

Department of Labor



At A Glance

KURT WESTBY, Commissioner

Daryle Dudzinski, Acting Deputy Commissioner

Established - 1873

Statutory Authority - C.G.S. Sec. 31-1 to 31-403 (excluding chapter 568)

Central Office - 200 Folly Brook Blvd., Wethersfield, CT 06109-1114

Average number of full-time employees - 608

Recurring operating expenses 2017-18: Federal - \$77,922,940; State - \$71,909,513

Capital Outlay: Federal - \$129,220; State - \$3,613; CEPF - \$20,207

Website - www.ct.gov/dol

Mission

The Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL) is committed to providing the state's jobseekers and business community with services to strengthen our workforce, communities and the state's economy.

Statutory Responsibility

The Connecticut Department of Labor meets the needs of workers and employers to become competitive in the global economy. For workers, this is accomplished through income support between jobs, assistance in searching for jobs, protection and fairness on the job, training programs, and information about the economy, wages and the workplace. Services offered to businesses include workplace data, labor market information, recruitment assistance, regional job fairs, programs to help maintain and upgrade employee skills, such as apprenticeship and incumbent worker training, CONN-OSHA guidance and consulting services, and tax credit information. Informational services to workers and employers, as well as enforcement responsibilities include the payment of wages, health and safety, employment of minors, family and medical leave, representation by labor organizations, and resolution of labor disputes. As the Connecticut arm of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the agency collects, analyzes and disseminates workforce data to inform businesses, the general public, government planners and policymakers about employment issues and trends.

Public Service

Employment and Training Assistance and Unemployment Insurance Programs

- American Job Center Services:* CTDOL receives federal funding under the *Wagner-Peyser Act* to provide universal access to an array of labor exchange services offered at *American Job Center (AJC)* locations throughout Connecticut. These services include assistance with career choices and job search, referrals to jobs, placement assistance for jobseekers, reemployment services to claimants receiving unemployment insurance, and employer recruitment services to businesses with job openings. Additional resources include computers with Internet connection, copiers, fax machines; and résumé writing, interviewing and career exploration workshops. During 2017-2018, a total of 44,488 *Wagner-Peyser* program participants received services (staff-assisted or self-service) at AJC offices, with 162,184 staff-assisted services provided statewide. In addition, 4,740 individuals received résumé preparation assistance at CTDOL-sponsored events and job centers.
- Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits* are provided to unemployed persons while claimants look for new work or take part in approved training programs. This year the agency further enhanced its online benefits filing system, located at FileCTUI.com that allows claimants to file a first time (initial) or re-opened claim by using the web. Furthermore, in order to provide better service to customers, resources allocated to phones were shifted in order to provide better online and in-person services.
- During the year, \$670 million in benefits was provided to unemployed workers needing assistance while securing their next job. The average number of weeks a claimant collected benefits before finding new employment was approximately 17 weeks.
- Reemployment Programs for Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claimants:* The agency provides a variety of federally-funded reemployment services to UI claimants through the Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (UI RESEA) program. The goal of this program is to provide UI claimants early access to services that will help them get back into the workforce faster. The UI RESEA program also serves as a prevention/detection program regarding improper UI payments.
- Enhanced Reemployment Services (ERS) program:* ERS identified UI claimants who were likely to exhaust their benefits, unlikely to return to their previous occupations, and needed specific workforce services to find new employment. Orientation sessions conducted for 131 ERS participants included providing labor market information, career guidance and assistance with the *CTHires* state job bank, overview of AJC services, and details on UI benefit rights and responsibilities. Many ERS participants also benefited from employment services and training. This year the ERS program was replaced with the statewide UI RESEA program which serves the same target population in a more robust manner.
- Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (UI RESEA):* UI claimants determined to be most likely to exhaust benefits, and transitioning veterans receiving Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members, are the target populations for this program. From July 2017 to June 2018, CTDOL completed 8,714 initial RESEA appointments. For this same time period, 7,701 claimants participated in a required reemployment activity.

- *Pathway to Reemployment*: To augment outreach efforts to UI claimants beyond RESEA, Pathway to Reemployment introduces other UI customers to the workforce programs available through the AJC network. The program, offered at affiliate AJC offices in coordination with AJC partners, is primarily for first-time claimants who may be unaware of the services available. Similar to RESEA, an orientation provides guidance on UI work search requirements, labor market information, web-based tools, and CTDOL's *Job & Career ConneCTion* to assist with reemployment efforts. Participants are provided with the *My Reemployment Plan*, information about the *CTHires* job bank, résumé development assistance, and online job search tools. From July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018, the program served 668 claimants.

- *DOL's Business Services Unit* helped Connecticut employers to hire, train and retain workers by analyzing the needs of businesses and customizing solutions. Between July 2017 and June 2018, Business Services staff assisted employers with approximately 550 employer recruitments attended by 4,539 jobseekers. In addition, Business Services staff provided employer assistance through the following state-funded training programs:
 - *The Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Program* helps employers upgrade employee skills, thereby helping businesses to remain competitive and avert layoffs. Employers provide a 50% or greater match for each training program, which includes training in manufacturing, engineering, bioscience and allied health. This year, CTDOL provided \$525,137 in Incumbent Worker Training funds to 75 Connecticut employers with 1,190 employees participating. Legislation requires that a minimum of 50% of the Incumbent Worker Training funds go to new employers, however, CTDOL surpassed this requirement and provided 93% of the funds to new employers, far surpassing the legislative requirement.

 - *The Manufacturing Innovation Fund Incumbent Worker (MIF IWT) Program* provides financial assistance to Connecticut manufacturers for growing innovative and technology-based manufacturing businesses. MIF IWT helps employers meet emerging market needs and improve productivity and efficiency by enhancing the skills of their current workforce. Since April 2015, a total of 322 companies have been approved for \$10,025,493 in funding to train 14,149 workers. Approximately 15% of those workers have already achieved an upgraded position due to skills training and 61% of the companies completing training report that upgraded skills are expected to increase production rate. The program is in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Community Development.

- *Jobs First Employment Services (JFES)* serves families receiving state cash assistance, Temporary Family Assistance (TFA), through the agency's partnership with the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Workforce Development Boards. During fiscal year 2017-2018, a total of 7,700 JFES participants received employment services from *American Job Center* staff or through contracted service providers. Services included job search assistance, vocational education, adult basic education, subsidized employment, case management and other support services such as transportation benefits.

Approximately 90 JFES staff received training on several different topics including Financial Literacy, Domestic Violence, Awareness, Motivation Skills Building, and Department of Rehabilitation Services' referral training.

In March 2018, the agency launched the new Jobs First Employment Services *CTHires* system that enables Jobs First case management and administrative staff to track activities and successes of Job First participants more accurately. *CTHires* (Connecticut Helping Individuals & Employers Reach Employment Success) offers two valuable components: job searching and case management, and serves employers, jobseekers and workforce development staff. This new system ensures continued compliance with state and federal requirements, provides a goal-driven employment plan to increase participant engagement, enhances the tracking of cash penalty referrals for noncompliance, improves the ability to audit off-site, and confirms that data accurately corresponds with the Department of Social Services for improved reporting measures.

- *Trade Adjustment Assistance* (TAA) helps individuals return to suitable employment as quickly as possible following employment loss. Participants are part of worker groups certified by the United States Department of Labor, and whose jobs are believed to be affected by increased imports or a shift in production to a foreign country. Benefits to eligible workers include: job training, job search assistance, relocation and readjustment allowances; a health coverage tax credit; and wage subsidies for individuals 50 years of age and older who return to lower-paying work. TAA activity during the program year included:
 - *Worker group certifications*: Petitions filed on behalf of workers from 24 companies were approved, with the workers determined by USDOL to be adversely affected by foreign trade and certified as eligible to apply for TAA; petitions filed on behalf of workers from four companies were denied.
 - *Individual applications*: 892 individuals were identified by USDOL as potentially eligible to apply for TAA benefits and 465 workers submitting applications to the agency were determined eligible for services.
 - *Training*: 265 individuals entered TAA-approved training programs and 399 were active in training, with training payments totaling nearly \$3.8 million.
 - *Trade Readjustment Allowances* (TRA): \$10.9 million was provided for 19,733 weekly TRA claims, including 9,237 weeks of basic TRA, 10,324 weeks of additional TRA, and 172 weeks of completion TRA. Individuals who satisfy applicable program requirements may receive one or more types of TRA income support: up to 26 weeks of basic TRA; up to 65 weeks of additional TRA, and up to 13 weeks of completion TRA.
 - *Reemployment/Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance* (R/ATAA): \$63,153 in payments was issued to eligible workers.
- *Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification* (WARN) is geared to lend timely re-employment assistance to workers that will soon be losing their jobs. The federal program

requires Connecticut employers of 100 or more full-time workers to give 60-days advance notice of a plant closing or mass layoff. The 60-day advance notice allows state and municipal entities to offer workforce assistance to affected employees prior to layoffs. The state's *Rapid Response Team*, headed by CTDOL, reaches out to Connecticut employers contemplating or experiencing plant closings, helps to ease the impact of layoffs, and assures workers are offered a full range of benefits and services.

Prior to layoffs, the agency's Rapid Response staff conducts "*Early Intervention*" sessions where employees can learn about unemployment benefits, job search assistance, training opportunities and receive information about community services and local agencies that provide support to dislocated workers and their families.

From July 2017 to June 2018, the Unit made 328 initial outreach calls and responded to 39 WARN notices affecting 3,090 workers. Staff made 81 employer and/or union visits and provided 131 presentations to 2,078 impacted workers, which included seven on-site job search and/or career planning workshops and 40 webinars.

At employment sites where face-to-face contact was not possible, information packets were provided, benefiting an additional 1,710 dislocated workers, including human resources managers and union representatives. An additional 4,246 webinar invitations were sent to workers who were part of large layoffs but whose employers declined on-site visits or had employees working remotely. As a means of layoff aversion, the Unit coordinated or assisted with five company-specific job fairs for 210 jobseekers.

The Unit submitted 14 TAA petitions on behalf of workers whose jobs were believed to be affected by increased imports or a shift in production to a foreign country. Twelve petitions covering 575 workers were certified as TAA eligible. Two petitions resulted in negative determinations.

- *CTHires (Connecticut Helping Individuals and Employers Reach Employment Success: (www.cthires.com)* is the agency's workforce development system that provides cost-free services via the Internet to individuals and employers 24/7. From July 2017 through June 2018, a total of 1,570 registrations from businesses were processed by *CTHires* staff. During this same period, employers posted 38,564 new Connecticut job orders and jobseekers placed 3,053 new résumés into the system. In addition, 99,685 jobs have been indexed from corporate websites. Indexing allows jobseekers to click on a job title and be taken directly to the job listing on the employer's website. Jobseekers can post their résumés online while employers can post jobs and search the résumé bank for qualified candidates.
- *Regional Hiring Events:*
 - *Recruitment events at the American Job Centers:* Between July 2017 and June 2018, Business Services staff assisted employers with 548 employer recruitments attended by 4,539 jobseekers.

- *Career Fairs*: Five Connecticut Career Fairs were held this past fiscal year, including a veteran-specific Heroes4Hire Job Fair co-sponsored by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, as well as Diverse Ability fairs focused on hiring individuals with disabilities. The fairs drew 873 company recruiters and 2,050 jobseekers.
- *Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)* program provides a federal tax credit for employers hiring individuals from specified groups. A total of 5,244 tax credit certifications were granted between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018. The current WOTC target groups include:
 - Unemployed Veterans (including disabled veterans)
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients
 - Food Stamp (SNAP) recipients
 - Designated Community Residents (living in Empowerment Zones or Rural Renewal Counties)
 - Vocational Rehabilitation Referred Individuals
 - Ex-Felons
 - Supplemental Security Income Recipients
 - Summer Youth Employees (living in Empowerment Zones)
 - Qualified Long-Term Unemployment Recipient
- CTDOL's *Alien Certifications Program* ensures that employers have exhausted all efforts to hire American workers before recruiting foreign workers prior to receiving certification. Acting as an agent for USDOL, in fiscal year 2017-2018, CTDOL staff processed 105 H-2A job order certifications for temporary foreign agricultural workers. A total of 97 pre-occupancy housing inspections in connection with agricultural certifications were also completed. In addition, the CTDOL also processed 43 job orders under the H-2B program for temporary workers in non-agricultural positions.
- The agency's *Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers* program provided outreach services to 595 workers, including information on available workforce services, referrals to healthcare providers, and related supportive services. Agricultural employers received recruitment assistance, mediation, interpreter services, and technical guidance on compliance with the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker regulations.
- The *Jobs Funnel Initiative*: Comprised of public-private joint efforts around the state, the program places unemployed and underemployed individuals in a variety of employment opportunities including construction and non-construction jobs in both union and non-union settings and apprenticeship training programs. Strategic partnerships support the Jobs Funnels in the areas of outreach and recruitment, job training and employment. The Funnel partnerships have placed 4,462 individuals into jobs since their inception.
- *Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)*: As of July 2018, the Connecticut State Legislature has appropriated approximately \$2.93 million for the Connecticut IDA program and \$600,000 for the Connecticut Housing Trust Fund IDA program. These funds have allowed for the leveraging of federal funds in the amount of \$907,500 for IDA programs statewide as well as over \$1.18 million in contributions from financial institution partners

and other businesses, foundations, the United Way, and municipalities. As a result, 493 low- and moderate-income families in Connecticut have become asset owners.

- *Job Corps vocational training program:* Administered by USDOL, the program served over 400 students at the Hartford and New Haven locations. Low income youth (ages 16-24) received services including life skills and social skills training, career and mental health counseling, basic health care, residential housing, a bi-weekly living allowance, annual clothing allowance, driver education, on-the-job training, high school diploma and high school equivalency attainment, academic and career technical training, skills training, job placement and retention, and support services after graduation. CTDOL has an assigned staff member providing on-site support to the Hartford Job Corps Academy and New Haven Job Corps Center.

Workforce Policy Advisors

Through its *Office of Workforce Competitiveness* (OWC), CTDOL serves as one of the Governor's principal workforce development policy advisors. OWC works to coordinate employment, education and training programs and promote innovative strategies and ideas that will stimulate employment opportunities and job growth. OWC staff also provides technical assistance to the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC) whose members represent Connecticut businesses, employers, key state agencies, regional/local entities, organized labor, community-based organizations and other stakeholders.

Apprenticeship Services

The *Office of Apprenticeship Training* administers Connecticut's Registered Apprenticeship system, which is supported by the state's general fund and industry support from registration fees. Registered apprenticeship is a proven solution for training and retaining talent and offers individuals the opportunity of "learning while earning." Currently, 1,674 active employer-sponsors and 6,089 registered apprentices are involved in the program. In addition, 1,081 apprentices completed their apprenticeship training while 3,089 new apprentices were registered in the program this year. The program recently expanded into the insurance and healthcare sectors through new industry partnerships.

The Office provides registration, monitoring, technical assistance and consulting services for the administration of apprenticeship agreements per state regulations and standards. Registered Apprenticeship provides a structured training strategy that combines on-the-job training with related technical instruction.

As part of its successful efforts to expand registered apprenticeship within the manufacturing sector, the program administers the *Manufacturing Innovation Fund*, a collaborative effort funded by the Department of Economic and Community Development to subsidize wages, classroom instruction, and credentialing for apprentices registered by manufacturers. To date, 154 companies and 454 registered apprentices have participated in this initiative.

The office administers multiple grants (see Grants and Awards section) that have the goal of growing registered apprenticeship in advanced manufacturing as well as non-traditional sectors such as information technology, healthcare and businesses services.

The office also qualifies employers for tax credits, works with the Department of Education, Department of Consumer Protection and other state agencies, and performs outreach to veterans, employer and manufacturing groups, chambers of commerce and many community-based organizations to promote Registered Apprenticeship in Connecticut.

Veterans' Services

The Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) helps Connecticut veterans through its team of Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists and Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVER) located at *American Job Centers*.

During the year, employment and training services were provided to more than 2,419 veterans. In partnership with both the state and federal Department of Veterans Affairs and the Connecticut Military Department, demobilization services were also provided to returning troops from the CT National Guard and U.S. Armed Service Reserves.

In April 2018, the *Heroes4Hire* Veterans Career Fair featured 101 employers and was attended by approximately 1,100 veterans – a 22.7 percent increase from the previous year. In addition to having the chance to meet with representatives from companies with job openings, 45 veterans were interviewed onsite.

CTDOL continues to work toward ending veteran's homelessness and chronic homelessness through its Homeless Veterans Employment Program (HVEP), which operates under a state grant. During the program year, CTDOL's HVEP team met with 85 homeless veterans, or those at risk of becoming homeless, to provide job search assistance, referral information and other supportive services. Specifically, 75 of these individuals received direct services from HVEP staff, such as résumé preparation assistance, job search help and career guidance; 17 were referred to housing services; 15 were referred to medical services; and 40 were referred to employment and training services at the *American Job Centers*.

In September 2017, JVSG staff participated in the annual Stand Down held at the State Veterans' Home in Rocky Hill, an event for veterans who are homeless, chronically unemployed, or have difficulty adjusting in society. JVSG staff promoted the services available at *the American Job Centers*.

Transitioning services were also provided to military troops returning from overseas. Information, referrals and other employment and training services were provided to service members at two demobilization briefings. CTDOL staff promoted the services available at the *American Job Centers*. This important transitioning process for returning troops is accomplished through the joint efforts of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, CTDOL's veterans' staff, CT Department of Veterans' Affairs, USDOL, and the CT Military Department.

Safety and Wage Services, Public Guidance, and Labor Market Information

- *Connecticut Occupational Safety and Health Division (CONN-OSHA)* enforces health and safety standards in public sector workplaces by conducting safety inspections, responding to complaints or requests, and investigating fatalities and serious accidents. Citations are

issued where violations are discovered. Safety training and onsite safety and health consultations are provided to private and public sector employers on request, and the division offers no-cost technical assistance and information services on workplace hazards.

- The *Wage and Workplace Standards Division* recovered more than \$4.9 million in owed wages for Connecticut workers this year. The Division enforces approximately 160 state statutes and administers a wide range of workplace laws, including the \$10.10 minimum wage, overtime laws, wage payment laws, prevailing wage, employment of minors, Family and Medical Leave Act, and misclassification of workers as independent contractors.
- *State Board of Labor Relations* defines and protects the statutory rights of employees including the right of public employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations. The Board also encourages and protects the right of employees and employers to bargain collectively and remedies certain practices on the part of employees and employers that are detrimental to the collective bargaining process and to the general public. More than 80 percent of the cases filed with the State Board of Labor Relations are resolved short of a Board hearing, largely due to successful mediation efforts of Assistant Agents.
- *State Board of Mediation and Arbitration* provides mediation and arbitration services to employers and employee organizations in the public and private sector. The objectives of the Board are to save jobs by maintaining peaceful employer/employee relations and to promote equity between labor and management by resolving labor disputes.
- The *Employment Security Appeals Division* conducts appeal hearings from decisions granting or denying unemployment compensation benefits through two levels of appeal. The first level (Referee Section) decided 12,970 appeals while the second level (Board of Review) decided 1,480 appeals.
- The *UI Tax Division* conducted nearly 1,100 employer audits and approximately 9,000 individual wage investigations. These examinations resulted in the reclassification of more than 7,200 workers and the discovery of more than \$64 million in previously unreported payroll.
- The *Wage and Workplace Standards Division* and the *UI Tax Division* work together to ensure workers are not misclassified. Workers misclassified as independent contractors can experience a loss of many worker protections such as UI benefits, workers' compensation coverage, no overtime pay, pay below minimum wage, and often a job without health benefits. This also creates an unfair advantage over companies abiding by state laws. Law-abiding employers cannot compete against those employers who intentionally undercut them by not paying all taxes and benefits for workers, and do not pay lawful employment-related taxes on workers – resulting in higher taxes for those employers that follow the law. Information. During the year, in an effort to deter misclassification, CTDOL's Wage and Workplace Standards Division issued 167 Stop Work orders, requiring cited employers to show proof of appropriate coverage, such as worker's compensation, before worksites can be re-opened and work resumed.

- The *Office of Research*, in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, collects, analyzes and delivers information on the state's labor market. Information is collected and disseminated on employment levels, unemployment rates, wages and earnings, estimates of available labor, employment projections, business staffing patterns, and career planning information. A survey of workplace injuries and illnesses and a census of work-related fatalities are conducted annually. Employers, career counselors, educators, economic developers, training program planners, policy makers, economists and the general public use the information.

The Office of Research also produces the *Labor Situation* report and partners with the Department of Economic and Community Development to produce the *Economic Digest*. The *Labor Situation* provides a monthly and over-the-year snapshot of the state's industry sectors and unemployment rate. The *Economic Digest* provides data and articles on the state's workforce and economy.

- The Office of Research has worked with the Department of Education, CT State Colleges and Universities, and UCONN to establish the P20-Win – a data sharing system to link individual student records across the education institutions and into the workforce. This permits the building of safe, de-identifiable databases to evaluate education programs and their impact on workforce outcomes. An example of the potential of this linkage is the Legislative Report Card that annually traces (by school and program of study) the industry of employment and wages earned for all graduates of Connecticut's Higher Education System. The Higher Education/Legislative Report Card developed through this data has been transitioned into an electronic offering to make the information more accessible.
- The *Lean Government Process Improvement* program actively promoted its services to state agencies and organizations this year through several public outreach events, including one at the Capitol. The program, which consists of formal classroom training and group sessions, works in a team setting to map out work processes, identify customer values, and find ways to slash waste. The goal is to promote increased productivity, fewer errors and improve quality by eliminating unnecessary reports and paperwork and streamlining approval processes and information retrieval. Looking ahead, the Statewide Process Improvement Committee will host a Lean 101 session on October 18, 2018 at the CT Department of Transportation Training Center in Berlin.

Grants and Awards

- *Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA)*: In fiscal year 2017-2018, CTDOL received over \$36 million in federal funding to provide workforce services to approximately 6,700 individuals and to help state workforce partners increase the availability of employment and training assistance. The CTDOL and Workforce Development Boards developed new employment and training initiatives to promote employment opportunities that show the best potential for job growth, and funded projects to strengthen Connecticut's workforce and businesses.

- Shared Work*: The agency is using a \$1.2 million federal grant to develop new technology and outreach strategies to help promote the Shared Work unemployment insurance program to Connecticut employers. To promote the Shared Work program and informational website, electronic newsletters and radio promotions have been combined with social media, press releases, web banners, radio interviews, and informational workshops for both employers and employees that explain the benefits of Shared Work. This year, a two-phase promotional effort included a pre-recorded informational webinar and 13-week radio campaign with quarterly email blasts to employers. These outreach efforts were instrumental in helping the agency serve 157 employers, of which 44 are new to the program. A total of 1,944 employees took part in the program that is geared to avoid layoffs. Materials can be found at: www.sharedworkct.com.
- Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (UI RESEA)*: The agency was awarded a UI RESEA federal grant of \$1.485 million for the program year January 2018 through December 2018. The program addresses the reemployment needs of transitioning military veterans receiving unemployment compensation and claimants identified as most likely to exhaust benefits. The primary goals for the RESEA program are to ensure an individual claiming unemployment compensation continues to be eligible for unemployment compensation, and to connect the claimant to reemployment services available in *American Job Centers* (AJCs) that support the claimant's return to work at the earliest possible time. A claimant selected for RESEA attends an in-person meeting at an *AJC* for an orientation to services at the center. This includes labor market and career information specific to the person's job skills and employment prospects; an assessment of the claimant's needs; and an individualized reemployment plan.
- The *Disability Employment Initiative*: Connecticut was one of eight states to receive a 2013-2017 three-year grant under the U.S. Department of Labor's Disability Employment Initiative (DEI). Awarded to CTDOL's Office of Workforce Competitiveness (OWC), the \$3,058,706 grant enhanced employment services to adults with disabilities in the public workforce system in the North Central and Northwest regions. The project ended in September 2017 and exceeded all performance goals with 1,454 jobseekers with disabilities receiving case management services, 231 trained and earning industry-recognized credentials, and 799 placed in employment. Additionally, five resource fairs were held, and four Diverse Ability career fairs helped jobseekers find employment.

Another federal DEI grant was awarded in October 2016, with Connecticut winning a three-year, \$2.5 million youth-focused project that involves the northwest, southwest, south central and eastern workforce development regions. Awarded to OWC, Connecticut was one of only six states to receive a grant. This newest project seeks to increase the participation of youth with disabilities ages 14-24 in the workforce system's career pathways programs, attain industry-recognized credentials, and provide paid internships and experiential learning opportunities. To date, 78 youth with disabilities have entered training in career pathway programs, 52 have received industry-recognized credentials, and 80 have been placed in paid internship or work experiences.

- *Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) Grant:* This \$6 million federal grant for an “Eastern CT Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative” involves bringing innovative approaches to the design/delivery of employment and training services that have the potential to generate long-term improvements in the workforce system. Administered by CTDOL in partnership with the Eastern CT Workforce Development Board, the grant runs from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2019.

Connecticut’s model is focused on the current hiring needs of Electric Boat (EB) for skilled labor. Developing curriculum specific to EB’s need for trades workers; providing short-term training to unemployed and under-employed jobseekers; and placing training graduates in jobs at EB or other area employers are goals of the initiative. The project will be evaluated by an independent evaluator with potential replication of the project’s model elsewhere in the state and across the country.

As a result of the grant, 644 participants were enrolled in the WIF grant; 547 were enrolled in customized occupational training, 490 completed training (compared to 202 last year), and following the training, 487 (compared to 231 last year) were employed in jobs, with 360 of these at EB – an increase of 191 EB job placements over last year.

- *Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant:* CTDOL was awarded a \$3,889,995 federal grant, ending June 30, 2017, to partner and conduct regional planning with the state’s five local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) with the goal of identifying new or growing employment opportunities and sector strategies to build talent pipelines. Concurrently, three WDBs (Capital Workforce Partners, Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board, and The WorkPlace) provided programs for enhanced employment and training services for dislocated workers. The grant was extended through June 30, 2018 and as of March 31, 2018, a total of 222 dislocated workers were receiving intensive re-employment services, occupational skills training, and on-the-job training. In addition, CTDOL’s Office of Apprenticeship Training provided informational workshops to approximately 120 *American Job Center* users and economic development partners about these programs.
- *Apprenticeship Grants:* Federal and state grants are very timely, since the state is seeing a healthy increase in advanced manufacturing jobs after years of decline. In addition, an aging workforce and the growing number of retirements compounds the need fill vacancies with skilled workers. With this taking place, Connecticut has a real need for its Registered Apprenticeship program administered by the CTDOL. Grants to expand Apprenticeship include:
 - CT now has nearly 7,000 registered apprentices actively working with sponsors to learn on the job. The program has been expanded from traditional construction jobs only to advanced manufacturing, insurance and healthcare. Registered Apprenticeship has also expanded in the manufacturing sector through the **Manufacturing Innovation Fund**, a grant program and joint effort between the CT Labor Department and the Department of Economic and Community Development to subsidize wages, classroom instruction, and credentialing for apprentices. More than 450 registered apprentices and 150 employers are now taking part in this program.

- To help supply Electric Boat (EB) with the skilled workers they need, CT was awarded a \$6M federal Workforce Innovation Fund Grant for an **Eastern CT Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative**. Nearly 650 people have been enrolled in the program, with about 500 now working, including 360 at EB. This grant runs through September 2019.
- **American Apprenticeship Initiative:** Provides \$5 million to enroll and assist 1,000 apprentices and pre-apprentices statewide in the high demand industries of Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare and Business Services.
- **ApprenticeshipUSA State Expansion Grant Summaries:** Provides \$1.55 million to increase registered apprenticeship opportunities in the aerospace manufacturing, energy and the building trades. Key partners include Pratt and Whitney, Sikorsky Helicopter Mechanic School, the Connecticut Building Trades Council, and the United Labor Agency.
- **ApprenticeshipUSA State Accelerator Grant:** Provides \$200,000 to help integrate the apprenticeship model into Connecticut's education and workforce system by working with industry and related partners to bring apprenticeship to new industries and populations.

Outreach/Public Education Services

- From July 2017 to June 2018, the agency's website had 4,489,323 unique visits, with approximately 2.2 million of these for information related to unemployment insurance benefits. A total of 294,982 people made inquiries on wages and workplace standards; 108,489 obtained information on job-seeking skills or youth employment; 16,956 sought employer recruitment information; and 8,140 were interested in veterans' services.
- The agency's newest web page, JobCenterCT.com, offers an easy-to-find entry point for visitors interested in employment and unemployment services, including workshops, hiring events, job fairs, the *CTHires* job bank, as well as the online filing site for claimants. This year the site has been promoted through social media, electronic newsletters and the CTHires online employment network.
- The agency's *web and social media presence* continues to expand through its Facebook and Twitter sites. Increased awareness has been generated through web banners, daily and scheduled tweets, inviting state policymakers to visit CTDOL's Facebook page, and electronic newsletters. From July 1, 2017 to July 31, 2018 those following the agency's social media sites showed an 18% increase, with web traffic expanding to over 1,900 unique visits. User engagement also increased, with 5,957 unique interactions, which includes comments, likes, re-tweets and reposts. At a glance social media activity:
 - Twitter: Followers: 490+ Traffic: 388+ Engagement: 1.2k+
 - Facebook: Followers: 250+ Traffic: 1.6k+ Engagement: 4.1k+

- Instagram: Followers: 160+ Traffic: N/A Engagement: 757+
- Total followers: 900+ (18% growth)
- The *Connecticut Job & Career ConneCTion (JCC)* received 114,815 page views from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018. The site provides job descriptions, education and training requirements for each job category, wage information and employment projections for nearly over 700 occupations. Included in the JCC is the VETCENTRAL website, which allows military veterans to find similar civilian occupations by military code, rank, or branch of service.
- A total of 225,521 page views were generated by the agency's *Connecticut Education & Training ConneCTion* over the past year. The site serves as a leading online source of information on education and training in the state, providing access to thousands of training programs and courses including WIOA-approved training.
- The agency's *Speaker's Bureau* includes a diverse pool of agency experts available for public speaking engagements on topics and issues within the agency's jurisdiction. Topics include employment law, worker health and safety, labor market information, hot jobs, résumé writing, job interview tips and techniques, workforce development, and unemployment insurance. Approximately 250 speaking requests were handled by a CTDOL subject matter expert. This year, through a partnership with the agency's Office of Workforce Competitiveness and the CT Employment and Training Commission, the agency offered a series of breakfast seminars featuring subject matter experts. Topics ranged from FMLA guidance to wage guidelines and are geared to help businesses with their operations. The seminars, which average 60 attendees per event, are promoted on Eventbrite, social media, press releases, and DOL's BusinessCT.com website.
- CONN-OSHA's monthly *Employer Roundtable Discussion series* featuring guest speakers, panel discussions and an overview of state and federal safety and health regulations for the workplace, was joined this year by periodic Business Seminars offered by CTDOL's Office of Workforce Competitiveness. Seminars included an employer's guide to handling worker's compensation correctly, and understanding the laws surrounding medical marijuana in the workplace. Participation for the monthly roundtables averages 40 attendees per event.
- The *Connecticut Learns and Works* conference this year successfully transitioned into a series of consortiums held at educational facilities and worksites throughout the state. Geared for counselors, educators, case managers, employment and training professionals, job developers, recruiters and private sector business, the breakfast events are a joint effort of the agency's Employee and Organizational Development Unit, Communications, Office of Research, and the Office of Workforce Competitiveness. In an effort to bring the consortiums to various parts of the state, three events were offered earlier in the year at Three Rivers Community College in Norwich on April 25, Post University in Waterbury on May 10, and at Goodwin College, East Hartford on May 18. Two additional consortiums will be held in the fall of 2018 at the Northwest Community College in Winsted on September 27 and at Norwalk Community College on October 19. The Connecticut Learns

and Works Consortium will host the CT Career Counselor and Development Association (CCCDA) on November 2 at the Labor Department's Wethersfield office for a day of training and professional development for Career Counselors throughout the state.

Improvements/Achievements FY 2017-2018

- During the year, a full-service *American Job Center* (AJC) opened in Montville. With 14 workforce partners in the building, it is a successful example of a successful one stop employment center. In total, the 18 AJC offices provided about 170,000 services to over 60,000 people and approximately 550 hiring events with Connecticut employers.
- FileCTUI.com, the agency portal for all service related to the filing of unemployment compensation benefits, including the filing of a first time (initial) claim, this year began offering a Chat feature several days a week. The FileCTUI.com portal now provides locations and hours for in-person UI Benefits Specialists that are now available at various *American Job Centers* to meet with claimants and assist with questions or concerns about an unemployment claim. Online filing, now in its third year of service, represents a major improvement over when claimants filed by phone and often experienced lengthy waits to speak with a Customer Service Representative. Other customer-friendly upgrades added to the filing system this year include:
 - *Text Messaging*: customers receive notifications regarding the status of their claim as well as a variety of reminders and advisements via email and text messaging (text messages are an opt-in feature).
 - *Automated Appointment Scheduling*: customers who need to provide additional information for claims are provided the option to schedule an automated appointment scheduling option for a call back.
- **UI Modernization** – The Connecticut Department of Labor has embarked on an initiative to further modernize its Unemployment Insurance (UI) Tax and Benefits systems and the associated business processes in order to gain the flexibility, security and adaptability required to provide improved service and operational efficiency. This project is called UI Modernization (UIM). UIM will enable DOL to respond promptly and efficiently to both state and federal initiatives as well as programmatic changes with minimal delay and seamless continuation of services to all customers.
- **Internet Initial Claims** – After developing an effective web-based unemployment insurance claims system with a secure, data collection tool for online filing in 2016, a second phase captured data for temporary shutdown claims and transferred to CTDOL's mainframe so that manual intervention was not required by agency staff. The newest phase, completed earlier this year, allows standard claims, to be transferred to the mainframe with some manual intervention by CTDOL staff. UI Modernization is designed to provide a seamless system for filing claims, along with other functions associated with unemployment insurance, such as claimants reporting job search activities.

- **WIOA Reporting Project** – Implemented in December 2017, this initiative saves a copy of the database of the *CTHires* online employment system at the end of each month. This allows the agency to utilize *CTHires* to compile data for the state’s Legislative Report Card and the Jobs First Employment Services program. It also allows the agency to accommodate expanded reporting and data requests for workforce programs including the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA), Wagner Peysner, and the Trade Act. In the summer of 2018, an upgrade now provides WIOA clients with a unique user ID that is common across all agencies providing WIOA services. This allows agencies to report on co-enrollment activities of customers in other WIOA programs, and gives agencies the ability to report wage data of clients that have finished a service so that it can be matched with DOL wage data.
- **eWage** – this new data collection system for the agency’s Wage and Workplace Standards Division (WWSO), is a cloud hosted, case and document management system that provides staff easier access to cases, and the public the ability to file a complaint or make a payment online. In the past, complaints were received via fax or paper. The system allows for better utilization of resources, eliminates waste, and delivers services to customers with great efficiency and data security.
- CONN-OSHA entered into a pilot program with DOL’s Employment Services unit to offer OSHA 10 training at the five full-service *American Job Centers*. The training is focused on upgrading worker skills by providing safety and health training for unemployed and disadvantaged workers – enabling participants to become more knowledgeable about workplace hazards and their rights. Workers completing the 10-hour course receive an OSHA 10 course completion card. The pilot has been very successful and will continue.
- Under a new partnership between the Connecticut Labor Department and Department of Correction (DOC), CONN-OSHA provides OSHA 10 construction training to incarcerated individuals in DOC custody that are nearing the end of their sentences and preparing to seek employment. This training is designed to make many of these individuals more marketable when after re-entry into society. Eight classes have already been held and approximately 250 men and women have received training.
- *Credit Card/ACH Repayment program*: This program allows individuals with a UI overpayment to use their credit card, debit card or e-check to repay these owed benefits. Since 2015, more than 16,000 transactions have been made through this service, resulting in the recovery of approximately \$4 million dollars.
- *CTDOL’s paperless option* for unemployment insurance benefits continues to save more than one million dollars per year by issuing about 30,000 weekly benefit payments via direct deposit or debit card. This saves on printing, mailing and re-issuing lost checks.
- *Separation and Information Data Exchange System (SIDES)*: This web system, funded through a \$1 million federal grant, expedites the process of gathering employment separation information from employers. SIDES allows for the electronic communication and transmission of unemployment insurance (UI) separation information between UI agencies and large multi-state employers or third party administrators (TPAs). The

employer website provides separation and wage information electronically for small- to medium-size employers who do not exchange information with the SIDES web services. Benefits to employers in using SIDES include savings in operational, postage and handling costs; standardized questions that result in improved quality of adjudications reports and decisions; and the ability to protest cases more quickly through an expedited data exchange. CTDOL went live with SIDES in 2016, and seven TPAs are currently participating, with a growing number of employers (5,168) now using the service. In addition, 147 employers are using E-Response.

- To help strengthen our economy, the Connecticut Department of Labor continues its efforts to minimize unemployment benefit overpayments while also focusing on fraud detection, fraud prevention and recovery of overpayments, using these tools:
 - *Integrity Cross Match*: Through a grant from USDOL, CTDOL successfully automated a system that prevents improper UI benefit payments using a cross match of the National Directory of New Hires and current Connecticut claimants filing for benefits. This system minimizes unemployment trust fund losses through earlier detection of overpayments.
 - *Fraud Prevention Partnership*: A federally-funded Unemployment Compensation Fraud Prosecution Unit resulted in more than 245 arrests for unemployment insurance fraud and approximately \$2 million recouped for the state's UI Trust Fund. The Unit, a partnership with CTDOL and the Chief State's Attorney's Office, identified, investigated, and prosecuted offenders for collecting benefits to which they were not entitled.
 - *Return-to-Work Cross Match*: Utilizing employer-submitted "New Hire or Rehire" information, hundreds of cases are reviewed each week for fraudulent activity. This prevention program diminishes opportunities to fraud the unemployment insurance program and prevents approximately \$5 million yearly in improper payments.
 - *Treasury Offset Program (TOP)*: A partnership with the Internal Revenue Service and the US Department of Labor that allows for the interception of federal tax returns when individuals have not repaid unemployment insurance benefits they were not entitled to collect. Amount recovered to date: approximately \$20 million
 - *Interstate Benefit Intercept*: Allows CTDOL to intercept benefits being paid to individuals filing UI claims in other states, and therefore should not be collecting benefits in Connecticut. More than \$300,000 has been recovered, and approximately \$1.2 million has been identified for potential recovery.
 - *State Income Tax Intercept*: Through a partnership with the Department of Revenue Services, CTDOL is able to intercept state income tax refunds to recover benefits that were fraudulently collected. Amount recovered to date is approximately \$24 million.

Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity

The agency is firmly committed to the principles and objectives of equal employment opportunity for all individuals and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity employer. The agency ensures compliance with the state's Affirmative Action regulations and Contract Compliance laws, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Fair Employment Practices Act, Title, VII of the Civil Rights Act, and other applicable laws. The agency's Office of Diversity and Equity coordinates and monitors programs and has undertaken numerous steps this past year to further equal opportunity in its hiring, promotions, training and other employment-related duties. Details can be found in the agency's Affirmative Action Plan, which was approved November 8, 2017 by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. The hiring freeze and budgetary concerns has challenged the agency's ability to fill Affirmative Action goals. The one hiring opportunity placed the agency's achievement rate at 100% while for the three promotional opportunities, the goal achievement rate was at 67%.

For fiscal year 2017-2018, demographic information is as follows: 58% of the agency's employees are female and 42% are male. For racial makeup, 61% are White; 20% are Black; 13% are Hispanic, and 6% are Asian/Native American/Other.

Information Reported as Required by State Statute

Wage and Workplace Standards Violations

Labor Department investigators recovered \$4,936,684.74 in legally-due wages for employees during the past fiscal year. This included \$2,296,792.40 recovered by wage enforcement staff responding to 1,184 complaints that owed wages had not been paid. Wage and Workplace Standards staff also returned \$1,928,509.37 to 1,813 workers who were not paid for overtime work or who were paid less than minimum wage, and recovered \$687,324.93 by enforcing the state's prevailing wage laws. Another \$21,808.86 was recouped in back pay owed to 63 service workers hired by private contractors and \$2,249.19 for joint enforcement efforts.

Violations of prevailing wage laws were determined after investigators conducted 53 payroll audits and made 39 site inspections. A total of 1,233 employees received owed wages as a result of non-payment of prevailing wage rates.

Violations were found in 242 additional cases concerning employment of minors in the workplace (hours of labor, night work of minors, prohibited employment of minors, working papers/certificates of age), meal/rest periods, personnel files, and drug testing issues.

A total of 167 Stop Work orders were issued to employers that did not comply with Workers' Compensation requirements. Following on-site investigations, these companies were required to cease work on a construction project until certain workplace regulations were met. In some cases, it was determined that employers misrepresented employees as independent contractors, a practice that causes an economic disadvantage to companies following the law and to those workers that are misclassified.

Unemployment Compensation

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) *UI Tax Division* administers an equitable UI tax program that protects both workers and employers through the fair enforcement of the UI law. UI benefits paid to unemployed workers totaled \$670 million. Of that amount, \$625 million was paid to claimants formerly employed by employers paying quarterly UI taxes under the regular UI benefits program, and \$45 million was provided to claimants formerly employed by non-taxable employers and/or under other programs. Total taxes paid by more than 103,000 employers whose employees were covered by UI totaled \$760 million.

Population and Employment Data

Through its Office of Research, the agency completes special state, local, or sub-state regional studies and economic analyses to provide information support for economic transition, workforce development initiatives, education program analysis and development, and responses to major layoffs or disasters. Strategies for addressing issues such as labor gaps, and for positioning the state's educational and workforce systems to be able to respond quickly to critical areas of workforce need, are a fundamental part of the Governor's vision for Connecticut's workforce and economic development efforts.

Occupational Analysis Products and Publications

The Office of Research website contains an exhaustive collection of data and tools useful for *Workforce Investment Planning* and understanding the labor market of Connecticut and each of the state's five Workforce Development Areas, including population and population density, labor force, employment and wages by industry sector, and new housing permits. In addition, detailed information on residents in need of workforce investment services such as high school dropouts, Medicaid recipients, adult probationers, Temporary Family Assistance recipients, and other residents with barriers to employment is included.

- *Connecticut Career Paths* is a planning guide developed for mainly high school students and those making or guiding career choices. Nearly 500 occupations are profiled, along with their employment levels, growth potential, expected earnings, skills requirements, and education paths. The Connecticut Career Paths is distributed to schools, colleges, libraries and job centers throughout the state.
- *Connecticut's Reemployment Portal* displays occupations with similar characteristics such as knowledge areas, tools and technology, and general work activities of selected occupations to connect jobseekers with helpful information and current job openings.
- *Training and Education Planning System (TEPS)* is a tool designed to aid the analysis and discussion of the demand and supply of talent in Connecticut's workforce. It is intended to help identify where there may be skill shortages or surpluses in the labor market, and thereby guide investments in education and training programs by program planners and administrators, as well as by individuals considering career options. The program is intended primarily for educational administrators and workforce development training providers that are considering whether or not to develop a new program, expand or contract an existing one, or drop an existing program, by showing where there may be a need for trained workers.

- *Economic Indicator Scorecards* are monthly updated economic indicators that present an overall picture of the current conditions in the Connecticut labor market, business climate, consumer sector and the current/future overall. These include charts, trends, year-to-year changes and data for 24 economic indicators.
- The *Connecticut Economic Digest* is a monthly publication aimed at analysts and decision makers in the state. It contains useful and timely articles relevant to understanding Connecticut's economy as well as a monthly summary of the state's labor market data.
- *Help Wanted OnLine* data from the Conference Board is used each month to produce a tabulation of the occupations with the most postings, the employers with the most postings, and an analysis of posting trends for the state and each Labor Market Area.

CONN-OSHA

- *Report on inspections:* The Occupational Safety and Health Division conducted safety and/or health compliance inspections at 157 public worksites. Citations were issued for 417 violations and are identified as follow: 243 "serious," 171 "other than serious," two "repeat," and one "regulatory."
- *Report on consultations and trainings:* CONN-OSHA provided safety and health consultations to 503 private-sector businesses that collectively employ 19,527 workers; during these consultations 2,521 hazards were identified. CONN-OSHA conducted 141 consultations at public sector workplaces with a total of 6,992 employees; during these consultations 227 hazards were identified. Additionally, safety training programs and outreach were provided to 16,102 employees.

Mediation and Arbitration

- During the year, 330 grievances were filed for arbitration and 752 formal grievance arbitration hearings were scheduled, resulting in 346 cases being successfully closed and 81 awards issued. Expiration notices on 171 private sector contracts were received. In compliance with Federal/State Statutes, the Board of Mediation and Arbitration imposed binding arbitration on 401 municipal contracts and two state contracts. Mediators responded to a total of 546 requests for grievance/contract mediation.