



MAWB Business Services/Economic Development Committee Minutes

December 9, 2021

Summary of Special Presentation

Cameron Macht shared a presentation from DEED's Labor Market Information Office on their recent Job Vacancy Survey. See slides. The unemployment rate is back to 3.5%, back to the same rate as March 2020 (pre-COVID). However, the workforce is down 85,000 workers since February 2020. There are many reasons why people have dropped out of the workforce. Minnesota currently has about 67.8% labor participation rate, which is still above the national average but below the state's pre-pandemic rate. There are currently about .6 jobseekers per job available – for context, there were about 8 job seekers per job available during the great recession in 2008. Median wage offer for all jobs has increased 4.3% since 2020 (note, there is a lag in the data available, so this number may be higher right now than the survey captures). [See slides for more information](#) and contact cameron.macht@state.mn.us with any additional questions or data requests. See also DEED LMI office article on [job vacancy details at the regional level](#).

Employer-Related Updates: Items Pertinent to Employers or Employer Services

- Economic Development Association of Minnesota (EDAM)
 - EDAM is sending out a survey soon to members; can share results with this committee.
- Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers (MAPCED)
 - Shared [recent article on the "Great Resignation"](#) and MinnPost article on the [impact of the worker shortage in greater Minnesota](#). Currently collecting a list from members about projects being funded by ARPA. Keeping watch on the ARP Flexibility Act, which is being debated in Congress – it would significantly expand eligible uses of funds. Will have a presentation later in December on this topic by a guest from NACo.
- State Agencies
 - DEED
 - Recently had the third meeting of the Minnesota Marketing Partnership. Shared [Racial Equity Dividends Index](#) – share with businesses.
 - DoLI
 - See [upcoming Pipeline events here](#). [Labor Education Advancement Program \(LEAP\) grants](#) have just been announced and are geared for community-based organizations. The goal is to provide funding that will facilitate the participation of people of color, Indigenous people, and women in registered apprenticeship programs. The fifth round of Youth Skills Training grants will open on January 18, 2022.
- Local Areas
 - Rural Minnesota CEP
 - Upcoming event will highlight services available for employers. News recently released regarding the [Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Project](#) which is expected to employ around 6,000 people for five years.
 - Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services (CMJTS)

- Ongoing job fairs; finding workers continues to be a challenge.
- Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council
 - Continuing to hear that businesses are overwhelmed in their need for workers. Some employers have been getting more involved in schools to try and recruit students. See flyers from Lac qui Parle Valley Career Fair and Worthington Career Fair – these events are in partnership with local schools.
- Ramsey County
 - [Inclusive Workplaces Cohort](#) is going well. They continue to receive positive feedback from employers about the program.
- Dakota-Scott
 - The area has been looking at I-WE but would like to take it in a slightly different direction. Continuing to hear frustrations from employers about being “ghosted” by prospective employees. Recently sent out a survey to jobseekers to hear what is frustrating about employers; will pull together feedback and share with employers in some way. More information to come.

Local area events/activities during Healthcare Month

Ramsey County is planning to do social media promotion during Healthcare Month. CMJTS is doing collaborations with local school districts. Their job fairs will also feature a greater percentage of healthcare employers in January. The DEED LMI office will be writing blogs about healthcare vacancies and have provided other data to DEED Communications to use in their media promotions for the month.