



September 25, 2024

STATE MODEL EXECUTIVE ORDER | Center for the American Worker &
America First Governors' Council

PROMOTING SKILLS-BASED HIRING FOR PUBLIC SECTOR JOBS

PURPOSE OF THIS EXECUTIVE ORDER

- Degree inflation—adding educational requirements to jobs that were previously open to any applicants with the necessary skills—has undermined labor productivity, delayed workers' entrance into the workforce, and saddled millions of Americans with student loan debt.
- Transitioning from degree-based hiring to skills-based hiring will help stop unnecessary and costly degree inflation, better align modern workforce needs, and expand access to job opportunities for all Americans.
- This model executive order for governors, based on South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem's Executive Order 2023-05, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy's Executive Order No. 327, and Ohio Governor Mike DeWine's Executive Order 2023-10D, removes unnecessary degree requirements from public sector jobs and empowers all of a state's citizens to pursue public service.
- Governors in Alaska, California, Colorado, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Virginia have issued similar orders, and legislators in Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Missouri, Tennessee, and Utah have codified the practice. In total, 22 states have taken some steps to limit unnecessary degree requirements for jobs, and private sector companies like Walmart, IBM, and Accenture have prioritized skills-based recruitment strategies instead of focusing on college credentials.

WHEREAS, it is the mission of the State of **[INSERT STATE]** to promote a strong workforce that is reflective of the talent and potential of all its citizens; and

WHEREAS, conventional hiring methods often overstress formal educational credentials at the cost of practical skills and experience; and



WHEREAS, qualified citizens who lack conventional credentials face obstacles to employment despite possessing valuable skills; and

WHEREAS, many citizens of **[STATE]** develop critical workforce skills from a variety of experiences outside of a four-year college degree, including prior work experience, apprenticeship programs, career and technical certificates and degrees, military service, and many other methods of qualification; and

WHEREAS, a nimble and efficient state government requires flexibility and innovation to meet our state's workforce needs and fully serve the citizens of **[STATE]**; and

WHEREAS, skills-based hiring will enable the State of **[INSERT STATE]** to identify and engage with a broader range of talent, provide opportunities for those without a four-year degree to contribute meaningfully to the state's workforce, and deliver better services for residents; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the State of **[INSERT STATE]** to build upon this approach and ensure that its workforce remains competitive and innovative by recognizing the value of various types of education, training, and practical experience; and

WHEREAS, concentrating on skills instead of credentials can help address labor shortages and skills gaps in the economy.

ACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE ORDER

NOW THEREFORE, I, **[INSERT GOVERNOR]**, Governor of the State of **[INSERT STATE]**, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of this State, do hereby order and direct the following:

1. For any current and future job posting for an executive branch agency position that requires an undergraduate or graduate degree, **[INSERT STATE DEPARTMENT OR GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL]** shall review and consider whether the position necessitates such a degree to perform the job duties.
 - a. If a degree is necessary to perform the job duties, **[INSERT RELEVANT STATE DEPARTMENT OR GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL]** shall state the reasons for the requirement and identify why relevant work



experience, skills, or competency-based training requirements cannot substitute for the required degree.

- b. If a degree is not necessary to perform the job duties, then the job posting shall clearly state that no degree is required for the position.
2. Any state employee responsible for hiring shall give due consideration to the work or life experience of an applicant during the selection process, such as prior work experience, apprenticeship program participation and completion, career and technical certificates and degrees, military service, or any other valid qualification to determine if the applicant is likely to be sufficiently prepared to perform job duties. **[INSERT STATE DEPARTMENT OR GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL]** shall ensure that all state agencies, departments, boards, and commissions are complying with the provisions of this executive order and periodically audit such compliance.
3. **[INSERT STATE DEPARTMENT]** shall develop guidance and strategies for agencies to implement skills-based hiring practices, including:
 - a. Providing training and resources for agencies on incorporating skills-based hiring practices into their recruitment strategies;
 - b. Partnering with **[INSERT STATE DEPARTMENT]** to integrate work-based learning models, such as apprenticeships, into agency skills-based hiring practices;
 - c. Developing a skills-based selection plan template for agencies to adapt and utilize; and
 - d. Establishing a data-driven, evidence-based approach to evaluate the progress and efficacy of skills-based hiring practices.
4. **[INSERT STATE DEPARTMENT]** shall collaborate and liaise with the leadership of **[INSERT STATE]**'s Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs and establish a partnership with those programs to identify and recruit CTE students and recent graduates for vacant positions in state agencies, departments, boards, and commissions within the executive branch.
5. **[INSERT PROPER DEPARTMENT]** shall provide a report to the Governor detailing the results of the job classification review and any recommendations for further action within 180 days of the issuance of this Executive Order.
6. Nothing in this Order shall be construed to confer any legal rights upon entities whose activities are regulated by state agencies; be construed to create a private right of action on behalf of any such regulated



entities; or be used as a basis for legal challenge to rules, approvals, permits, licenses, or other action or inaction by a state agency. Nothing in this Order shall be construed to supersede any federal, state, or local law or to apply to any job posting where performing certain duties without a required license, degree, or similar certification would be illegal under the laws of **[STATE]**.

IN WITNESS THEREOF AND SIGNATURES

This Executive Order shall become effective upon its signing and shall remain in full force and effect until amended or rescinded by further executive orders.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and cause the Great Seal of the State of **[INSERT STATE]** to be affixed this **[INSERT DATE]**, in the year of our Lord **[INSERT YEAR]**.

