group of similarly situated persons to restrain further violations and to recover damages, costs, and reasonable attorney fees.

A violation of the prohibition against individualized price setting or individualized wage setting is a deceptive trade practice under the "Colorado Consumer Protection Act".

Fiscal Note: No appropriation is required.
Status: Passed the House, onto the Senate

House Bill 26-1272

Extreme Temperature Worker Protections

Representatives Meg Froelich (D), Elizabeth Velasco (D) and Senators Lisa Cutter (D), Mike Weissman (D)

The bill requires the department of labor and employment (CDLE), on or before January 1, 2027, to begin compiling data concerning temperature-related injury or illness or temperature-related emergencies, including by requiring the division of labor standards and statistics (division) to:

- Develop a platform on CDLE's website where users can provide information about occurrences of temperature-related injury or illness or temperature-related emergencies;
- Obtain from the department of public health and environment (CDPHE) data that CDPHE has collected through its syndromic surveillance program regarding occurrences of heat-related injury or illness or heat-related emergencies; and
- Collect similar data from the division of workers' compensation and the Center for Improving Value in Health Care.

On or before July 1, 2028, the bill requires the division to develop a model temperature-related injury and illness prevention plan (TRIIPP) that thereafter must be made available on CDLE's website.

Employers of workers who are exposed to extreme hot or cold temperatures at worksites are required to develop and submit a TRIIPP to the division on or before September 1, 2028, and the division is required to develop procedures regarding how often employers will be required to submit an updated TRIIPP and how the division will handle review of TRIIPPs.

Lastly, the bill requires CDLE to develop training standards related to temperature safety and ensure that employers are providing proper training to workers who are affected by extreme temperatures.

Fiscal Note: The bill increases state expenditures by about \$140,000 in FY 2026-27, by \$245,000 in FY 2027-28, and by \$75,000 in FY 2028-29 in future years.

Status: House Appropriations

Skills2Compete Colorado is a multi-sector policy advocacy coalition focused on greater access to education and training opportunities which ultimately lead to middle-skilled jobs. For more information on this bill list, contact:

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