

# WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

## 2021 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

### Senate Bill 47

FISCAL  
NOTE

BY SENATORS HAMILTON, BALDWIN, AND NELSON

[Introduced February 10, 2021; referred  
to the Committee on Economic Development; and  
then to the Committee on Finance]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,  
 2 designated §5B-1-11, relating to creating the New Worker Relocation Incentive Program;  
 3 providing an incentive for workers to move to West Virginia; establishing conditions for the  
 4 incentive; defining terms; and requiring rulemaking.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

**ARTICLE 1. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE.**

**§5B-1-11. New Worker Relocation Incentive Program.**

1 (a) The Department of Commerce shall design and implement a New Worker Relocation  
 2 Incentive Program to award incentive grants to new workers as provided in this section and  
 3 subject to the policies and procedures the department adopts to implement the program.

4 (b) A new worker may be eligible for a \$5,000 grant under the program for qualifying  
 5 expenses.

6 (c) The secretary shall propose rules for legislative approval in accordance with §29A-3-1  
 7 et seq. of this code to implement this section, including, but not limited to:

8 (1) Adopting procedures for implementing the program, which shall include a simple  
 9 certification process to certify new workers and qualifying expenses;

10 (2) Promoting awareness of the program, including through coordination with relevant  
 11 trade groups and by integration into the department’s economic development marketing  
 12 campaigns;

13 (3) Awarding grants on a first-come, first-served basis beginning January 1, 2022, subject  
 14 to available funding; and

15 (4) Adopting measurable goals, performance measures, and an audit strategy to assess  
 16 the utilization and performance of the program.

17 (d) As used in this section:

18 “New worker” means an individual who on or after January 1, 2022:

19 (A) Becomes a full-time resident of this state;

20 (B) Becomes a full-time employee of a business domiciled or authorized to do business  
21 in this state;

22 (C)(i) Is employed in an occupation identified by the Department of Labor in its 2016–2026  
23 Long Term Occupational Projections as one of the top occupations at each level of educational  
24 attainment typical for entry; or

25 (ii) Who the department determines should otherwise receive an incentive grant under the  
26 program because the worker possesses exceptional education, skills, or training or due to other  
27 extraordinary circumstances; and

28 (D) Whose gross wage for the position equals or exceeds:

29 (i) One hundred sixty percent of the state minimum wage; or

30 (ii) If the employer is located in a labor market area in which the average annual  
31 unemployment rate is higher than the average annual unemployment rate for the state, 140  
32 percent of the state minimum wage.

33 “Qualifying expenses” means the actual costs that a new worker incurs for one or more of  
34 the following:

35 (A) Relocation expenses, which may include closing costs for a primary residence, rental  
36 security deposit, first month’s rent payment, and other expenses established in the department’s  
37 guidelines; and

38 (B) Expenses necessary for a new worker to perform his or her employment duties,  
39 including connectivity costs, specialized tools and equipment, and other expenses established in  
40 the department’s guidelines.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create the New Worker Relocation Incentive Program. The bill provides an incentive, up to \$5,000, for workers to move to West Virginia. The bill establishes conditions for the incentive, defines terms, and requires rulemaking.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.