



Overview

LegisStat, launched in August 2021, builds on existing efforts in New Mexico around evidence-based budgeting. Its main goal is to strengthen collaboration with state agencies in monitoring the implementation of state programs and improving state budget decisions. LegisStat is the first adaptation of the PerformanceStat strategy to a legislative context in the United States.

The PerformanceStat Movement

PerformanceStat, of which LegisStat is an example, involves ongoing, regular meetings between leadership and departments or bureaus. Participants review key performance measures and diagnose performance deficits and then decide how to fix those problems. One of the most well-known examples is CitiStat in Baltimore.

Principles of LegisStat

Focused: Meetings focus on most important performance challenges facing agencies, identified ahead of time.

Committee-driven: Meetings are driven by the committee chair and by members' questions, with only brief agency presentations to open the meeting.

Deeper: Members use follow-up questions to try to get to the root causes of agency performance challenges.

Action-Oriented: Agencies commit to specific actions by the next meeting, representing important near-term progress even if the challenges being addressed are longer term.

Actionable: Meetings start with agency updates on their action items.

Collaborative: Meetings help foster ongoing collaboration between legislators and agency leaders: The goal is progress and collaboration, not "gotcha."

Impactful: The meetings are the most visible part of LegisStat, yet important progress occurs *between* meetings, when agencies work to achieve agreed-to action items.

Typical LegisStat Meeting Format

- Meetings start with updates from the LFC analyst, including on agency action items.
- Next is a brief presentation (5 minutes) from the agency head.
- Then comes discussion with the agency leadership based on member questions about agency priority challenge #1, including follow-up questions to get to root causes.
- Next, action items are identified for challenge #1.
- The meeting then moves to challenges #2 and #3, as time allows, using the same format.

Workforce Preparedness and Economic Strategies Related to Science and Technology Sectors

Previous LFC LegisStats and reports have highlighted the need for coordinated economic development and workforce training, and the challenges of integrating initiatives and strategies across a variety of state agencies, including the Economic Development Department (EDD), Workforce Solutions Department, (WSD) Higher Education Department (HED), and K-12 public education system.

Over the past two sessions, the Legislature has significantly invested in New Mexico’s science and technology ecosystem by increasing EDD’s recurring budget, creating the Technology and Innovation Division, and funding infrastructure, startup support, and capital programs. These efforts include \$6.4 million for staff expansion, \$15 million for innovation hubs and quantum space, \$12 million for startup and advanced energy grants, \$5 million for incubator support, and \$40 million for the research, development, and deployment fund.

EDD’s science and technology target industries demand advanced skills, but New Mexico’s workforce lacks the training to meet those needs. In its 2021 strategic plan, EDD compared state and national job shares and found shortages in key roles needed by industry. These skill gaps contribute to underemployment, hiring challenges, and hinder business attraction.

While much of the state’s investment in STEM-related workforce development is led by colleges and universities, in recent years, the Legislature has made investments in STEM and trades-related workforce development through pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and the community development fund.

Key Data

One-Time Appropriations Related to Economic Development and Science and Technology from 2025 Session (in thousands)	
Community benefit fund	\$7,800
Quantum venture studios	\$10,000
Technology enhancement fund*	\$10,000
Research, development, and deployment fund	\$40,000
Talent recruitment in science and tech fields	\$10,800
Advanced energy award pilot program	\$8,000
Science and technology business startup grants	\$4,000
Innovation hubs	\$5,000
Quantum physical space	\$10,000
Innovation in state government	\$1,000
Incubators and venture studios	\$5,000
Total	\$111,600

*Appropriated to HED

Source: LFC Files

- The research, development, and deployment fund will provide early-stage capital and financial support to emerging technologies, start-up businesses, and research initiatives that align with the state’s economic development plan. EDD is currently finalizing a contract to draft rules related to the program.
- EDD requested proposals for a \$25 million contract to deliver a quantum venture studio and physical space by June 30, 2026. EDD expects the contractor(s) to create or attract at least three quantum startups or supply chain firms and deploy at least \$4 million in private capital.
- The Legislature also invested in existing EDD’s programs, including \$8 million for the Advanced Energy Award pilot program and \$4 million for the Science and Technology Business Startup grant program.

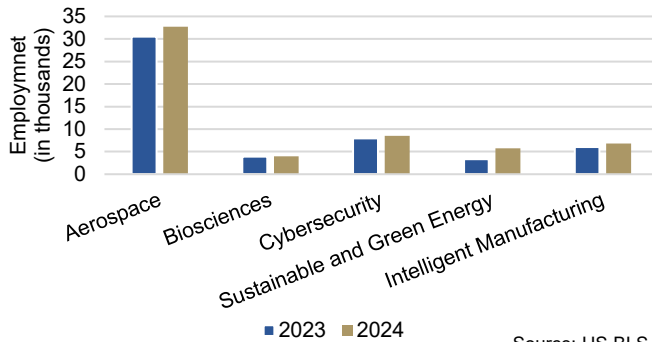
Employment in Science and Technology Target Sectors 2024

Target Industry	Estimate	Share
Aerospace	32,727	3.8%
Cybersecurity	8,510	1.0%
Intelligent manufacturing	6,833	0.8%
Sustainable and green energy	5,728	0.7%
Biosciences	3,958	0.5%
Total	57,756	6.6%

Source: US BLS

- Combined employment in the science and technology target industries make up 6.6 percent of New Mexico's total employment.
- The aerospace target industry is the largest, but over 95 percent of employment is categorized as science and technology research and development, making the industry appear larger than what normally constitutes the aerospace industry. Without research and development, the aerospace target industry would be less than 0.1 percent of total private employment.

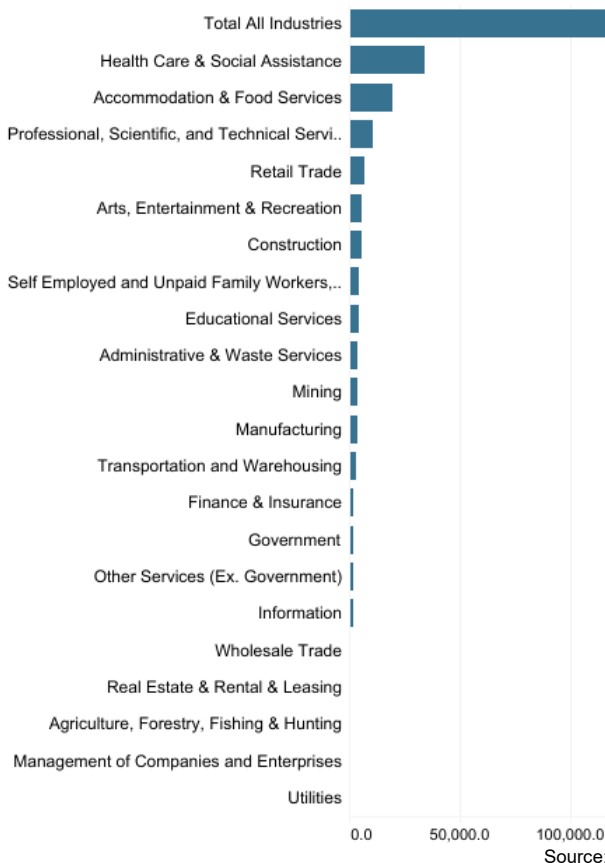
Employment Growth in Target Industries 2023 - 2024



Source: US BLS

- Between 2023 and 2024, employment in science and technology target industries grew by 6 thousand jobs, or 11.6 percent. As mentioned above, jobs in these sectors represent 6.6 percent of the state's total employment.
- Sustainable and green energy had significant employment growth, mostly attributable to growth in the power and communication line sector.
- Within intelligent manufacturing, the largest employment growth came from semiconductors and related device manufacturing.
- Any employment change in these industries will seem drastic because these industries have relatively low employment.

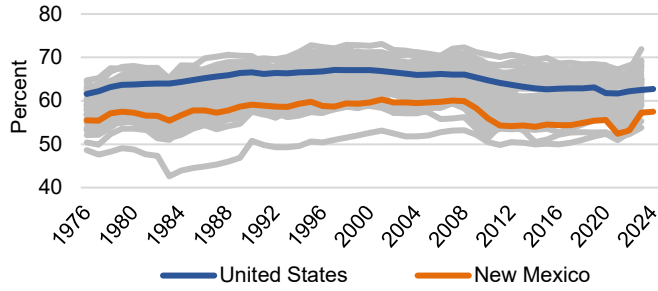
Projected Employment Growth by Industry Sector 2022 - 2032



Source: WSD

- According to 2022 WSD industry growth projections, the professional, scientific, and technical services sector is projected to grow to 74,950 jobs by 2032, or roughly 10 thousand jobs over 10 years.
- The construction industry, which includes may trade-related fields, is projected to grow to 55,320 by 2032, or an increase of 5,660 jobs over a decade.

Labor Force Participation Rates US and NM



Source: US BLS

- Overall, New Mexico's labor force participation rate (LFPR) has improved from the pandemic low but continues to lag the national average.
- In May 2025, the state's LFPR was 57.5 percent, while the national average was 62.4 percent.
- Previous LFC analysis has estimated the state would need to add roughly 40 thousand people of prime working age to the labor force to meet the national average.
- In the General Appropriations Act of 2025, WSD received a \$750 special appropriation for a labor force participation rate study to understand why adults are not participating in the labor force and make recommendations to increase labor force participation.

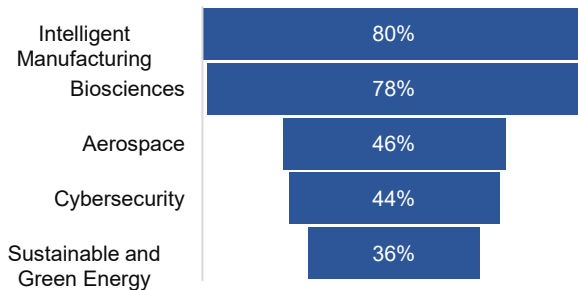
Average Wage in Science and Technology Target Industries

Target Industry	Weighted Average Wage
Aerospace	\$117,539
Intelligent Manufacturing	\$111,896
Sustainable and Green Energy	\$78,918
Biosciences	\$82,698
Cybersecurity	\$61,946

Source: US BLS and EDD

- The average wage in EDD's science and technology target industries is \$90,599, 57 percent higher than the average wage in New Mexico.
- Prioritizing industries with high wages is crucial for raising per capita income and improving quality of life.

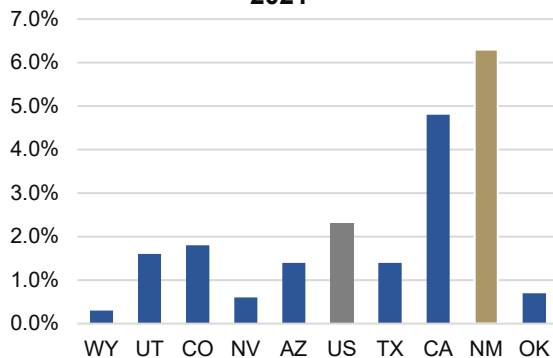
Percent of Employment in Bernalillo County



Source: LFC Files

- Two of the science and technology target industries, intelligent manufacturing and biosciences, have a substantial part of their workforce in Bernalillo County. Sustainable and green energy has the largest workforce outside of Bernalillo County.
- Investing in industry with regional diversity promotes equity and has a larger impact on employment. EDD should continue to focus on industries that reside in distressed labor markets.

Research and Development Value Added as a Percent of GDP 2021



Source: US BEA

- Research and development (R&D) activities accounted for 2.3 percent of the US gross domestic product (GDP) in 2021. R&D value-added ranged from 0.3 percent in Wyoming to 6.3 percent in New Mexico.
- Massachusetts, Washington, California, and New Mexico were among the states with the largest R&D shares of state GDP, employment, and compensation.
- New Mexico's higher percent is likely attributable to activities by Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories
- The US Bureau of Economic Analysis measures research and development's contribution to gross domestic product, also known as R&D value added. This report was published in 2024.

Performance Challenge: Job Growth in Target Science and Technology Sectors

LegisStat Recap

At its June 2024 LegisStat hearing, the Economic Development Department presented its efforts to support the state's five science and technology target industries, despite low employment in those sectors. LFC members asked how EDD is tracking job growth in the target sectors and for updates on the agency's statewide economic development plan. Legislature has prioritized receiving updates from EDD on the plan, as it represents the agency's primary publicly shared strategy for statewide economic development. LFC members also asked how EDD plans to spend the additional \$5 million in recurring funding appropriated during the 2024 legislative session.

At the September 2023 joint LegisStat on economic recovery and workforce alignment, LFC members heard from WSD and EDD. Members asked both agencies about their efforts to increase the labor force participation rate and how they were using recent appropriations for pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs.

Progress

During last year's LegisStat, EDD outlined plans to use the additional \$5 million in recurring funding. EDD committed to conducting an asset analysis and developing industry prospectuses for its OSST target sectors, launching a second round of the Research University Team Pitch Award pilot program, establishing a pilot contract for startup wraparound services, securing consulting contracts to support sector growth, and funding an advanced energy and climate technology pilot or demonstration project.

Economic Development Strategic Plan. EDD published an updated version of its statewide plan in March 2025, the second update since the plan's original release in 2021. The latest update outlines key initiatives for the upcoming year, including improving data management and visualization for stakeholders, advancing site readiness strategies, supporting historically oil- and gas-dependent communities, and identifying sectors where New Mexico holds a competitive advantage. The original 2021 plan provided recommendations to address the state's major economic challenges and identified five science and technology target industries—aerospace, intelligent manufacturing, cybersecurity, biosciences, and sustainable and green energy—among nine priority sectors for economic diversification. In August 2024, EDD reported to LFC staff that it had completed 37 percent of the recommendations from the original state plan and had 36 percent in progress. EDD noted that the remaining 25 percent either required additional resources or were under reconsideration.

Share of Employment in Target Industries

Target Industry	% of Emp.
Aerospace	3.6%
Intelligent Manufacturing	1.8%
Outdoor Recreation	1.4%
Global Trade	0.8%
Cybersecurity	0.5%
Biosciences	0.5%
Sustainable and Value-Added Ag	0.4%
Sustainable and Green Energy	0.4%
Film and Television	0.3%

Source: US BLS

Focus on Science and Technology Industry. The Legislature has made significant efforts to support science and technology industries aligned with EDD's strategic plan, recognizing that with limited resources, the state must focus on policy interventions and industries with the greatest potential impact. In 2024, LFC members received a presentation from staff economists on the results of an industry cluster analysis. The analysis evaluated industries using three measures: competitiveness, wages, and regional diversity. Based on these criteria, economists identified the education and knowledge creation cluster—which includes colleges, universities, research institutions, and training providers—as a sector where New Mexico holds a competitive advantage, offers above-average wages, and demonstrates strong regional diversity.

LFC staff used the same measures from the industry cluster analysis—competitiveness, wages, and regional diversity—to evaluate EDD's science and technology target sectors. Despite an average employment growth rate of 11.6 percent over the past year, LFC found that employment in aerospace and intelligent manufacturing grew

more slowly than national trends, indicating a lack of competitive advantage in New Mexico. In contrast, employment in cybersecurity, sustainable and green energy, and biosciences outpaced national growth, suggesting New Mexico holds a competitive edge in these sectors. An industry’s competitiveness is partly driven by labor and capital—inputs that policymakers can influence through targeted interventions and incentives.

In terms of wages, the average wage in the science and technology target industries is \$90,599, 57 percent higher than the average wage in New Mexico of \$57,520. On the higher end, the average annual wage in the aerospace industry is \$117,539 and on the lower end is \$61,949 in cybersecurity.

The state should prioritize investment in industries that benefit distressed labor markets, such as counties with lower employment rates, as opposed to solely focusing on the Albuquerque metropolitan area. Research suggests a job created in the most stressed labor markets increases long-term employment by 80 percent more than a job created in the strongest market. Two of the five science and technology target industries—intelligent manufacturing and biosciences—have the majority of employment, 80 percent and 78 percent, respectively, in Bernalillo County. Aerospace, cybersecurity, and sustainable and green energy have 46 percent, 44 percent, and 36 percent of their employment in Bernalillo County. Investment in aerospace, cybersecurity, and green energy in a distressed community will have a larger impact on long-term employment than in an average labor market.

State Funding to Support Science and Technology. The Legislature has prioritized building an ecosystem for growing the state’s science and technology sectors by providing key resources and policy support. The Legislature has invested funding into staff capacity at EDD, education and workforce, physical infrastructure, start-up support, entrepreneurial support, commercialization and technology transfer, and capital stacks to foster growth in science and technology sectors.

Over the past two sessions, the Legislature increased EDD’s recurring budget by \$6.4 million for the Office of Strategy, Science, and Technology (OSST), which will now be the newly created Technology and Innovation Division (TID). The Legislature appropriated recurring funding to EDD with the intent of increasing staff capacity through OSST program officers, adding personnel for each target industry, and backfilling for the entrepreneurship coordinator position. Reoccurring funding also includes \$5 million to support OSST’s activities and programs. During the previous session, the Legislature passed Chapter 144 (House Bill 20) to create the Technology and Innovation Division, which will engage with the technology and innovation network advisory board, identify federal grant opportunities, staff EDD’s target sectors, develop a statewide technology and innovation strategic plan, support technology transfer and commercialization, and administer the Research, Development, and Deployment Fund Act. The division will absorb the existing OSST and Office of Entrepreneurship.

The Legislature has also invested in physical infrastructure, including \$5 million for innovation hubs and \$10 million for a quantum space, to support research, development, and commercialization across target sectors.

To support startups, the Legislature appropriated \$4 million in one-time funding to EDD’s Science and Technology Business Startup Grant program, which awards \$25 thousand to \$50 thousand to high-growth companies in target industries. The Legislature also invested \$8 million in EDD’s New Mexico Advanced Energy Award Pilot program to provide non-dilutive funding of \$250 thousand to \$1 million to early-stage companies advancing energy innovation and commercialization.

The Legislature passed Chapter 133 (House Bill 20), which creates the research, development, and deployment fund to provide early-stage capital and financial support to emerging technologies, start-

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*Appropriated to HED

Source: LFC Files

up businesses, and research initiatives that align with the state's economic development plan for the purpose of catalyzing innovation, economic growth, and job creation. The fund aligns with HED's technology enhancement fund, which was appropriated \$10 million to support research projects at higher education institutions during the 2025 session.

Finally, the Legislature also invested \$5 million to support operational capacity at business incubators, venture studios, and accelerators. Previously in 2023, the Legislature appropriated EDD with \$3 million in one-time funding to support the expansion and maintenance of business incubator programs from FY24 to FY26. To date, EDD has spent \$1.3 million on awards to certified incubators ranging from \$50 thousand to \$100 thousand.

In summary, the Legislature has made significant investment to support the multiple aspects of the science and technology industry ecosystem. Investments from the most recent legislative session build on previous years of investment to increase staff capacity and one-time funding. The Legislature should continue to monitor EDD on its activities related to science and technology to ensure programming results in job and industry growth.

Suggested Questions

- How is EDD tracking progress on jobs created in its target science and technology sectors?
 - How will EDD know if job growth in these sectors is above the national average, indicating that the agency's efforts are resulting in additional growth as opposed to the expected growth?
 - Does EDD have a job creation target in these sectors?
- How is EDD working with WSD to ensure skills alignment?
 - Do the agencies have measurable targets for skills alignment?
 - How will the agencies know if they've been successful in aligning workforce skills with industry growth?
 - How have other states aligned job creation efforts and skills alignment?
 - What are best practices EDD and WSD should implement?
- What are EDD's planned use for the community benefit fund, and what anticipated outcomes should the state expect from this investment?
 - How will this be impacted by recent federal changes to the Inflation Reduction Act?
 - How will New Mexico capitalize job opportunity in the green energy sector?
- What is the status of EDD's progress on the research, development, and deployment fund?
 - How will the agency prioritize and identify projects with commercial viability?
 - What is the relationship with HED's technology enhancement fund? How will the two funds work together? How will they overlap?

Performance Challenge: Workforce Development in the STEM Sector and Apprenticeships

LegisStat Recap

Previous LegisStat hearings have primarily focused on the state's overall low labor force participation rate, which holds New Mexico back from economic development and expansion. The state's relatively low unemployment rate seems to indicate a tight labor market but does not provide a full picture, as many New Mexicans are persistently disengaged from the labor market. Disengagement is simultaneously a symptom and a cause of larger social and economic issues. In New Mexico currently, the demand for workers is much greater than the supply and adding labor force participants is essential. In addition, during the November 2024 LegisStat hearing, the committee discussed the need to take a targeted approach.

Efforts to increase workforce participation may include reemployment services for people who are currently unemployed and targeted programs for people who are not participating in the labor force. WSD has the opportunity to grow the state's labor force, but existing programs chip away at the edges and are not dramatically increasing the number of working-age adults participating in the labor force at the level needed to make New Mexico more competitive nationally.

The Workforce Solutions Department (WSD) is the state agency most directly responsible for bringing disengaged adults into the workforce, and many of the programs offered by WSD are targeted to disengaged or unemployed populations. WSD oversees the states Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) programs, a federal program designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services. WSD relies on a network of Workforce Connections Centers to reach those seeking services in rural and urban areas of the state. In recent years, the Legislature has made investments within WSD for workforce development targeted to specific industries, including the trades and STEM. Much of the state's investment in workforce training and development exists outside of WSD, and in FY25 LFC estimated the state allocated over \$135 million for workforce training at colleges and universities, K-12 public schools, WSD, and other state agencies.

In particular, if the state aims to expand science and technology industries, New Mexico will need to focus on workforce development within STEM fields and the trades. The state's K-12 public schools and higher education systems also play significant roles in preparing the state's workforce, particularly for STEM-related industries which require credentials and degrees awarded by colleges and universities. Previous LFC briefs and LegisStat hearings have highlighted the need for shared strategy and agency coordination for economic and workforce development.

WSD: STEM and Trade-Related GAA Appropriations Available FY26 (in thousands)		
Purpose	GAA 2024 for FY26	GAA 2025 for FY26
Community benefit fund (train workers for non-extractive agencies). Available through FY28.		\$17,000
Innovation in state government fund (establish plans to achieve net-zero carbon emissions)		\$1,000
Pre-Apprenticeship programs (GRO)	\$600	
Pre-Apprenticeship programs in STEM or pathways to registered apprenticeships (GRO)		\$600
Be-Pro-Be-Proud- Career Exploration Bus (GRO)	\$2,000	
Intensive outreach for out-of-school youth (Section 5)		\$750
Apprenticeships (Operating Budget)		\$9,670

Progress

Pre-Apprenticeships and STEM. Pre-apprenticeship programs operated by WSD in New Mexico provide paid work-based learning experiences for people ages 16 through 24. The state is primarily funding youth career exploration through \$45 million in appropriations for career and technical education and internships delivered through public schools, but has provided funding to WSD for “pre-apprenticeships,” which are similar to paid internships.

In FY24, roughly half of all pre-apprentices were high school students, and partner organizations included businesses in the hospitality industry, the US Forest Service, and a plumbers and pipefitters union.

For FY25, the General Appropriations Act provided \$600 thousand to WSD to pilot and evaluate pre-apprenticeship programs through the Government Results and Opportunity (GRO) fund. In FY25, WSD used remaining American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 appropriations to fund the program at a total of \$1.2 million, projecting 267 participants. For FY25, target industries include the building trades, education, IT, health care, behavioral health, and hospitality. The agency is currently planning to track employment and self-reported career plan outcomes of participants. In FY24, 9 percent of pre-apprenticeship participants went on to an apprenticeship program and 4 percent were employed, following participation. Previous LegisStat briefs have raised questions about the outcomes the state will be able to collect related to these programs during the GRO appropriation and the existence of a counter-factual to determine if the program is having a casual impact on employment outcomes.

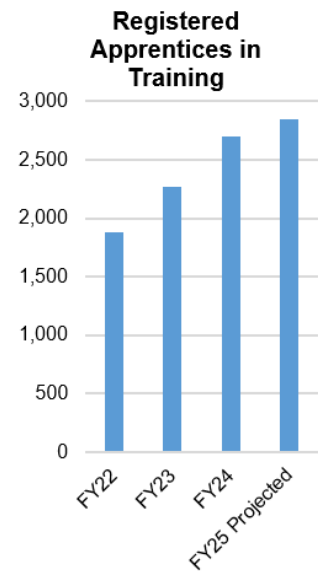
The 2024 General Appropriations Act contained an appropriation of \$600 thousand for the pre-apprenticeship program in FY26, and the 2025 GAA contained an appropriation of \$600 thousand for STEM-focused or apprenticeships that provide a direct pathway to apprenticeships, bringing the total available for the program to \$1.2 million in FY26.



Source: WSD

Apprenticeships. Apprenticeship programs combine on-the-job training with related classroom instruction, aiming to prepare individuals for skilled occupations. Most apprenticeship programs require the participant to be 18 years or older and have a high school equivalency credential. To receive the state Department of Labor approval, registered programs must meet certain standards. Apprenticeships range between one and five years in length and typically involve 2,000 hours of on-the-job training and 144 hours of classroom instruction. More than 50 apprenticeship programs are registered in New Mexico. Of these programs, 28 percent are operated by unions. Apprenticeships are funded through three sources:

- The Public Works and Apprenticeship Training Fund (PWAT) is focused on the construction and building industries and provides a per-apprentice distribution to programs;
- The Apprenticeship Assistance Act (AAA), which historically used revenue transferred from the Workers Compensation Administration, provides employers with reimbursement for technical instruction; and
- Federal Apprenticeship grants.



Source: LFC files

Legislation passed in the 2024 session created the workforce development and apprenticeship trust fund and appropriated \$30 million to the fund, which will distribute \$5 million, evenly split between the PWAT and AAA programs in FY25 and FY26. In subsequent years, the fund will distribute \$3 million, evenly split. In FY25, the increased appropriations resulted in relatively small increases in enrolled apprentices because the \$5 million distribution was primarily used to increase the per-apprentice payments to apprenticeship programs. These payments have decreased in recent years as the number of enrolled apprentices grew, which could mean that per-apprenticeship payments may decrease in the future when distributions from the workforce development and apprenticeship trust fund distributions decrease. While year-end performance and report card data is not due to LFC until later this month, WSD projections anticipated 2,850 apprenticeship completers in FY25.

WSD's FY26 budget includes roughly \$9.7 million for apprenticeship programs, including the transfer of \$5 million from the workforce training and apprenticeship fund.

Community Benefit Fund. Senate Bill 48, passed during the 2025 legislative session, established the community benefit fund to fund projects that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase electricity grid capacity and resilience, increase electricity from renewable energy resources, establish or expand economic development needed to address “the economic implications of climate change,” and expand worker training activities to provide workers for industries that assist in achieving the objectives of the bill.

The 2025 GAA appropriated \$17 million from the community benefit fund to the Workforce Solutions Department “to provide individuals training in non-extractive industries and to provide extractive industry workers with training that will enhance their skill set to transition to non-extractive industries for expenditure in fiscal years 2026 through 2028.” This funding can be used for STEM-related workforce training, in alignment with the fund’s purpose.

For FY26, WSD has budgeted \$6.01 million from the \$17 million appropriation and has committed the following to date:

- \$500 thousand to the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Foundation for Northern New Mexico Youth Fund, which is a fund that pools philanthropic funds and makes grant to community organizations to support career and technical education (CTE) and work-based learning. The LANL Foundation has since announced the award of a variety of grants to community organizations providing work-based learning opportunities for youth in Northern New Mexico.

The 2024 GAA appropriated \$7.8 million to EDD from the community benefit fund. As of June 2025, the agency had not outlined how it plans to spend those funds.

Job Training Incentive Program. EDD administers the state’s Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP) that funds classroom and one-the-job training for newly created jobs in expanding or relocating businesses for up to 6 months. Only companies that manufacture a product, nonretail service companies exporting a majority of their services out of state, and certain green industries are eligible for JTIP. In 2024, EDD awarded \$10.7 million in JTIP funding to 20 companies. Of those awards, 80 percent of the funding was awarded to companies in EDD’s target science and technology industries. In 2023, approximately 99 percent of EDD’s total JTIP funding was awarded to science and technology focused companies.

Suggested Questions

1. What does WSD know about the people not participating in the state’s labor force, and how might the state develop programs and strategies to support these people to move into the workforce?
2. What are the anticipated outcomes associated with the GRO and other special appropriations, and how will the state know if these programs are successful or achieve their desired outcomes? (Pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, community benefit fund, etc.).
3. For example, does WSD have specific plans for evaluation relate to the GRO appropriations? What are these plans?
4. What is WSD’s role in training and developing a STEM or trade-focused workforce, alongside other agencies including K-12 public schools and colleges and universities?
5. How many apprentices does the state project training in FY26, and what are the target industries?
6. How do these organizations coordinate, alongside EDD, to develop STEM-focused industries and jobs?
7. What is the department’s planned use for the community benefit fund, and what anticipated outcomes should the state expect from this investment?
8. What else could the state do to develop a workforce prepared for STEM and trade opportunities?