CICERO ACTION

UTAH
Workforce Policy Fact Sheet

Utah is poised for significant economic growth, and strategic workforce policies are vital to harness the full potential of its labor force. Removing degree requirements from public sector roles and shifting towards skills-based hiring will enable employers to hire from a deeper and more qualified pool of candidates.

Snapshot of Utah's Workforce[1]

Available Workers:
44
Per 100 Jobs

Job Openings:
105,000

Unemployed Workers:
45,772

Unemployment Rate:
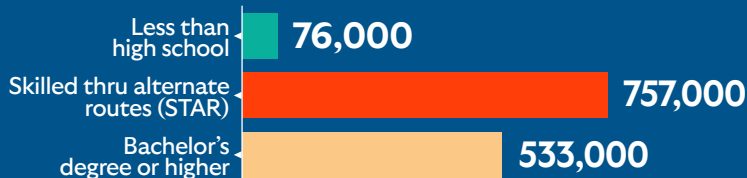**2.5%**

Labor Force Participation Rate:
69.8%

Quit Rate:
2.8%

Hiring Rate:
3.7%

Workforce by Education Attainment[2]

Education	Count
Less than high school	76,000
Skilled thru alternate routes (STAR)	757,000
Bachelor's degree or higher	533,000

Total State Workforce: **1.4M**

% of STARs in State Workforce: **55%**

Sources: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Opportunity@Work

Among the state's population, only **40.4% of White residents possess at least a bachelor's degree**, while the figures for **Black residents and Hispanic residents stand at 29% and 19.1%**, respectively.[3]

Existing Degree Requirements Reforms: NONE

Cicero Institute Policies

Cicero Institute has helped numerous states take executive action and pass legislation to remove degree requirements for many government jobs. As a result, government employers must justify whether degree requirements are essential to the role—such as a nurse—thereby preserving the integrity of a degree while removing limitations for qualified individuals who are ready to gain meaningful employment.

Benefits of Removing College Degree Requirements

EMPLOYEES:

Removing unnecessary degree requirements for specified middle-skilled roles will open up **meaningful employment opportunities** for non-degreed workers.

EMPLOYERS:

Employers will be able to hire **more qualified workers from a deeper pool** of candidates.

FINANCIALLY:

Removing degree requirements for state jobs will enable hiring managers to hire **more qualified candidates from a wider pool of talent that is currently being held back** simply due to a lack of a degree. Hiring more qualified candidates should in turn lead to more satisfied employees, contributing to lower turnover rates, and thus reducing onboarding and off boarding costs; all the while lowering the unemployment rate.

1. Ferguson, Stephanie, and Lindsay Cates. Understanding America's labor shortage: The most impacted states, January 2024. https://www.uschamber.com/workforce/the-states-suffering-most-from-the-labor-shortage?state=ut.

2. Opportunity@Work analysis of the 2021 1-year American Community Survey, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Note that some estimates may be less reliable than others due to small populations, pay special attention to population sizes when determining the reliability of estimates. Estimates in thousands. STAR segmentation is defined as: Forming STARs - STARs who can see smaller wage gains through limited employment pathways; Rising STARs - STARs who have several pathways into higher paying occupations; Shining STARs - STARs in high wage roles today..

3. Bureau, United States Census. "S1501 | Educational Attainment." Explore census data. Accessed February 19, 2024. https://data.census.gov/table?q=utah+population+by+education.

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