

HOUSE BILL 280

57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2026

INTRODUCED BY

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10 | AN ACT

RELATING TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT; CREATING THE YOUTH
INTERNSHIP PILOT PROJECT TO DEMONSTRATE THAT PAID INTERNSHIPS
FOR YOUTH WILL SUPPORT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE STATE;
PROVIDING FOR GRANT AWARDS TO INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS; PROVIDING
FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR AN AWARD; ASSIGNING DUTIES TO THE WORKFORCE
SOLUTIONS DEPARTMENT; MAKING APPROPRIATIONS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. [NEW MATERIAL] YOUTH INTERNSHIP PROJECT--GRANT AWARDS--ELIGIBILITY--TERMS--DUTIES.--

A. As used in this section:

(1) "department" means the workforce solutions department;

(2) "internship program" means an internship program administered by a nonprofit organization, school

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district, charter school or federally recognized Indian nation, tribe or pueblo located wholly or partially in New Mexico;

(3) "project" means the youth internship project; and

(4) "youth" means persons who are between the ages of fourteen and twenty-two and who are attending high school or recently graduated from high school.

B. The "youth internship project" is created as a three-year pilot project to demonstrate that supporting paid internships for youth will improve workforce development in the state. The department shall administer the project by awarding grants, monitoring the use of a grant awards and collecting and analyzing data to measure outcomes.

C. A project grant:

(1) may only be awarded to an internship program that facilitates paid internships for youth with public or private entities;

(2) may only be used to supplement pay for internships, for support services for interns and for administrative program expenses approved by the department; and

(3) shall have a one-year term and may be renewed if the internship program was successful in the initial grant term and if money is available in the fund.

D. To be eligible for a grant award, an internship program shall be otherwise eligible to receive state money and

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1 shall:

2 (1) have a thorough system to vet public or
3 private entities that host interns and a system for interns and
4 entities to submit complaints;

5 (2) only facilitate internships with a pay
6 structure by which an intern's pay is covered by contributions
7 from both the organization and the public or private entity
8 hosting the intern;

9 (3) provide support services to interns that
10 may include training, coaching, career counseling, education
11 regarding financial literacy, transportation, equipment or
12 supplies;

13 (4) agree to collect data for grant evaluation
14 that includes, at minimum, internship completion rates, post-
15 internship placement statistics, intern pay, intern
16 demographics and satisfaction surveys of public or private
17 entities that host interns;

18 (5) if applicable, coordinate with the public
19 education department to provide for a student to receive credit
20 toward the student's graduation requirements for an eligible
21 internship; and

22 (6) meet other conditions or criteria imposed
23 by the department.

24 E. The department shall:

25 (1) determine the form and manner of grant

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1 applications;

2 (2) require that all interns receiving pay
3 supplemented by a grant register with the department's online
4 information system;

5 (3) determine metrics to measure the
6 effectiveness of a grant award and adopt a uniform system to
7 evaluate effectiveness of a grant award;

8 (4) provide an annual report on grant awards
9 made and the related evaluation data to the legislative
10 education study committee and the appropriate interim committee
11 that reviews economic development issues on or before December
12 1 of 2026, 2027 and 2028; and

13 (5) provide a final report on the
14 effectiveness of the project to the governor and the
15 legislature on or before December 1, 2029.

16 **SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION.**--Two hundred fifty thousand
17 dollars (\$250,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the
18 workforce solutions department for expenditure in fiscal years
19 2027 through 2029 to carry out the purposes of the youth
20 internship project. Any unexpended balance remaining at the
21 end of fiscal year 2029 shall revert to the general fund.