

# Workforce Development & Employment Equity in Albuquerque

**The City of Albuquerque's Economic Development Department (EDD) recognizes that lower-income residents and residents of color have been disproportionately impacted by unemployment during the pandemic.**

Local small businesses have also been harmed disproportionately by the economic crisis, and essential businesses have needed additional resources due to higher demand for their services. To support both the local workforce and Albuquerque's most vulnerable employers, the EDD is creating pathways that connect the two groups. The EDD will act as a hub and convener to align the workforce and economic development systems to help build a more dynamic and equitable economy.



## Purpose

- Speed up the economic recovery from the pandemic
- Reduce unemployment
- Chart coherent pathways to higher-paying jobs for lower-income workers
- Support small, economically vulnerable businesses
- Improve collaboration and alignment in Albuquerque's workforce development system to ensure access to economic opportunities for lower-income people
- Identify opportunity gaps to drive employment equity, racial equity, and economic inclusion
- Bolster the early childhood education industry and workforce

## Contact Details

For questions related to the EDD's workforce development initiatives, contact Mark Zientek, the Workforce Development Liaison, by email:

- **Email:** [mzientek@cabq.gov](mailto:mzientek@cabq.gov)



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## Primary Tactics

**A WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT LIAISON**, a first-of-its-kind position at the City, has been established in the EDD's Small Business Office. This person will:

- **Coordinate efforts among education, workforce, and governmental partners** to provide job training and skill-based job placement that benefit lower-income individuals and small businesses
- **Help unemployed and underemployed workers** find paths to high-quality jobs during and after the COVID-19 crisis
- **Develop opportunities** for people to move from low-wage into living-wage jobs
- **Collaborate with workforce development partners and businesses** on recovery solutions that will help businesses safely remain open and preserve jobs, or re-open and bring employees back to work
- **Host virtual training events and small group workshops** when it's safe to do so
- **Lead Job Training Albuquerque** efforts to provide paid job training opportunities and skill-based job placements that benefit lower-income workers

## **AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION NAVIGATOR**

will assist the Workforce Development Liaison in:

- **Constructing career pathways** to higher-quality jobs for early childhood education and care professionals
- **Providing job and career counseling** to unemployed and underemployed individuals to help them advance in their career trajectory
- **Engaging partners** to assist in aligning resources for industry practitioners and job seekers

The City of Albuquerque's Economic Development Department is a recipient of a W.K. Kellogg Foundation grant that furthers the City's efforts to create a more equitable economy through innovative workforce development programming.

## Target Workforce Sectors

- **YEAR ONE OF THE GRANT** will emphasize supporting workers and businesses in the early childhood education industry. This sector, which emerged as "essential" during the pandemic, is largely owned, operated, and staffed by women of color and provides a service that is critical to the rest of the economy.
- **YEAR TWO OF THE GRANT** will focus on at least one other high-growth career sector and apply the learnings from the Year One pilot in early childhood education. Possibilities include health care, film, or other high-growth sectors in the region that provide living-wage jobs.

