

Community Health Worker Apprenticeship

Trailhead Institute alongside several partners in the Colorado Public Health Workforce Collaborative (The Collaborative) are building out specific career and educational pathways for public health in Colorado. This includes a unique opportunity to explore apprenticeships in public health, specifically **community health worker apprenticeships** for the first time in the state.

Colorado has seen incredible turnover in public health leadership and staffing due to the pressure and stress brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. The community health worker apprenticeship aims to build the bench of public health workers in the state while providing a proven value to employers. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, research shows that more than 94% of apprentices remain employed six months after completing their programs and contribute to substantial increased productivity and greater front-line innovation in the workplace. In addition to alleviating senior-level employees from entry-level tasks, apprentices gain invaluable on-the-job training, increase staff retention overall and create a pipeline of skilled workers who are well-versed in the needs of the employer¹.

Working with the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Trailhead has received approval for the community health worker apprenticeship to receive COVID Disaster Relief Fund reimbursement from the U.S. Department of Labor, providing an incentive to employers through a wage reimbursement of \$15,000 per eligible apprentice – about half the wages due to an apprentice. In addition, there are other funds that can likely be applied for as well to further lessen the burden on employers, including partnerships with community colleges.

Community Health Worker Apprenticeship Eligibility Requirements:

- The community health worker apprenticeship is now eligible to receive COVID Disaster Relief Fund reimbursement from the U.S. Department of Labor through 2022
- Each apprenticeship is customized to the employer within the community health worker apprenticeship competency framework and must last a minimum of 2,000 hours or one year of full-time employment
- Any employer who hosts an apprentice under this registered apprenticeship occupation will receive \$15,000 in wage reimbursement

Wages & Benefits:

- The employer must pay the apprentice any wage above the minimum wage and offer benefits as offered to employees in the same class
- The wage must have one wage progression over the course of the apprenticeship
- The wage progression can occur at any point during the apprenticeship and for any amount
- Employer works with a community college, or other partners, to determine job related training

Available Administrative Support:

- Employers may choose to act solely as the employer or as both the employer and sponsor for the community health worker apprenticeship
- Trailhead is available to serve as the apprenticeship sponsor for participating employers. As the sponsor, Trailhead would assume responsibility for record keeping with U.S. Department of Labor, relieving the administrative burden on the employer

¹ U.S. Department of Labor. (2020, September 18). U.S. Department of Labor Announces Campaign to Share the Benefits Of Apprenticeships with Job Seekers and Employers: U.S. Department of Labor. U.S. Department of Labor. <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/eta/eta20200918#:~:text=More%20than%2090%20percent%20of,employment%20six%20months%20after%20completion.>