

NEW MEXICO

Workforce Innovation and
Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Combined State Plan

Program Years 2024-2027

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



It has been an adventure to lead the New Mexico State Workforce Development Board through the process of putting together the 2024-2027 WIOA State Plan. We supported the ambitious strategy to gather input from across the state and a wide swath of stakeholders. And we committed to developing a plan that the State Board would embrace and continue to track. Fortunately, New Mexicans stepped up to this challenge and engaged with us through in-person forums, virtual townhalls, and written input. The result is a plan that the Board is excited to use as our charter for the next few years.

In my professional life, I work at the heart of the border trade economy as the Vice President of Strategic Development at Global Perspectives Integrated in Santa Teresa, New Mexico. The border complex is booming, with new businesses coming in from our neighbors to the South, Asia, and Europe. Each of these businesses has a unique set of workforce needs. More and more, the ability to provide an agile workforce can make or break a company's decision of whether to do business in our state.

As a business representative on the State Board, I am also acutely aware of how busy our employers are. Learning about the wide range of programs that the workforce system offers was eye-opening. But at the same time, I knew we needed to do more to connect employers and workers to those amazing programs. I am especially proud that the WIOA State Plan emphasizes streamlined business outreach and aligned case management. Every workforce program relies on the participation of the right people and companies, and these aspects of the plan will make that quicker, easier, and more rewarding.

On behalf of the State Workforce Development Board, I am grateful to everyone who came out to a meeting, analyzed data, shared expertise, and lent passion and perspective to this process. We look forward to engaging in this Plan and take the New Mexico workforce system to the next level.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joshua Orozco". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly legible.

Joshua Orozco, Chair
New Mexico State Workforce Development
Board

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY



We are very pleased to present the 2024-2027 WIOA State Plan Summary. Four significant dynamics shaped this plan. First, the COVID-19 pandemic changed the way we think about work and workplaces. Second, the state faces an inverted labor market with over 30,000 more vacancies than unemployed people looking for work in 2023. Third, Governor Lujan Grisham's bold educational initiatives, including the Opportunity Scholarship that provides tuition-free college and the Early Childhood Education and Care Fund that endowed accessible early childhood services, opened a world of possibilities to many New Mexicans. Finally, billions of dollars of infrastructure investment will require a skilled workforce. Each one of these is a historical first. The combination of all of four factors creates a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve the lives of all New Mexicans.

After a comprehensive participatory process, we developed a vision, goals and strategies that are a marked departure from the WIOA State Plans of the past. While continuing to align to the state's forward-looking economic development goals, this Plan emphasizes the immediate needs of New Mexico communities to build and improve infrastructure and to take care of each other. The plan also recognizes that the rapidly changing nature of work – both with advancements in technology and the emergence of new industries - means that we need to prepare our workforce for a future we cannot fully envision yet. We prioritized reaching populations in our state that are less engaged in the labor force, while also recognizing that the workforce system needs to engage in larger efforts to attract more people to New Mexico. The plan also includes cross-goal and alignment strategies that will enable stronger case management, more coordinated business engagement, and strengthens our partnerships with education and training providers.

On behalf of the entire Department of Workforce Solutions, I extend my most sincere gratitude to our core partners for their extensive contributions, to the State Workforce Development Board for being a key part of a strong community engagement strategy, and to everyone who took the time to participate in the process. We are excited to make this plan a reality.

Sincerely,

Sarita Nair, Cabinet Secretary
New Mexico Department of Workforce
Solutions

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June of 2023, New Mexico's workforce system embarked on a journey to develop the State's 2024-2027 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan. New Mexico's workforce system is a cornerstone of the State's economic vitality, dedicated to equipping its residents with the skills and opportunities needed for individual success, and providing employers with access to skilled talent to drive economic growth. The workforce system includes industry, government agencies, non-profit organizations, school-to-career programs, and educational institutions.

The goals of the WIOA planning process are to 1) promote a shared understanding of the workforce needs in the State, and 2) foster development of more comprehensive and integrated approaches for addressing the needs of employers and workers within the State. The planning process (described in the graphic below) has been comprehensive, engaging stakeholders from across the State, because New Mexico stands at a crossroads, needing to make critical decisions on how to prioritize its workforce development activities in an ever-changing world of work. A confluence of factors in New Mexico led to the need for a more comprehensive planning process:

- The COVID-19 pandemic changed the way employers and individuals think about how, when, and where people work, requiring more adaptability and agility in the workforce system.
- New Mexico has an inverted labor market, meaning there are many more jobs available in the State than there are unemployed people looking for work, which means that the State needs innovative solutions to address talent needs.
- Governor Lujan Grisham is making historic investments to address workforce challenges such as through the New Mexico Opportunity Scholarship and the Early Childhood Education and Care Fund.
- The Federal government is investing billions of dollars to help states rebuild infrastructure through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Inflation Reduction Act, CHIPS Act, and more, and New Mexico needs people to be able to complete that critical work.
- With the rapid evolution of technologies like artificial intelligence, the workforce system must play a greater role in helping employers and workers navigate the future of work.

This report summarizes the strategic components of the State's 2024-2027 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan and discusses key considerations for successful implementation. Additionally, it contains sector reference guides as essential tools in guiding workforce development efforts.

THIS REPORT AT A GLANCE

- An **overview** of the state's workforce system and its strengths and weaknesses.
- **Goals** for the workforce system, as established through a participatory process.
- **Cross-goal strategies** that will impact all of our work under this plan.
- **Alignment strategies** that reflect a desire for greater coordination of people, process, and technology" to better serve employers and job seekers.
- **Priority Sector** reference guides that provide details on the priority industries.

WIOA PARTNERS

The New Mexico WIOA Core and Combined Partners are:



The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions serves as the State Administrative Entity for WIOA, and directly administers the WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser), Trade Adjustment Act, Jobs for Veterans, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) work and education programs.

Four Local Workforce Development Boards administer funds and programs pursuant to WIOA Title I, Workforce Development Activities. This consists of the Adult, Youth & Dislocated Worker programs, as well as administration of the American Job Centers.



The Adult Education Division of the New Mexico Higher Education Department administers WIOA Title II, adult education and literacy programs as outlined by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation of the New Mexico Public Education Department and the New Mexico Commission for the Blind administer WIOA Title IV, vocational rehabilitation services for people with disabilities.



New Mexico Commission for the Blind



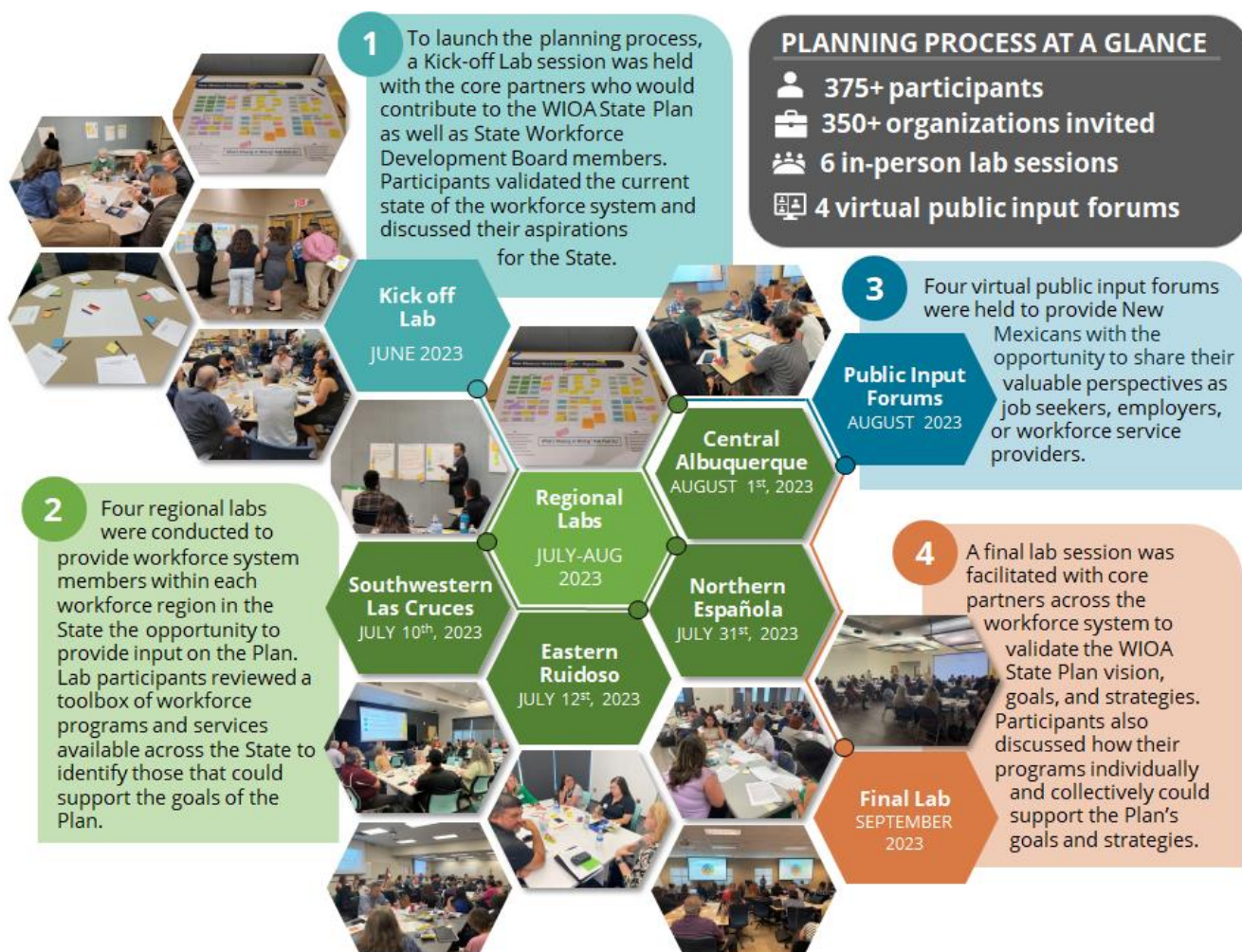
The New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department administers the Senior Community Service Employment program authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965.

The Income Support Division of the New Mexico Health Care Authority (formerly New Mexico Human Services Department) administers eligibility and benefit administration for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and oversees the contracts for the TANF and SNAP employment and training programs.



THE PLANNING PROCESS

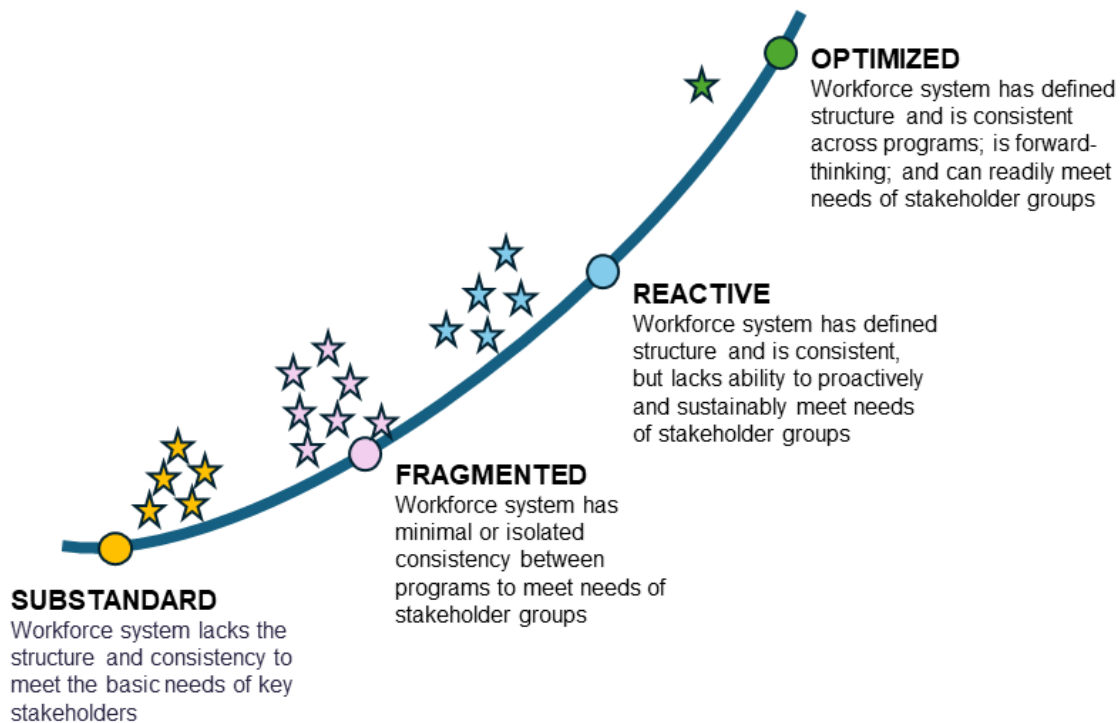
To ensure that the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) incorporated a wide range of perspectives into the Plan, we hosted a series of meetings with core programs, and combined partners and key stakeholders on the development of the State's visions, goals and strategies for the State Plan. The regional input sessions included diverse participants, including state and local workforce development board members, chief elected officials, regional service providers, business representatives, higher education institutions, workers' rights organizations, organized labor, and community advocates. We brought in our local workforce partners for in-depth discussions. Additionally, we hosted multiple virtual public input sessions. By the end of the stakeholder engagement process, over 375 people representing diverse communities and interests had shared their ideas and contributed to this Plan.



STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

During the planning process, the Department used a “maturity model” to solicit participants’ thoughts about the strengths and weaknesses of the current workforce system. The graph below represents the maturity model, with the stars representing the frequency that participants rated the New Mexico system at each stage of maturity.

Workforce Maturity Model with Input from Statewide Planning Process



- ★ Participants who felt that aspects of our workforce system are substandard commented that the complexity and layered nature of the workforce system is a weakness and that “we don’t do enough to make sure people have enough.” Similar comments focused on inadequate employer engagement.
- ★ Participants identified the number of programs in our system as a strength, but that duplication of efforts was a weakness that makes the system fragmented. They identified the need for a “truly universal referral system” and for more support services.
- ★ Participants assessed certain aspects of the system as reactive, citing challenges in reintroducing our services to the community after the pandemic. They highlighted the strength that “we have brilliant minds” and “agencies are doing stellar work.”
- ★ Participants expressed that our workforce system seems optimized for compliance with the myriad rules that govern our funding and programs. While compliance is a strength, it often results in disconnection among programs with different eligibility or implementation requirements.

VISION

Our vision is a coordinated and streamlined workforce system that empowers all New Mexicans to provide for themselves and their families through meaningful jobs and careers; helps employers find the talent they need to flourish in New Mexico; and is ready for the changing economy of our state and nation.



GOALS



Collaborate with employers to expand the workforce that supports the safety, health, and well-being of New Mexican families and the modernization of New Mexico's infrastructure.

This goal is all about building a State in which families can thrive. Several factors have increased the urgency of investments in the industries identified within this goal.

First, New Mexico has historically not looked at current vacancies as workforce shortages to be a cornerstone of the workforce development plan. However, the current inverted labor market with over 30,000 more vacancies than the number of unemployed people looking for work, means that we can't afford to look solely at the long-term. Shortages in healthcare, behavioral health, and first responders are current, urgent, and not going to improve without dedicated cross-agency efforts.

The sense of urgency underlying this goal is compounded by the unprecedented investments in infrastructure that are underway and in the pipeline. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, CHIPS and Science Act, and Inflation Reduction Act are all driving urgent needs in industries related to construction, broadband expansion, natural resource management, and water infrastructure.

Governor Lujan Grisham's goal to make New Mexico the best state in which to raise a child unifies all of the industries within this goal. The simple objective is to create a workforce that enables us to take care of the people and places we love.

The priority sectors within this goal are below and specific strategies are included on each Priority Sector page:

- Broadband Expansion
- Construction Industries
- Early Childhood Education and Care
- First Responders
- Healthcare, including Behavioral Health
- Natural Resource Management



Cadets at the Albuquerque Fire Rescue Academy are stepping up to fill New Mexico's need for more first responders, including firefighters, paramedics, and police.



Build and empower the workforce to thrive in the face of changes to the state and national economy and the way we work.

This goal began as a way to articulate the difference between industries with jobs right now (like construction) and industries that have strong future growth potential (like bioscience). Throughout the course of our regional labs and public input forums, the goal expanded to reflect all of the changes we are likely to see in the economy and workplaces of the future.

The Future of Work Institute estimates that 65% of children entering primary school today will end up working in completely new job types that don't yet exist. Globally, one billion people are estimated to need reskilling by 2030 because of technology's impacts on work. Over the next 2 years, 48% of the total global workforce will work in a mobile or hybrid arrangement. Our stakeholders took from these facts the need to develop uniquely human foundational skills and the absolute necessity of digital literacy.



The New Mexico Spaceport is a keystone of the state's burgeoning aerospace industry.

Technology is not the only rapid change that New Mexico faces. In 2022, New Mexico was the nation's second-largest crude oil-producing state, after Texas. The state accounted for more than 13% of total U.S. crude oil production. We were also the 7th largest natural gas-producing states and accounted for 6% of the nation's total natural gas gross withdrawals. The decline in supply of fossil fuels and intentional steps to develop more sustainable sources of energy will have a profound impact on our state and our workforce. For these reasons, energy transition workforce issues are part of this goal.

Climate change is another force driving this goal. We saw the largest wildfires in New Mexico history in 2022, while 2023 brought drought and record-high temperatures. Developing equitable strategies for a climate resilient workforce is a key part of the State's Climate Action Plan, and NMDWS leads the Climate Action Team for economic transition, with these action items also falling within Goal 2.

New Mexico is also embracing industries that have tremendous growth potential over the next four years. Aerospace, bioscience, advanced manufacturing, and sustainable agriculture all fall into this category. These sectors align with the State's economic development strategy. They also offer a longer-term opportunity to develop a pipeline, in contrast with the industries of Goal 1. The priority sectors within Goal 2 are below and sector-specific strategies are included on each Priority Sector page:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Aerospace
- Biosciences
- Energy Transition and Climate Resilience
- Sustainable and Value-Added Agriculture

Strategy 1: Explore models and innovations to address wage differentials and mass layoffs in the transition from traditional fossil fuels to other forms of energy.

The Energy Transition Act (ETA) establishes New Mexico as a national leader in clean energy. The ETA sets a statewide renewable energy standard of 50 percent by 2030 for New Mexico investor-owned utilities and rural electric cooperatives and a goal of 80 percent by 2040, in addition to setting zero-carbon resources standards for investor-owned utilities by 2045 and rural electric cooperatives by 2050. The law transitions New Mexico away from coal and toward clean energy, ensuring greater renewable energy production and reducing costs for consumers. It also provided tens of millions of dollars of economic and workforce support for communities impacted by coal plant closures, as well as the development of renewable replacement power in San Juan County. NMDWS has created a number of innovative programs using ETA resources, including a Direct Payment Program, Wage Differential Program, Direct Training Program and Apprenticeship Program. This strategy will involve monitoring and drawing on data from these programs and similar efforts in other states to develop a toolkit for the energy transition.



Strategy 2: Spearhead a foundational skills initiative that empowers job seekers to develop uniquely human skills (e.g., resiliency, adaptability, critical thinking, empathy, emotional intelligence) that are needed regardless of the sector within which they will work, fostering personal growth and preparing them to thrive in an ever-evolving job market.

Through the course of our planning process, the Department heard from employers that while they may not know *how* technology will change, but they know what will *not* change. Businesses need people to hear, understand, respect and express compassion for other people – that is something all the artificial intelligence in the world will never do as well as we do. In a world of limitless information, we need people to be able to think critically about that information, its source, its aims, and its validity. We need people to respond to the changing world more quickly than technology will – for example, putting a team on a bus to a community experiencing a natural disaster will always be more effective than polling, bots or apps. We need people to prioritize and manage their time, because even as technology helps us do things faster, it won't lead us to our goals faster without the right priorities and management.

These skills have many names: durable, foundational, timeless, human. These foundational skills must be part of work and career readiness, whether the person coming through our door is age 16 or 60.

The activities that are part of this strategy include:

- Developing a portfolio of foundational skill sets and identify training providers, including platforms like LinkedIn Learning. NMDWS is working with New Mexico State University to explore micro-credentialing for areas from management training to digital literacy to people skills. We will focus on asking every employer we work with what skills they most need today and will continue to need tomorrow, and then actively integrate and use that information to rapidly develop responsive training and experiential learning.
- Expanding use of workforce preparation and pre-vocational paths to expand training on foundational skills, in partnership with the Adult Education system. The Individualized Education & Training (IET) model, administered by the New Mexico Higher Education Department's Adult

Education Division, is an effective way to synchronize the paths of foundational skills development and more specific job-training. As trainings and credentials are developed, we will use the tools we currently use for literacy and numeracy for foundational skills as well.

- Training WIOA staff to be trainers and educators on foundational skills as part of career counseling. Our staff faces the same challenges around foundational skills that our jobseekers face, and the added challenge of needing to stay abreast of developments in this area. We will develop mechanisms to communicate and educate our staff on foundational skills consistently and frequently, in order to create a community of practice.

Strategy 3: Connect the rural, low-income, and vulnerable populations that work in the fossil fuel industries with the training and work opportunities needed to engage in next-generation industries. The activities that will be part of this strategy include:

- Working together with community colleges and organizations to develop and deliver custom training, focused on the giving underserved populations the skills necessary to enter a career in emerging industries, including literacy, numeracy, test-taking and computer skills.
- Partnering with unions and other registered apprenticeship program sponsors to develop new programs specific to emerging industries.



Memorial of the 2013 Silver Fire in the Gila National Forest. Climate resilience includes prevention and preparation for, and recovery from, forest fires of increasing frequency and intensity.

- Extending the existing pre-apprenticeship and high school career counselor programs, by connecting students enrolled in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs with opportunities related to emerging industries.
- Collaborating with the NM Environment Department, NM Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department, unions, and private industry to find good jobs across the state in the field of climate resilience.



Increase year-over-year labor force participation rates and economic prosperity for disengaged and difficult to reach New Mexicans.

New Mexico has now, and has historically had, one of the lowest labor force participation rates (LFPR) in the nation. Diving below the surface of this statistic led to Goal 3, focused on getting New Mexicans “off the bench” and into jobs and careers.

The steepest difference between the New Mexico population’s LFPR and the national rate is in men ages 20-24, where our rate is 12.1% lower than that of the US as a whole. Between 2019 and 2022, men’s LFPR in New Mexico decreased in every age group except 55 to 64. Underlying those data are many factors, including disengagement, low educational attainment, criminal justice involvement, and a lack of rural opportunity.

Women are not in much better shape, also seeing decreases from 2019 to 2022 in every age group except 55 to 64. New Mexico women’s LFPR is 6.5% below the national rate in the 25-34 age group, and 6.2% below the national rate in the 45-54 age group. In addition to the dynamics in the male population, women carry a much larger share of the caregiving burden for children and elders.

Although the State LFPR for people with a disability is higher than that of the US (49% compared to 46.3%), our overall population of people with a disability is very high (17.1%), four points above the national percentage of 13%. This means that our LFPR is bound to be lower because of people who cannot work because of their disabilities. But it also means that reaching those people with disabilities who can work is all the more important, and that the demand for vocational rehabilitation services is relatively high.



WIOA Titles I and III and TANF employment & training staff at a job fair in Gallup. Coordinated outreach in rural communities is essential for increasing labor force participation.

Similarly, while New Mexico has a slightly higher percentage of working people earning below the Federal Poverty Level compared to the national rate (38% vs. 37.1%), we have a dramatically higher poverty rate than US as a whole (18.2% vs. 11.5%). Again, the effect is that these demographics have a direct and significant impact on our overall LFPR.

What this means for the workforce system is that we absolutely must work with folks who are more difficult to reach and face greater barriers. Our economy needs these individuals, and these individuals need to understand how important they are to the success of our state.

A multitude of programs already exists for many of these groups, but awareness of the programs is dismal. As part of this goal, the State also needs to make the job-seeker experience more streamlined and friendly. In addition, we need to educate employers to dismantle bias against people with disabilities, people who are reintegrating into society, and working caregivers.

The following strategies aim to develop pathways to prosperity for disengaged and difficult to reach New Mexicans:

Strategy 1: Streamline and improve delivery of wraparound services to at-risk youth, criminal justice-involved individuals, Native American communities, people with disabilities, rural New Mexicans, English language learners, veterans, women who have left the workforce, and individuals receiving unemployment assistance.

We know that people who have historically been challenged to find a place in the workforce need additional support to be successful. The behavioral health world calls these wraparound services, and the workforce system is adopting this terminology. Aligned case management (discussed in more detail in alignment strategies) will be key to this strategy. Removing barriers to access to wraparound services is also a component of this strategy.

One promising development is the partnership between TANF and the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD). TANF participants currently go through the process of signing up for ECECD resources at the same time that they enroll in education and training (E&T) services. This can serve as a model for co-enrollment between other programs.

Strategy 2: Advocate for WIOA stipends to not be treated as income for tax and benefit calculation purposes. Stakeholders in the NMDWS public input and regional lab sessions identified this specific strategy, related to the “cliff effect” that deters benefit recipients from working.



Strategy 3: Expand opportunities for English language learners (ELLs). Particularly in the border regions, developing custom curriculum will support English language learners in pursuing meaningful careers regardless of language barriers. Through partnerships between Adult Education and other WIOA programs, this is a practical, low-risk/high-reward strategy to engage the ELL population.

Strategy 4: Develop a tool to educate make it easier for residents to find available assistance opportunities and applicable eligibility requirements. The New Mexico Health Care Authority is taking the lead on developing this tool, so that New Mexicans can more easily access programs and services applicable to them. ECECD has an excellent child care finder that can serve as the model for this type of platform.

Strategy 5: Educate employers on expanding their conventional recruiting pools to include marginalized groups through skills-based and other inclusive employment practices.

Strategy 6: Innovate and increase marketing and outreach efforts to marginalized populations to bridge the information gap and ensure that vital services reach those who need them the most. Data reviews show that initial assessments and triage must help job seekers meet critical needs – food, utility assistance, shelter, safety, etc.— before job search assistance is provided.

Strategy 7: Enter into intergovernmental agreements with tribal and Pueblo workforce programs. These agreements will provide for communication of opportunities, including collaboration and co-enrollment, and joint discussions of sector strategies and other initiatives. This will ensure the continuation of these relationships through changes in state and tribal leadership.



Attract out-of-state workers to New Mexico and improve retention of New Mexicans within the State, particularly in rural communities.

Between 2010 and 2022, 30,085 New Mexicans migrated out of the State, and since 2010, nearly 20,000 more workers left New Mexico than arrived. This has resulted in reduced statewide workforce capacity for an entire generation, as those individuals aged, got jobs, and raised families in other states. In addition, within the State, rural areas have lost population to the urban centers. Not only did we lose these individuals, but as they aged and raised families in other states, we lost a new generation of workers.

Goal 4 was not an original goal that we identified at the beginning of the process. Instead, it emerged from our stakeholders as they recognized the significant impacts of these migration numbers that match their lived experiences. Stakeholders expressed concern that the state may never have an adequate workforce, especially in light of the factors driving the other three goals, unless we work to bring people (back) to New Mexico.

Attracting out-of-state talent and “boomerangs” (meaning New Mexicans returning to the state) has been a goal of State economic development strategies occasionally over the past two decades. Targeted recruitment has also been a strategy for various industries like tech and police officers. However, focusing on bringing workers to New Mexico from other states has never before been a goal that the workforce system prioritized. With new initiatives to draw people to our state, from tuition-free college and expanded access to childcare and early education, to outdoor recreation, our stakeholders noted that it was time for the workforce system to join forces to this end.

This goal also encompasses efforts to retain people in and attract people to the rural parts of the state, where both workforce and training needs are particularly challenging.

Strategy 1: Participate in statewide campaigns to promote New Mexico as a great place to live and work for resident, non-resident, and “boomerang” populations. The State is evaluating a campaign, similar to the “New Mexico True” tourism campaign, to tell the story of why New Mexico is a great place to live. The workforce system’s labor market information can help to target and tailor these larger efforts.

Strategy 2: Advertise “hot jobs” to people residing outside of the state, paired with materials on why living in New Mexico is appealing. These materials would emphasize the state’s assets, including cultural diversity, outdoor recreation, and early childhood and higher education access. WIOA programs have historically never publicized New Mexico jobs outside of state borders. Yet nearly one quarter of our field offices (Clovis, Farmington, Gallup, Hobbs, Raton, Sunland Park) are within 20 miles of the state’s border. Given the inverted labor market, advertising New Mexico employment opportunities in neighboring states will be a good investment.

Strategy 3: Partner with the State’s chambers of commerce and Department of Economic Development on out-of-state recruitment initiatives. Workforce agencies have often been an afterthought in drawing businesses to locate in our state. As employers are increasingly concerned about finding skilled talent, this is beginning to change. By building strong relationships with the key players in business recruitment, WIOA partners will be engaged in these discussions earlier in the conversation.

Strategy 4: Explore options for working with businesses to promote NAFTA Professional (TN) visas. The nonimmigrant TN visa allows citizens of Canada and Mexico, as NAFTA professionals, to work in the United States in prearranged business activities for U.S. or foreign employers. Yet New Mexico ranked 22nd among the states in TN visa issuance in 2020. This would be another tool for businesses who are struggling to find skilled workers.

Strategy 5: Partner with Boomerang NM to attract New Mexico natives to return home. Boomerang NM aims “to help STEM professionals make connections to discover career opportunities in every sector of New Mexico's economy.” Although some WIOA core and combined partners have worked sporadically with this group, stakeholders suggested exploring a longer term, more consistent, and more formal relationship.

Strategy 6: Collaborate on remote worker recruitment strategies, specifically addressing skills gaps by offering work-from-home opportunities (similar to Clovis Remote) and pair that with employment services that link to remote work jobs out-of-state, with a focus of keeping people in the rural communities of New Mexico.

CROSS-GOAL STRATEGIES

As the NMDWS planning process began to develop strategies, it became clear that certain strategies would cut across some of or all of our four goals. The following “cross-goal strategies” are relevant to achieving multiple goals:



Cross-Goal Strategy 1: Collaborate across WIOA partners, workforce regions, education providers, and employers to develop comprehensive strategies for priority sectors that are tailored to each workforce region and detail actionable plans for outreach and recruitment.

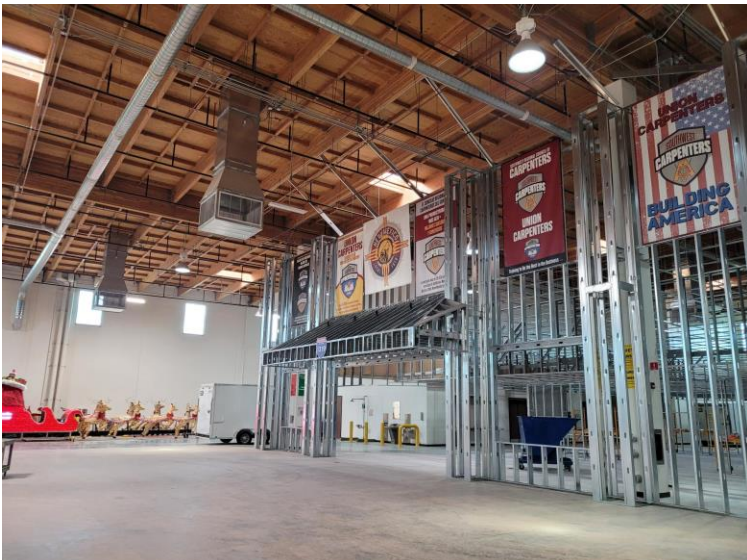
Historically, sector strategies have long been part of the WIOA State Plan. In practical terms, concrete sector strategies have been elusive. Stakeholders identified the root causes of this dynamic as a lack of shared vision on what a sector strategy is and a lack of true ownership of the sector strategy process. Our activities within this strategy are designed to fix these problems.

- Develop a statewide template for sector outreach instead of each Title, program, and local board inventing its own approach to sector outreach. Basic components of a sector strategy include: detailing the range of specific occupations for each sector, providing current wage data and employment numbers and projections for each occupation, developing models to identify potential shortages in certain jobs, establishing a follow-up process to identify existing education and training opportunities that result in credentials for those occupations, and determining how to expand those opportunities where needed. Working collaboratively and through rapid experimentation, NMDWS will lead the process of developing a shared vision and process for preparing a sector strategy.



- Train WIOA partner staff to conduct meaningful sector outreach. In many of the trainings NMDWS staff attended on sector strategies, stakeholders saw a heavy reliance on contractors and outside expertise. In contrast, our partners want to build internal capacity to create and maintain sector strategies. To do this, we will engage outside expertise to train our workforce system staff to be their own sector strategy experts. This will increase investment in the sector strategy process and foster ownership of the final product.
- Working with employers and using proven sector outreach techniques, develop specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals for each sector. Another historical weakness in our sector efforts have been a reliance on general principles (like “build a pipeline of electricians”) rather than specific measures (like, “double the number of enrolled electrician apprentices in the state on an annual basis, starting in 2024”). Successful sector strategies will culminate in SMART goals.

- Develop sector strategy roadmaps that outline activities, timelines, and owners. SMART goals need people and resources. The sector strategy roadmaps will include concrete and realistic activities and timelines that the State Workforce Development Board can use to drive accountability.
- Within each sector, identify specific connections between that industry and difficult to engage and historically underserved populations. In order to achieve Goal 3, the workforce system must engage difficult-to-reach residents as we engage in sector strategies. As we articulate career pathways, we need to recognize that people will be starting their journeys in different places. Sector strategies must draw on vocational rehabilitation and adult education resources to ensure that all New Mexicans benefit.
- Ensure that all workforce programs are integrated into sector strategies as appropriate. This will fortify the efforts to keep equity at the forefront of all sector strategies.
- Identify and implement strategies to market New Mexico jobs and careers in in-demand and emerging sectors to out-of-state audiences. In order to achieve Goal 4, sector strategies must identify opportunities to recruit people to New Mexico. This can be as simple as identifying jobs in each sector that are strong candidates for out-of-state recruitment.
- Convene quarterly sector check-in meetings with businesses and education providers to review progress. Sector strategies must remain living documents, with continued progress and accountability. For those strategies being undertaken at the local level, communication is also key to efficiency and making sure our local initiatives are aligned with one another. Quarterly meetings will keep everyone on track and in sync.



State of the art training programs like the apprenticeship programs at the Southwest Carpenters Training Center are vital education and training partners.



Cross-Goal Strategy 2:

Coordinate with education and training providers and employers in priority sectors to create flexible pathways, certification programs, short-term credentialing, and work-based learning opportunities to prepare the workforce.

Between siloed funding and mismatched eligibility and program requirements, the workforce system often struggles to stay in step with our partners in education and training. Our stakeholders emphasized that greater coordination in this area is absolutely essential to achieving all of our goals.

- Grow the number of programs certified on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to support both in-demand and emerging industries. The ETPL has

stagnated, in that new providers have not engaged and the current providers are not clearly tied to career pathways in priority sectors. We need to communicate the value of being on the ETPL and fill any gaps that we identify through the lens of our sector strategies.

- Improve the quality of data from ETPL providers, including those reporting through the NM Higher Education Department and those reporting directly to DWS, through technical assistance and quality control initiatives. ETPL data can paint a powerful picture of the impact of the Department's work

and the places we can improve. This strategy includes working closely with providers to improve the quality and timeliness of ETPL data.

- Coordinate with HED's Integrated Education and Training programs for adult education to ensure alignment with training providers on the ETPL to maximize efficiency, provide continued workforce supports for participants, and report performance outcomes, as required by WIOA.
- Identify and encourage / fund programs that have additional supports for difficult to engage and historically underserved populations. NMDWS education and training partners have many programs that support underserved populations and with which they can connect that are key to the success of Goal 3. We need to connect the dots between workforce agency services and partners' programs to create a strong safety net.
- Support and coordinate the marketing of sector-specific New Mexico educational and training programs to out-of-state audiences. New Mexico has cutting edge programs in niche priority areas like broadband expansion. Part of this strategy is collaborating to spread the word about these programs to our state's rural areas and other states, so that we can achieve Goal 4 by recruiting people to New Mexico education and training venues.



Cross-Goal Strategy 3: Work with the NM Public Education Department (PED), WIOA partners, and employers to increase outreach in middle and high schools and help students explore available career paths in priority sectors by streamlining and clearly defining the path among work-based learning programs. New Mexico has done a great job of investing in programs to connect youth to work. Unfortunately, those programs are not connected to each other or our sector strategies. This strategy aims to address this challenge.

- The first step in this strategy is establishing with PED a shared definition of terms like “work-based learning,” “internship,” “pre-apprenticeship” and related terms. We also need a comprehensive statewide budget that quantifies our investment in these programs.
- NMDWS and PED will also jointly determine how these programs comprehensively relate to and coordinate with the Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs run by PED under State funding and policies, as well as under the Federal Perkins law.
- Through the planning process, stakeholders identified many programs that can be matched to priority sectors and underserved populations, including:
 - Summer Enrichment Internship Program
 - New Mexico Career Pathways
 - Careers2Communities
 - High School Career Counselors
 - New Mexico Job Corps
 - Pre-Apprenticeship Programs
 - Workforce Pathways for Youth
 - WIOA Youth Program
 - NM Internship Plus
 - Graduation Reality & Dual-role Skills (GRADS)
- All partners with work-based learning programs must track the demographics and outcomes of participants. NMDWS is also working on developing educational outcomes for these programs. Agency leadership and



Events like the Heavy Equipment Rodeo at ACE Leadership Charter School help youths connect to careers in the trades.

the State Workforce Development Board will monitor these data regularly to identify opportunities for expansion or refocusing programs as needed.



Cross-Goal Strategy 4: Enhance outreach efforts around incentives and programs available to employers in priority sectors that support them with finding and retaining qualified talent. A recurring theme in the planning process is that we have programs to meet a wide variety of populations where they are and engage them in training and work. Unfortunately, much like work-based learning programs, these programs are largely unknown, often underutilized, and disconnected from each other and from the business community.

- Develop and promote shared communication tools to increase the reach of workforce programs, including but not limited to:
 - Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and Federal Bonding
 - Job Training Incentive Programs (JTIP)
 - Step Up partnership with the Child Support Enforcement Division
 - Veteran Tax Exemption and Disabled Veteran Tax Exemption
 - On-the-job Training
 - Custom Training Programs
 - Additional NMDWS Business Services
 - Student Loan Repayment Programs

ALIGNMENT STRATEGIES

To align all programs and services within the State's workforce system, the Core and Combined Partners will pursue the following strategies:

Alignment Strategy 1: Improve communication and collaboration among Core and Combined State Plan program partners.

Communication was the foremost concern and weakness identified through the planning process. Partners recognized that everyone has a desire to communicate, but coordination efforts often fall by the wayside as each agency moves forward with its own activities. The following activities were identified as key to improving communication:



The Eastern regional lab was held at Eastern New Mexico University-Roswell as part of the state planning process, which incorporated a wide range of stakeholders.

- Develop and implement common communication and messaging and branding.
- Develop a schedule of regular meetings, which may include quarterly meetings with local regions, DWS, and State Workforce Development Board Chair; monthly one-on-one meetings between local regions and DWS; and regular meetings at the local level with all partners.
- Collaborate and coordinate among all partners on grant writing.

Alignment Strategy 2: Strengthen the Statewide Workforce Development Board (SWDB) by improving its committee structure and outlining specific goals and tasks for committees and board members.

The SWDB has struggled to find its role within the workforce system, especially as meetings went remote during the pandemic. In-person meetings returned in spring 2023. The process of filling vacancies has been streamlined. In September 2023, the Board revised its bylaws to solidify the committee structure. Board members participated enthusiastically in the planning process, attending events in each of the regions as well as the core and combined partner sessions. The SWDB is energized to play a key role in WIOA State Plan implementation. Activities identified under this strategy are:

- Implement updated SWDB bylaws and committee structure.
- Engage in a planning process that results in specific goals and tasks for SWDB committees and members.
- Structure quarterly board meetings to drive towards accountability for and celebration of goals and tasks.
- Increase engagement with local boards on specific initiatives and determine what local boards and partners should share with the state board.

Alignment Strategy 3: Improve services to the employer community by streamlining processes, increasing coordination, and defining clear pathways for business engagement.

Another key theme in the planning process was the need to engage with businesses in cross-agency teams to simplify working with our programs. During one of the regional planning sessions, a business owner suggested that employers would also benefit from the equivalent of case management. By integrating our business outreach services, WIOA partners can make it simpler to access our multitude

of programs. Rather than engaging with businesses on separate programs, a business engagement meeting should start with an inquiry into the business's needs and challenges. Partners should then collaborate to create a package of services for those specific needs. Ideally, the business never needs to know what agency they are working with – only that the workforce system was able to help them with minimal effort on their part. Activities identified under this strategy are:

- (Re)build business teams across state agencies that engage all partners (including DVR and TANF business specialists) to establish a business “case management” approach that leads with each business’ needs and presents services in a source-blind or seamless manner.
- Develop consistent and comprehensive employer outreach materials.
- Improve systems for tracking business engagement – including evaluation and possible replication of local systems currently being used or in development.
- Develop and implement business outreach “roadshow” to explain all workforce services across the state.
- Support Adult Education programs to cultivate employer relationships for career pathway, workforce preparation, and Integrated Education and Training initiatives, as well as access to work experience for adult education students.

Alignment Strategy 4: Implement an aligned case management system across people, processes, and technology to streamline and improve delivery of services.

Aligned case management is not merely a technology solution; it entails coordinating people, processes and data to provide seamless service to jobseekers and employers. In fall 2023, New Mexico joined the Aligned Case Management (ACM) Institute, an initiative facilitated by the USDOL ETA’s Office of Workforce Investment and NASWA’s Workforce Information Technology Support Center (WITSC). The mission of the ACM Institute is “to enhance service delivery and customer experience within the public workforce system through the creation of a replicable framework and an on-demand toolkit of resources, leveraging interoperable data and modern technology.” Activities in this planning period will benefit from this opportunity to collaborate, prototype potential solutions, and design a state-specific action plan. These activities are:

- Develop interagency MOUs to delineate exactly what programs and services will be aligned.
- Complete development of specifications and procure services for development of an aligned case management system.
- Develop policies and procedures for alignment of case management, referrals, common registration, and any new technologies.
- Evaluate, refine, and strengthen WIOA I application processes to support adult education students’ priority access (as basic skills deficient individuals) to Title I services.



Alignment Strategy 5: Innovate and collaborate to contain costs of field offices.

While other states decrease their field presence, New Mexico’s workforce system recognizes that in-person services are necessary. Face-to-face services are our competitive advantage over online job search and recruitment tools like Indeed and LinkedIn. American Job Center offices remove barriers like broadband and language access. While core partners are pursuing funds to make field offices more

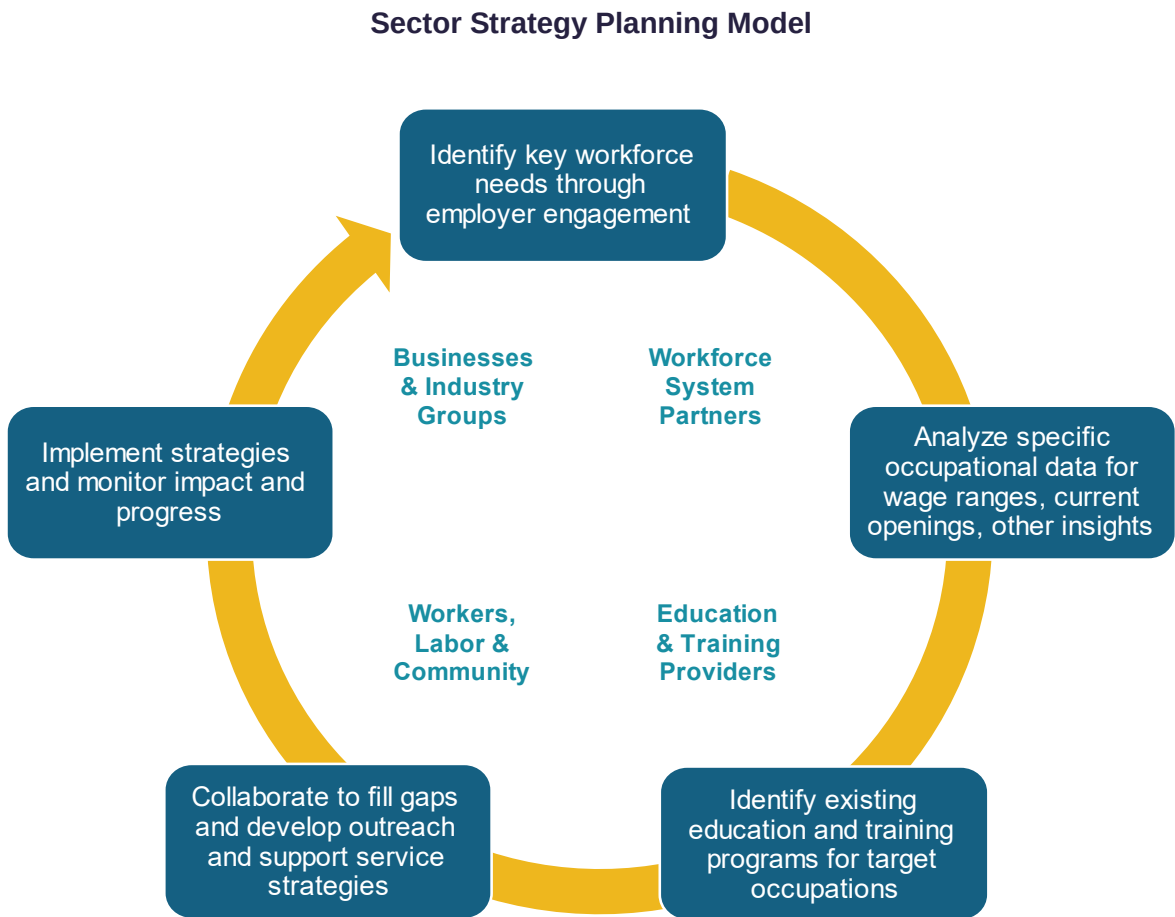
inviting, we also recognize that we must contain costs in order to continue to provide services in the remote parts of the state. Activities under this strategy are:

- Conduct ongoing reviews of office locations/staffing patterns with specific attention to promoting co-location, strengthened referral practices, and coordinated outreach.
- Explore alternative locations such as libraries or other free locations.
- Participate in statewide pilot program to establish Family Resource Centers.

PRIORITY SECTORS

The following pages describe the priority sectors under Goals 1 and 2. They provide insight into the educational profile of the industry, sector highlights, and sector-specific strategies. As described above in Cross-Goal Strategies, the partners will develop sector strategies for each sector, at either the state or regional level.

Sector strategies are an employer-driven workforce development approach that directly aligns education, training, and other workforce development services with the needs of businesses in a particular area of the economy. While each sector may require specific pieces of the strategy that are unique, the following diagram describes the basics of developing a sector strategy.





Advanced Manufacturing



Sector Overview

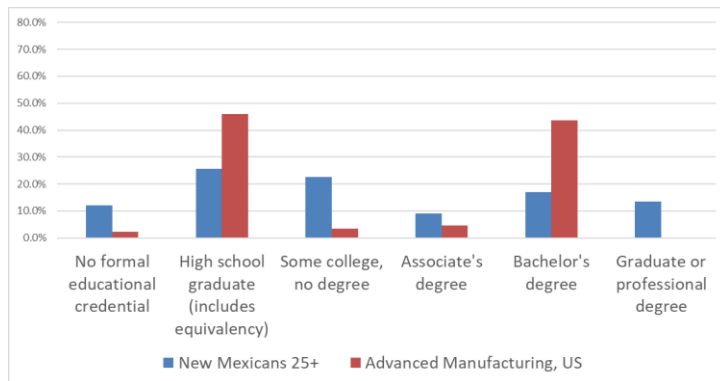
Advanced manufacturing aims to create agile, sustainable, and competitive manufacturing ecosystems that can rapidly adapt to changing market demands and innovate in the production of goods and services. This sector encompasses a broad range of industries and activities focused on the application of advanced technologies, automation, data analytics, and artificial intelligence (AI) to transform traditional manufacturing processes into highly efficient, data-driven, and adaptable systems.



Labor Force Challenge Level: Low

Job opening data does not directly tie to the needs of the Advanced Manufacturing sector. As such, it is difficult to ascertain how acute the labor challenge is. The mismatch between the industry entry requirements and the educational attainment in the state suggests that this workforce will require a longer on-ramp.

Educational Attainment of New Mexico Residents 25 Years and Older, Compared to Typical Education Needed to Enter Advanced Manufacturing Occupations, Nationally



Sector Highlights

- New Mexico is home to three national research facilities and three nationally recognized research universities. Education and research opportunities at these facilities contribute graduates in many fields including engineering, optics, nanotechnologies, physics, and manufacturing hardware and software development.
- This sector leverages technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT), robotics, machine learning, and cloud computing to optimize production, improve quality control, reduce operational costs, and enhance decision-making in manufacturing environments.
- NMSU Doña Ana Community College offers an Automation and Manufacturing Technology program that provides training for individuals looking to enter the field or upskill.
- In 2023, Governor Lujan Grisham announced a partnership with Taiwan-based Hota Industrial Manufacturing, a producer of automotive gears for companies, including Tesla. The company has plans to hire 350 employees and invest \$99 million in the state, with the possibility for future expansion.



Strategies

Strategy 1: Collaborate with educational institutions, trade schools, and vocational training centers to develop specialized programs and training initiatives tailored to the needs of the intelligent manufacturing sector.

Strategy 2: Develop a marketing strategy to promote New Mexico as a hub for intelligent manufacturing, highlighting the state's strengths, skilled workforce, and favorable business climate.

Strategy 3: Leverage Be Pro Be Proud tour to increase middle and high school students' awareness about the diverse career opportunities available in manufacturing.

Sector Planning Level: State





Aerospace



Sector Overview

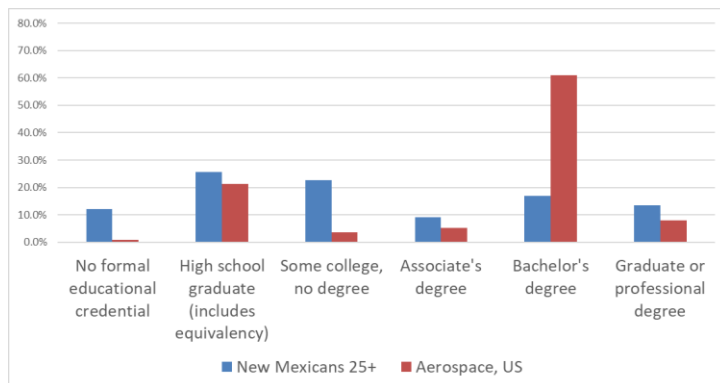
The aerospace sector is a dynamic industry that encompasses the design, development, manufacturing, and operation of aircraft, spacecraft, and related systems and equipment. Professionals in the aerospace sector include engineers, scientists, pilots, aerospace manufacturers, and other tradespeople. Employers include research organizations, government agencies, and private companies. The sector plays a critical role in advancing transportation, communication, national defense, and space exploration, contributing to scientific discovery and global connectivity while driving innovation and economic growth.



Labor Force Challenge Level: Moderate

Job opening data indicates some current demand. In addition, the mismatch between the industry entry requirements and the educational attainment in the state suggests that this workforce will require a longer on-ramp.

Educational Attainment of New Mexico Residents 25 Years and Older, Compared to Typical Education Needed to Enter Aerospace Occupations, Nationally



Sector Highlights

- As home to the world's first commercial spaceport, as well as multiple national research laboratories, Air Force bases, testing facilities and restricted air space, New Mexico is the place to be to grow aerospace businesses, jobs, and educational opportunities.
- According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, New Mexico has the nation's highest concentration of aerospace jobs per capita. 27,000 people, or 3.2 percent of the workforce, are tied to New Mexico's aerospace industry.
- New Mexico Space Valley Coalition is a statewide team of public and private entities that have come together to rocket forward the commercial space industry in New Mexico. The Coalition meets a national imperative to grow the commercial space industry, with an unmatched, holistic approach to space accessibility, commercialization, and exploration.
- Pathways to the Stars is a program designed to systematically connect and grow the talent pipeline by equitably infusing space industry involvement into programs that promote interest in STEM and space careers and amplifying educational opportunities in underserved communities.



Strategies

Strategy 1: Partner across the workforce system and with the Space Valley Coalition to build the aerospace workforce of the future.

Strategy 2: Work with employers to gain a deeper understanding of the trades needed for the aerospace sector, to align with the state's educational profile.

Strategy 3: Work with NMPED and to implement the Pathways to the Stars program to provide middle and high school students with the opportunity to explore career paths in STEM and aerospace.

Sector Planning Level: State





Biosciences



Sector Overview

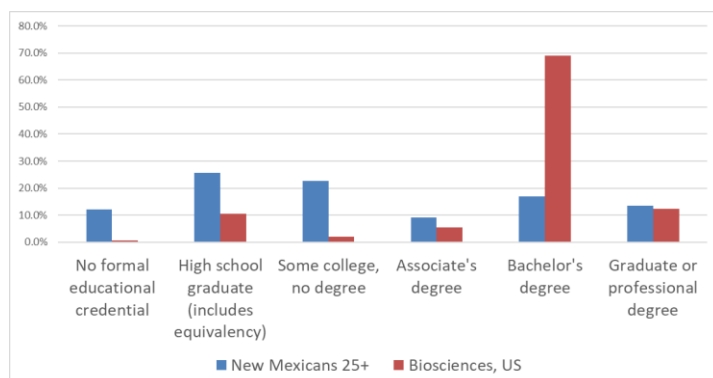
The biosciences sector encompasses the study, research, and application of biological systems, processes, and organisms. This sector includes fields such as biology, genetics, biochemistry, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, healthcare, agriculture, and environmental science. Professionals in the biosciences sector engage in diverse activities, including fundamental research, drug discovery and development, genetic engineering, and medical diagnostics.



Labor Force Challenge Level: Low to Moderate

Job opening data indicates some current demand. However, the mismatch between the industry entry requirements and the educational attainment in the state suggests that this workforce will require a longer on-ramp.

Educational Attainment of New Mexico Residents 25 Years and Older, Compared to Typical Education Needed to Enter Bioscience Occupations, Nationally



Sector Highlights

- In New Mexico, jobs in biosciences support nearly 18,900 jobs due to the direct effect employment multiplier of 2.49 – meaning that for every 1 direct bioscience job, another 2.49 jobs are created due to the indirect supply chain and induced employee spending effects.
- The New Mexico Bioscience Authority (NMBSA) seeks to increase awareness and support for New Mexico's biosciences sector by attracting capital investors, influencing policy, and assisting in infrastructure and business development. The NMBSA connects all necessary elements of Research & Development, Technology Transfer, Investment and Funding and Workforce.
- According to a report established by the Biotechnology Innovation Organization, New Mexico's bioscience industry has grown by 5 percent since 2016. There are 700+ biotech companies now working on human health, agricultural, and environmental issues around the state.



Strategies

Strategy 1: Promote interdisciplinary collaboration to drive innovation, particularly in areas where bioscience intersects with technology, data analytics, and engineering.

Strategy 2: Develop research and innovation hubs in partnership with universities, research institutions, and private enterprises to facilitate cutting-edge research and development in bioscience fields.

Strategy 3: Collaborate with educational institutions to create or enhance specialized bioscience programs and training initiatives, including internships and apprenticeships.

Sector Planning Level: State





Broadband Expansion



Sector Overview

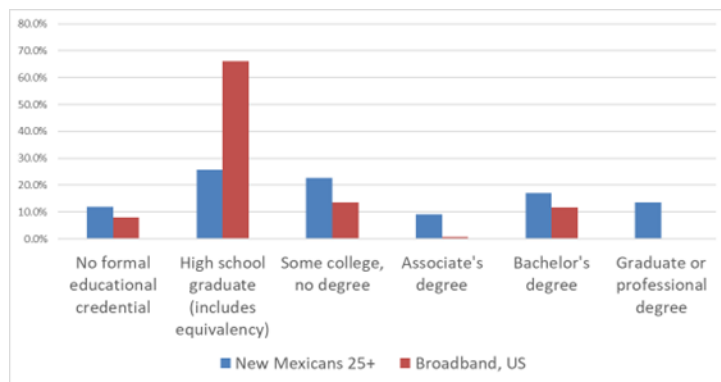
The broadband expansion sector is a dynamic field focused on extending and enhancing high-speed internet connectivity to underserved and unserved areas, both urban and rural. The sector's primary goal is to bridge the digital divide by deploying broadband infrastructure and services, enabling equitable access to the internet for all individuals and communities. Occupations aligned to the sector include engineers, network administrators, tower technicians, and many more.



Labor Force Challenge Level: Low to Moderate

The broadband expansion sector has a lower number of online advertised job openings compared to other priority sectors. However, with the recent investment and predicted expansion of this sector, the labor challenge level is trending towards moderate.

Educational Attainment of New Mexico Residents 25 Years and Older, Compared to Typical Education Needed to Enter Broadband Occupations, Nationally



Sector Highlights

- In 2020, a conservative analysis of State, ISP, and federal data identifies an estimated 196,000 locations in New Mexico that are unserved by broadband, or 20 percent of the State's approximately 940,000 homes and businesses. New Mexico ranks behind its neighboring states at 42nd in the nation for broadband coverage.
- New Mexico has received approximately \$1.4 billion in broadband funds from different federal agencies. This includes dollars to help connect rural areas, tribal nations, and other underserved communities to stable internet.
- To better coordinate broadband deployment efforts among different state entities, New Mexico established the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) and Connect New Mexico Council.
- OBAE developed a legislative package intended to break down inherent barriers through changes to existing statutes. 2023 was a successful legislative session for broadband initiatives, during which a slate of bills passed both houses, and the legislation was signed into law by Governor Lujan Grisham and took effect in July 2023.



Strategies

Strategy 1: Collaborate with the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion to develop targeted outreach, education, and training programs to grow the workforce and bridge the digital divide in underserved communities.

Strategy 2: Identify existing education and training programs, including registered apprenticeships, for related occupations

Strategy 3: Pursue federal and state funding opportunities related to BEAD and other broadband expansion initiatives.

Sector Planning Level:
State





Construction Industries



Sector Overview

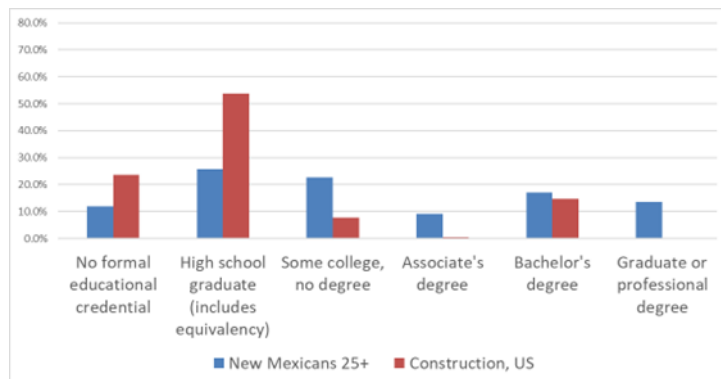
The construction sector is comprised of businesses and professionals involved in the planning, design, development, building, renovation, and maintenance of physical structures and infrastructure. Occupations aligned to this sector include residential and commercial construction, specialty trade contractors, plumbing, heating and cooling contractors, and many more.



Labor Force Challenge Level: Moderate to High

The construction sector currently presents a moderate number of online advertised job openings when compared to other priority sectors, however given the upcoming federally funded construction projects that will require a plethora of workers, the labor challenge level for this sector is trending towards high.

Educational Attainment of New Mexico Residents 25 Years and Older, Compared to Typical Education Needed to Enter Construction Occupations, Nationally



Sector Highlights

- NMDWS and Local Workforce Development Boards have partnered with the NM Departments of Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources; Transportation; and Environment to apply for federal grants to develop the infrastructure workforce.
- Transitioning military, Reservists, and Guardsmen are eligible to participate in the Helmets to Hardhats program, which seeks to match veterans with career opportunities in the construction industry.
- Be Pro Be Proud is a workforce development initiative that seeks to change the perceptions around technical careers through a mobile workshop tour that features virtual reality simulations that allow students to step into a life of a technical professional.
- In 2024, the Legislature created the Workforce Training & Apprenticeship Fund, which boosts funding of apprenticeship programs under the Apprenticeship Assistance Act and Public Works Apprenticeship and Training Act.



Strategies

Strategy 1: Expand building trades and other infrastructure-related pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships through diversified funding and increased outreach.

Strategy 2: Partner with tribal communities on conducting basic skills training that will enable communities to spend infrastructure money in a timely way.

Strategy 3: Create a sub-sector strategy specific to the public works construction workforce, at the state level.

Sector Planning Levels:

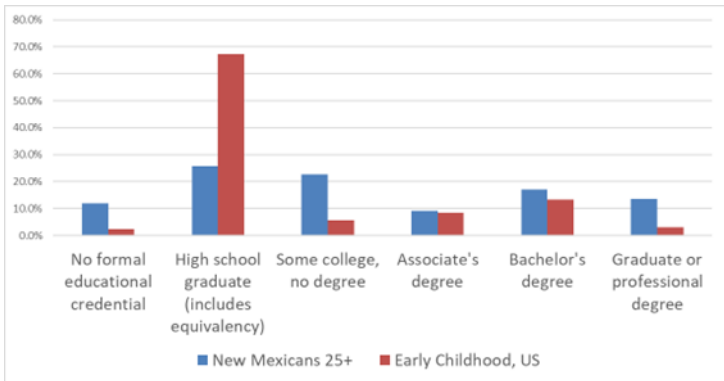


Regional

State for Public Works Subsector

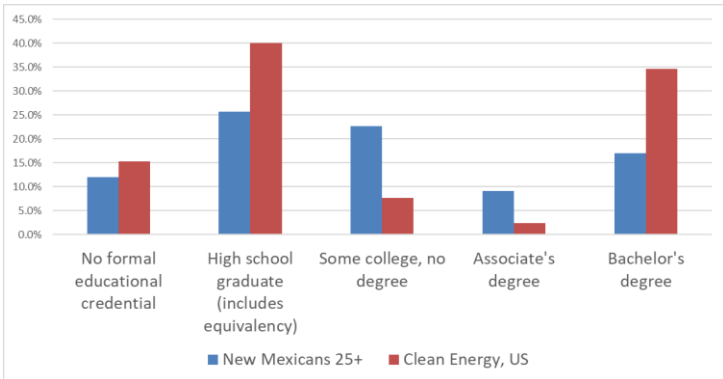


Early Childhood Education and Care

 Sector Overview	 Sector Highlights																					
The Early Childhood Education and Care sector is a comprehensive system of services and programs designed to support the holistic development, education, and well-being of young children, typically from birth to around eight years of age. Providers focus on nurturing a child's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development through age-appropriate activities, curriculum, and caregiving.	• To meet the FY25 early childhood education and care needs of New Mexican families, it is estimated that the workforce needs to grow by an additional 200-225 educators. • A \$110 million (104%) increase in funding for early childhood education and will be used by the NM Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) to increase the number of instructional hours in some programs, expand the number of seats in classrooms, and increase early childhood educators' pay. • As of July 2023, approximately 15,700 children were receiving pre-K services in community, school, or other settings in NM. The number of children needing pre-K is expected to grow by 40%. To support this growth the State will need to recruit more child care professionals. • According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are 100,000 fewer child care workers nationwide than there were before the COVID pandemic.																					
 Labor Force Challenge Level: Moderate																						
Given Gov. Lujan Grisham's historic investment in early childhood education, the State faces increasing demands for early educators and care providers. Because the field is a good match with our State population's educational profile, the labor challenge level for this sector is moderate. Educational Attainment of New Mexico Residents 25 Years and Older, Compared to Typical Education Needed to Enter Early Childhood Occupations, Nationally <table><tr><th>Education Level</th><th>New Mexicans 25+</th><th>Early Childhood, US</th></tr><tr><td>No formal educational credential</td><td>12.0%</td><td>2.0%</td></tr><tr><td>High school graduate (includes equivalency)</td><td>25.0%</td><td>68.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Some college, no degree</td><td>22.0%</td><td>5.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Associate's degree</td><td>10.0%</td><td>8.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Bachelor's degree</td><td>18.0%</td><td>12.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Graduate or professional degree</td><td>12.0%</td><td>3.0%</td></tr></table>	Education Level	New Mexicans 25+	Early Childhood, US	No formal educational credential	12.0%	2.0%	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	25.0%	68.0%	Some college, no degree	22.0%	5.0%	Associate's degree	10.0%	8.0%	Bachelor's degree	18.0%	12.0%	Graduate or professional degree	12.0%	3.0%	
Education Level	New Mexicans 25+	Early Childhood, US																				
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Bachelor's degree	18.0%	12.0%																				
Graduate or professional degree	12.0%	3.0%																				
 Strategies																						
Strategy 1: Develop and expand pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships for early childhood education to provide aspiring educators with essential practical training, mentorship, and direct classroom engagement. Strategy 2: Convene employers, including employers with successful child care (SFCC, UNM) programs, and ECECD to hear about challenges to establishing employer-based child care services and identify actionable solutions to address challenges.	Sector Planning Level: Regional 																					



Energy Transition and Climate Resilience

Sector Overview		Sector Highlights																	
This sector combines the need to prepare communities for the challenges arising from climate change with the need to adapt our state’s energy sources to mitigate those challenges. Although data is readily available to assess the workforce needs of the clean energy industry, less information is available to guide the discussion regarding climate resilience and readiness. Another dimension to this sector is the need to ensure that the workers and communities in energy industries that will be transforming are prepared for those changes and have good jobs and careers into which they can transition.		• In 2019, Governor Lujan Grisham signed the Energy Transition Act (ETA), which set a statewide renewable energy standard of 50 percent by 2030 for New Mexico investor-owned utilities and rural electric cooperatives and a goal of 80 percent by 2040. In addition, the ETA set zero-carbon resources standards for investor-owned utilities by 2045 and rural electric cooperatives by 2050. • In January 2019, Governor Lujan Grisham created the state’s Interagency Climate Change Task Force and included directives for agencies to incorporate climate mitigation and adaptation practices into their policies and operations. • In 2022, Federal Emergency Management Agency Building Resilient & Infrastructure Communities (BRIC) funding was awarded to New Mexico to support climate change adaptation planning and climate awareness outreach. • Since 2023, the NM Department of Workforce Solutions has administered the first ETA Displaced Worker Assistance Program, in connection with the closure of the San Juan Generating Station and Westmoreland coal mine. This program includes direct assistance, and assistance including a living stipend for laid-off workers who want to pursue training or an apprenticeship.																	
Labor Force Challenge Level: Low																			
The energy transition sector currently exhibits a lower number of online advertised job openings compared to other priority sectors. In addition, the state has a longer lead time to work with communities transitioning from oil and gas production economies. Educational Attainment of New Mexico Residents 25 Years and Older, Compared to Typical Education Needed to Enter Clean Energy Occupations, Nationally  <table><tr><th>Education Level</th><th>New Mexicans 25+</th><th>Clean Energy, US</th></tr><tr><td>No formal educational credential</td><td>12.0%</td><td>15.0%</td></tr><tr><td>High school graduate (includes equivalency)</td><td>25.0%</td><td>40.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Some college, no degree</td><td>22.0%</td><td>8.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Associate's degree</td><td>10.0%</td><td>2.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Bachelor's degree</td><td>18.0%</td><td>35.0%</td></tr></table>				Education Level	New Mexicans 25+	Clean Energy, US	No formal educational credential	12.0%	15.0%	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	25.0%	40.0%	Some college, no degree	22.0%	8.0%	Associate's degree	10.0%	2.0%	Bachelor's degree
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Bachelor's degree	18.0%	35.0%																	
Strategies		Sector Planning Levels: State																	
Strategy 1: Connect the rural, low-income, and vulnerable populations that work in the fossil fuel industries with the training and work opportunities needed to engage in next-generation industries, in partnership with other state agencies. Strategy 2: Work with community colleges and organizations to develop and deliver custom education and training to provide foundational skills to workers who will be displaced in the energy transition, including literacy, numeracy, test-taking and computer skills. Strategy 3: Partner with registered apprenticeship program sponsors to develop new programs specific to energy transition and climate resilience.																			



First Responders



Sector Overview

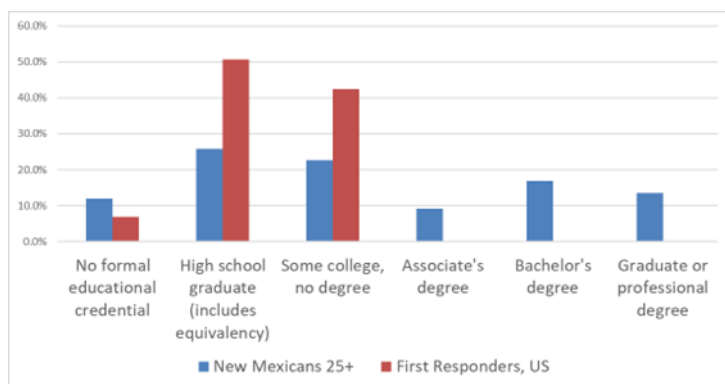
The first responder sector encompasses a range of occupations dedicated to providing immediate assistance and emergency services during crises and critical incidents. The sector includes paramedics and emergency medical technicians, firefighters, police officers, and other professions dedicated to preserving public safety, protecting lives, and mitigating the impact of emergencies and disasters in communities.



Labor Force Challenge Level: Moderate to High

The first responders sector indicates elevated demand for workers in this crucial realm of public safety and emergency response. The strong match between the educational attainment needed to enter this field and our state's general population suggests that these gaps may be more easily filled than in some other sectors.

Educational Attainment of New Mexico Residents 25 Years and Older, Compared to Typical Education Needed to Enter the Occupation of First Responder, Nationally



Sector Highlights

- Between FY12 and FY21, the number of certified law enforcement officers employed by municipal police departments, county sheriffs' offices, and state police grew by 1.8 % nationwide.
- In 2020, law enforcement agencies nationwide employed an average of 2.4 officers per 1,000 residents. At the beginning of 2021, New Mexico employed 2.2 officers per 1,000 residents. To reach the national rate, the state would need to add 408 more officers, which is more than it has employed at any point in recent history.
- Incremental increases in law enforcement officer pay do not appear to have significantly improved recruitment and retention. Between FY16 and FY21, the state invested \$12.4 million in salary increases, growing the average state officer's annual salary by 19%. New Mexico State Police force strength increased by just 0.5% in the same period.
- Nationwide, only 26% of firefighters and 31% of EMS professionals believe their department has a strong recruitment or retention plan; 55% of police officers say current efforts have not improved recruitment. In addition, 50% of police officers and 54% of EMS professionals plan to leave their jobs in the next 5 years.



Strategies

Strategy 1: Expand partnerships with paramedic licensure, law enforcement, and dispatch training programs to develop pre-apprenticeship programs for first responders and a standardized approach to funding uniforms and equipment.

Strategy 2: Participate in statewide women in law enforcement initiative to promote and support the recruitment, advancement, and retention of women in law enforcement.

Strategy 3: Partner with New Mexico Health Care Authority's Behavioral Health Services Division to improve access to mental health/well-being services for first responders, to improve retention.

Strategy 4: Support the development of a program that focuses on the active in-state and national recruitment of behavioral health professionals modeled after primary care recruitment.

Sector Planning Level:
Regional





Health Care, including Behavioral Health



Sector Overview

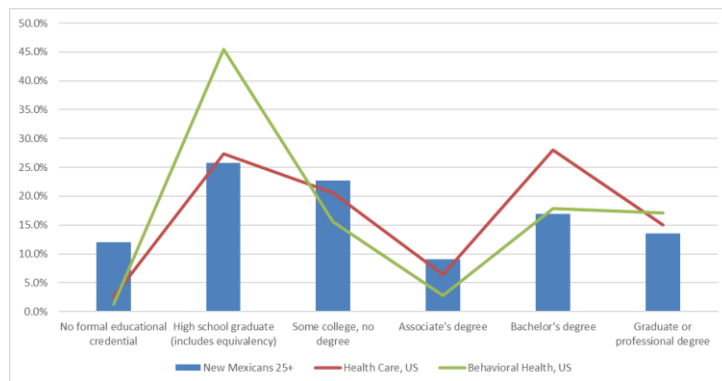
The health care sector encompasses a wide range of jobs and professions dedicated to the maintenance, improvement, and restoration of people's health and well-being. Professions aligned to this sector include physicians, behavioral health specialists, home health aides, nurses, social workers, public health specialists, and more.



Labor Force Challenge Level: High

The healthcare sector in New Mexico has the highest number of online advertised job openings compared to other priority sectors, highlighting the urgent and growing need for more healthcare professionals in the state.

Educational Attainment of New Mexico Residents 25 Years and Older, Compared to Typical Education Needed to Enter Healthcare and Behavioral Health Occupations, Nationally



Sector Highlights

- Estimates forecast a national primary care physician shortage of more than 37,500 by 2034 and the need for more than 3 million new registered nurses between 2016 and 2030.
- In New Mexico, there is an average of 5.04 primary care physicians per 10,000 population, meaning for each primary care physician, there are about 2,000 people to serve.
- According to the national 2021 Public Health Workforce Interest and Needs Survey, 16% of employees leaving the workforce departed due to COVID.
- 12% of the State's current nursing workforce is comprised of traveler nurses whose per-hour costs have more than doubled when compared to pre-COVID wages.
- Employment in the healthcare practitioners and technical occupational group in New Mexico is projected to add about 5,590 jobs (10.9% increase) from 2018 to 2028.
- About 1,240 total job openings for registered nurses will exist every year in New Mexico. More than 80% of those openings will be to replace workers who retired or left the occupation.



Strategies

Strategy 1: Engage in peer support programs to create a pathway for people with lived experience to enter the behavioral health and healthcare professions.

Strategy 2: Support the implementation of recommendations from the New Mexico Health Care Workforce Committee 2022 Annual Report.

Strategy 3: Use the healthcare modules in the Be Pro Be Proud program to increase middle and high school students' awareness about the diverse career opportunities available in healthcare.

Strategy 4: Support the development of a program that focuses on the active in-state and national recruitment of behavioral health professionals modeled after primary care recruitment.

Sector Planning Level: Regional





Natural Resource Management



Sector Overview

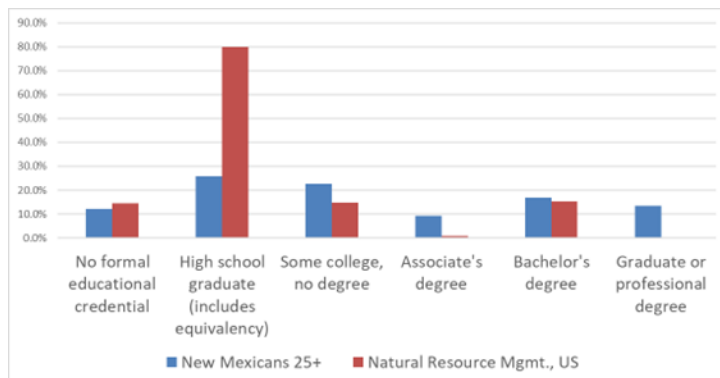
The natural resource management sector is a multidisciplinary field that encompasses the sustainable planning, utilization, conservation, and stewardship of Earth's natural resources. This sector is focused on the responsible management of renewable and non-renewable resources such as land, water, forests, minerals, wildlife, and ecosystems. Professions include: environmental scientists, conservationists, foresters, ecologists, policymakers, and land managers, who collaborate to ensure the long-term health and viability of natural resources.



Labor Force Challenge Level: Moderate

The natural resource management sector currently has a moderate number of online advertised job openings in comparison to other priority sectors, reflecting elevated demand for skilled professionals to oversee sustainable resource utilization and conservation efforts.

Educational Attainment of New Mexico Residents 25 Years and Older, Compared to Typical Education Needed to Enter Natural Resource Occupations, Nationally



Sector Highlights

- American Climate Corps, a new initiative announced by President Biden, seeks to train young people in high-demand skills for jobs in the clean energy economy. Members will participate in a paid training or service program focused on clean energy, including conserving our state's lands and waters, bolstering community resilience, advancing environmental justice.
- In its December 2022 report, Governor Lujan Grisham's Water Policy and Infrastructure Task Force identified growing the water workforce as one of the top five solutions for addressing problems in water infrastructure. The report states that apprenticeships and educational programs can help grow the water workforce to meet the demands for certified operators, staff, and volunteers.
- Uranium mining has left a legacy of environmental and groundwater contamination. The key constraints on developing a strong workforce to support uranium mine remediation are a combination of obtaining and maintaining specialized certifications, matching workers with jobs, retaining workers, and ensuring that educational institutions are collaborating and coordinating their efforts.



Strategies

Strategy 1: Collaborate on the execution of NM Environment Department's strategic plan for environmental reclamation, including assistance with establishing lower-threshold training requirements.

Sector Planning Level:
Regional





Sustainable and Value-Added Agriculture



Sector Overview

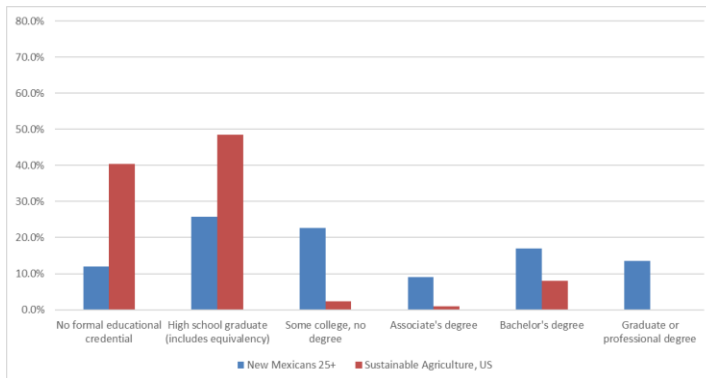
The sustainable agriculture sector is a specialized segment of agriculture that focuses on environmentally responsible and economically viable practices to enhance the value and quality of agricultural products, while ensuring long-term ecological and social sustainability. Value-added agriculture is the process of manufacturing or marketing processes that increase the value of agricultural commodities.



Labor Force Challenge Level: Low

Job opening data shows a moderate current demand for jobs in this sector, and industry entry requirements and the educational attainment in the state are a good match.

Educational Attainment of New Mexico Residents 25 Years and Older, Compared to Typical Education Needed to Enter Sustainable and Value-Added Occupations, Nationally



Sector Highlights

- New Mexico's Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Workforce Development (AWD) Program offers incentives to the state's agricultural businesses to hire interns. The AWD Program is intended to provide hands-on educational opportunities for students aspiring to careers in agriculture, as well as young or beginning farmers and ranchers.
- The Sustainability Studies program at the University of New Mexico works with numerous sustainability organizations (both for-profit and not-for-profit) in the greater Albuquerque area. The program provides opportunities for students to attend workshops, lectures and tours offered by community partners, and participate as volunteers, interns, and employees.
- New Mexico participates in the Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (WSARE) program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The program functions through competitive grants conducted cooperatively by farmers, ranchers, researchers and agricultural professionals to advance farm and ranch systems that are profitable, environmentally sound and good for communities. It is housed by New Mexico State University.



Strategies

Strategy 1: Explore options for expanding Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP) and diversify funding sources to support agriculture businesses with gaining the funding needed to attract and educate a skilled workforce.

Strategy 2: Partner with the New Mexico Department of Agriculture and education and training programs to help farmers develop the workforce needed to implement sustainable techniques.

Strategy 3: Collaborate with the New Mexico Economic Development Department to connect workforce programs with economic development initiatives related to agriculture.

Sector Planning Level: Regional

