



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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June 8, 2021
For immediate release
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Gov. Henry McMaster, S.C. DEW, S.C. Technical College System Announce Workforce Retraining Initiative

COLUMBIA, S.C. – Governor Henry McMaster was joined today by state officials to announce a new workforce training initiative between the S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce and the S.C. Technical College System.

Under the new partnership, unemployed South Carolina claimants will have the option of exploring short-term retraining programs offered at their local technical college in lieu of conducting a weekly job search. Upon enrolling in and attending a short-term training program, the claimant continues to forgo the weekly job search requirement and receive benefits.

"Through the power of our technical colleges we have an opportunity to jump ahead ten years through education," **said Governor Henry McMaster.** "We have the culture and people who are ready to take the next step forward and we just need to get them trained and ready for work."

The cost of the workforce training program is free to the student because of Governor McMaster's [January allocation of \\$8 million in Governor's Emergency Education Relief \(GEER\) funds](#) to the state's technical colleges, which will provide scholarships to cover the cost of retraining 3,100 South Carolinians.

"As the federal unemployment programs come to an end on June 26, 2021, we want to ensure that claimants have access to all options involving training and employment opportunities. If someone is ready to make a career change, exploring the state technical college programs should be your first step. This free training could lead to a certification or credential, which provides you access into new or higher paying jobs," **said S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce Executive Director Dan Ellzey.** "And, our agency is making this training more accessible to people who will remain on South Carolina unemployment insurance by relieving those claimants of the weekly work search requirement if they participate in the training."

"The key to building South Carolina's critical workforce lies in quick training and education programs geared towards high-demand fields," **said S.C. Technical System President Tim Hardee.** "Our colleges are uniquely positioned to quickly get people negatively impacted by the pandemic back on their feet – training them in these high-demand fields and building more stability for their lives. We have identified 11 programs for this initiative that are 16 weeks or less in length, lead to an industry-recognized credential or certificate, and have a high placement rate in critical workforce areas."

Currently, there are an estimated 82,000 available jobs in South Carolina. In order to expedite South Carolinians' return to work, [Governor McMaster announced in May](#) that the state would discontinue its participation in federal unemployment programs which were acting as a barrier to South Carolinians re-entering the workforce. The new retraining initiative provides eligible South Carolinians with another avenue to receive state benefits while setting them up to participate in the state's growing, global economy in the future.

South Carolinians wishing to participate in the new training programs can find more information by visiting the [S.C. Technical College System's website](#).

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