



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

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NEWS: Governor Shapiro Signs Executive Order to Expand Opportunity for Pennsylvanians Seeking a Career in Public Service & Make the Commonwealth the Best Employer in Pennsylvania

The Shapiro Administration has expanded opportunities for Commonwealth workers since Day One – emphasizing skills and experience in hiring, investing in mental health resources for employees, expanding internship and apprentice programs, making government more accessible, and more.

Governor Shapiro believes that state government's top priority should be delivering for Pennsylvanians – and this Executive Order will help the Commonwealth continue to create opportunity and build a competitive workforce that is representative of Pennsylvania.



Harrisburg, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** signed [Executive Order 2024-01](#), establishing the Hire, Improve, Recruit, Empower (HIRE) Committee to expand opportunity for Pennsylvanians seeking a career in public service, continue to build a more competitive Commonwealth workforce, and make state government the best place to work in the Commonwealth.

The Governor signed the Executive Order during the Commonwealth Job Fair, where over 40 state agencies set up recruitment tables with information on about 580 open Commonwealth positions for over 500 Pennsylvanians in attendance to learn more about exciting career opportunities in public service.

“Public service is a noble profession – and I am proud to serve alongside 80,000 Commonwealth employees who go to work every day to help their communities. Since my first day in office, we’ve worked to break down barriers and create real opportunities for Pennsylvanians who want to work in state government – but we have to do more to remain competitive in a challenging labor market and set an example for the private sector,” said **Governor Josh Shapiro**. “The Executive Order I am signing today will ensure the Commonwealth is a competitive, attractive, and fulfilling place to work – and we have a workforce that is representative of Pennsylvania as a whole and accessible to our residents. Whether you’ve just graduated at a recent commencement and you’re starting a new career or have been in the workforce for a while now – we want you to build your career with the Commonwealth.”

Since the start of his Administration, Governor Shapiro has created real opportunity for hardworking Pennsylvanians to obtain good-paying jobs. On his first full day in office, Governor Shapiro [announced](#) that 92 percent of state government jobs – about 65,000 positions – do not require a four-year college degree and [instructed](#) all state agencies under his jurisdiction to emphasize work experience in their hiring rather than arbitrary requirements – ensuring that every career path is treated with the same level of respect, regardless of whether or not it requires a college degree.

This Executive Order builds on the track record and will open more doors of opportunity for Commonwealth employees while ensuring we have a skilled, robust workforce for decades to come. Approximately 24 percent of the Commonwealth’s workforce is eligible for retirement in next 5 years in agencies under the Governor’s jurisdiction – and the HIRE Committee will work to ensure the Commonwealth can make progress on attracting the next generation of public servants, compete with other employers in a competitive labor market, recruit and hire for historically hard to fill jobs, and ensure the Commonwealth’s workforce is representative of the diverse backgrounds and beliefs of Pennsylvania’s residents.

Chaired by **Secretary of Administration Neil Weaver** and comprised of Cabinet secretaries and senior Administration officials, and the HIRE Committee will help to strengthen the Commonwealth’s recruitment, hiring, development, and retention of high-

performing employees by attracting younger generations, hiring for historically hard-to-fill jobs, and ensuring our workforce represents our residents.

“We need to do everything we can right now to attract the best and brightest to public service to lead our Commonwealth into the future. We want to hire Pennsylvanians from all backgrounds, beliefs, and walks of life, so that our workforce continues to represent our 13 million residents,” said **Secretary of Administration Neil Weaver**. “Through today’s Executive Order to create the HIRE Committee and our ongoing efforts around recruitment and hiring, we are positioning the Commonwealth to be a model employer and a destination for employees who want to make a difference through their work.”

To build a competitive workforce and become a model for other states and the private sector, the HIRE Committee will work with the **Office of Administration (OA)** and other Commonwealth agencies to:

- Develop a pilot program to create financial incentives to help recruit Commonwealth employees with non-English language proficiency for key roles where language proficiency is needed.
- Continuously build creative recruitment strategies for the Commonwealth’s most hard to fill jobs.
- Develop a mentorship and networking program to support recently discharged veterans entering or returning to Commonwealth employment.
- Collaborate with the PA Reentry Council to promote pathways to employment in state government for recently incarcerated Pennsylvanians who are returning to our communities as productive citizens.
- Create an inclusive workplace in state-owned buildings by directing an accessibility study of the Harrisburg Capitol Complex to improve mobility in and around the Capitol Complex for individuals with disabilities.
- Expand childcare options in state-owned buildings to support working parents.
- Expand the availability of free menstrual products in Commonwealth-owned restrooms.
- Continue efforts working with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to widen pathways to Commonwealth employment for individuals with disabilities.

- Provide employees with notice that they may use allotted sick leave to prioritize their mental health.

This Executive Order will also open new doors of opportunity for Pennsylvanians by affirming that the Commonwealth can hire non-United States citizens if they are legally authorized to work in the United States, orders OA to develop strategies to enhance state agencies' language access plans, and increase digital accessibility efforts.

Seven percent of Pennsylvania residents are foreign-born and 12 percent speak a language other than English – and by continuing to strengthen the Commonwealth's recruitment, hiring, and development of employees, the Commonwealth will serve as a model employer and will better meet the rapidly evolving needs of Pennsylvanians.

“With this Executive Order, the Shapiro Administration is letting Pennsylvanians know that our doors are open to everyone,” said **Norman Bristol Colón, Commonwealth Chief Diversity Officer**. “It's important that Pennsylvanians see themselves reflected in their state government – and the HIRE Committee's efforts will help the Commonwealth strengthen our workforce by making jobs more accessible, meaningful, and representative to help deliver better services for everyone.”

AFSCME Council 13 Administrator Mike Sukal and SEIU Local 668 President Steve Catanese joined the Governor for today's Executive Order signing. Together, AFSCME and SEIU Local 668 represent more than 36,000 Commonwealth employees.

“AFSCME is proud to partner with the Commonwealth on these efforts,” said **Mike Sukal, AFSCME Council 13 Administrator**. “They fall directly in line with our members' goals in the last set of contract negotiations, as well as AFSCME's Staff the Front Lines initiative to boost recruitment and retention in public service jobs.”

“We're excited to partner with the Governor in making Commonwealth worksites more inclusive and welcoming for new and existing staff,” said **Steve Catanese**, President of SEIU Local 668. “If we want to provide the best services for the citizens of Pennsylvania, it's vital we incentivize recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff. We look forward to working with Governor Shapiro and our partners in organized labor to make these initiatives a reality.”

The Governor was also joined by OA employee Neisser Ribera, an Information Technology Help Desk Apprentice who was recently recruited to work for the Commonwealth from Dauphin County Technical School.

“I believe the Commonwealth is a place where you can build yourself up to be the person you have always wanted to be,” said **Neisser Ribera, Commonwealth employee**. “It has given me a path to a career that fulfills my lifelong goals to work with technology and help others.”

The Shapiro Administration has expanded opportunities to those who want a career in public service – whether they are a recent college graduate or have years of relevant experience outside of the classroom. Since taking office, the Shapiro Administration has expanded opportunities for workers and invested in employees who serve our Commonwealth by:

- Removed the college credit requirement for Pennsylvanians who want to serve as [state troopers](#).
- [Expanded paid parental leave](#) to up to eight weeks following a qualifying birth, adoption, for foster care placement, an increase from the previous six weeks offered.
- [Enhanced work-life benefits](#) by expanding support services offered through the Commonwealth's State Employee Assistance Program (SEAP) to support a healthy work-life balance for Commonwealth employees.
- Invested in mental health and [educational](#) resources for our employees and their families.
- Expanded [internship, fellowship, and apprenticeship](#) programs to bring more people into state government to create new pipelines for talent.

The Commonwealth is one of the largest employers in Pennsylvania – and in September 2023, the Commonwealth was ranked among [the top employers in Pennsylvania](#) by workers in a survey conducted by [Forbes](#) and was [ranked among the top employers](#) in the nation by college graduates in July 2023.

Pennsylvanians interested in a career in public service with the Commonwealth can easily search among the thousands of open positions that don't require a four-year degree on [OA's website](#).

Pennsylvanians can also explore internships, fellowships, apprenticeships, and other open opportunities and careers in state government on OA's ['Launch Your Career' webpage](#).

Read Executive Order 2024-01, Hire, Improve, Recruit, Empower Committee, [here](#).

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