Michigan's 2026 Workforce Strategy

MICHIGAN WORKS! ASSOCIATION

Michigan's economy depends on a PROVEN workforce system that supports businesses and job seekers alike.

The FY27 Michigan Works! Association policy priorities focus on practical, employer-driven solutions that keep people working, build skills, and prevent avoidable setbacks, positioning Michigan for long-term economic strength.

1 Implement SNAP/Medicaid Work Requirements Responsibly

Goal: **Ensure new SNAP/Medicaid work requirements support work and health—without unnecessary coverage loss.**

Why it matters

- New work and reporting requirements will **drive significant traffic** to local Michigan Works! offices, as individuals seek help understanding and complying with rules.
- Experience in Michigan and other states shows that people who are working or qualify for exemptions can still lose coverage due to paperwork and reporting barriers.

Requested investment

- Invest **$25 million** to:
  - Hire and train frontline navigators in every region.
  - Build basic coordination and referral processes with MDHHS and community partners.

Expected impact

- Protect coverage for eligible adults while supporting job searching, training, and compliance.
- Reduce downstream costs associated with uninsured care and labor-force detachment.

2 Scale Registered Apprenticeships

Goal: **Grow high-quality earn-and-learn pathways in high-demand, high-wage occupations.**

Why it matters

- Michigan has doubled the average number of Registered Apprenticeships since 2016 and now ranks 4th nationally in active apprentices. **This is a program that works.**
- Apprenticeship completers have roughly a **93% retention rate**, giving employers a skilled, loyal workforce.

Requested investment

- **Appropriate $5 million** for Registered Apprenticeship expansion in FY 27.

Expected impact

- Support new and expanded apprenticeship programs in sectors like advanced manufacturing, health care, IT, construction, and public service.
- Increase completions, wages, and long-term attachment to Michigan's labor market.

When it comes to building active apprenticeships, Michigan ranks #4 in the U.S.

Local Michigan Works! agencies drive an annual $12.4B in statewide workforce impact

3 Expand the Going PRO Talent Fund

Goal: Align training dollars with employer demand and help more workers move into in-demand, higher-wage jobs.

Why it matters

- Approximately 68% of top Michigan employers report difficulty filling positions across skill levels.
- Due to last year's funding cuts, $23.4M in funding requests have been denied so far during FY 26. **These denied requests would have trained 13,986 individuals.**

Requested investment

- Maintain the Going PRO Talent Fund budget at **$31.8 million.**

Expected impact

- Train workers annually in employer-driven, job-linked training.
- Support wage growth, productivity, and retention across urban, suburban, and rural employers.

These investments are good for Michigan.

- Funds are targeted where employers show a clear need, and where outcomes can be measured (jobs, credentials, wages, retention).
- Relatively modest state investments help shorten periods of unemployment, prevent unnecessary loss of coverage, and draw down additional employer and federal funding.
- Michigan Works! ensures that businesses and job seekers across the state—including small and mid-size employers—can access these opportunities.

Together, these priorities position Michigan to grow its talent base, support employers, and implement significant policy changes that strengthen both the economy and communities.

#1 in the U.S.

in credential attainment for adults AND in helping individuals with disabilities get employed.

#3 in the U.S.

in helping adults get employed AND for customized reemployment services.

#1 in the Midwest

Employment services to more individuals than any other state in the region.

MICHIGAN WORKS! ASSOCIATION

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