

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019

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HOUSE BILL 1176

Short Title: COVID-19/Create Temp. Jobs Statewide/Funds. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Garrison and Willingham (Primary Sponsors).

For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

May 26, 2020

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FROM THE CORONAVIRUS RELIEF RESERVE TO ENHANCE PANDEMIC HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES AND TO CREATE TEMPORARY JOBS TO FIGHT COVID-19 AND MAKING TIME-LIMITED CHANGES TO THE EMPLOYMENT SECURITY LAWS TO HELP PEOPLE NEEDING HELP AND TO GET PEOPLE BACK TO WORK.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. The State Controller shall create the Pandemic Safety and Temporary Jobs Fund (Safety and Jobs Fund) in the General Fund to provide funding for the immediate creation of time-limited employment opportunities at public entities across North Carolina that will fund the hiring of employees whose services are substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the pandemic. The Safety and Jobs Fund is a special fund to be administered by the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) to implement provisions of this act. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, including Section 2.1 of S.L. 2020-4, the State Controller shall transfer from the General Fund, Coronavirus Relief Reserve (Reserve), to the Safety and Jobs Fund established by this act the sum of five hundred million dollars (\$500,000,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated from the Safety and Jobs Fund to the OSBM the sum of five hundred million dollars (\$500,000,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2019-2020 fiscal year to be allocated as provided in Section 3 of this act. The Safety and Jobs Fund appropriation will not revert on June 30, 2020. Funds will remain available to be granted to public entities until December 30, 2020.

SECTION 3. The OSBM shall allocate funds from the Safety and Jobs Fund as follows:

(1a) The sum of \$500,000,000 in the form of grants to be spent by the public entities listed in subdivision (1b) of this section as authorized under the federal CARES Act (i) for pandemic health and safety measures, (ii) to create temporary employment opportunities that are substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the pandemic, and (iii) to provide teleworking and paid sick leave opportunities for current public employees. The OSBM shall determine a formula and protocols for making job-creation grants that achieve the following requirements:

- a. Compensation for these positions will be at least \$25,000 per year, annualized.
- b. Positions will last for a time-limited period of six to 12 months.



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- 1 c. Rate of pay established for these positions should be calculated at
- 2 eighty percent (80%) of the average pay for the employer's same or
- 3 similar jobs for full-time employees.
- 4 d. Funds are available to all 100 counties.
- 5 e. The unemployed and underemployed receive priority consideration.
- 6 f. Positions will not displace or supplant others already employed by the
- 7 employer.
- 8 g. Up to 20,000 participant job slots will be created.
- 9 (1b) To the following public entities eligible for grants:
- 10 a. Counties, cities, and other local political subdivisions of the State.
- 11 b. Local boards of education, local community colleges, The University
- 12 of North Carolina, and the Community Colleges System Office.
- 13 c. Public hospitals.
- 14 d. Public libraries.
- 15 e. Public health departments.
- 16 f. Sheriffs' departments.
- 17 g. Police departments.
- 18 h. Other public entities determined eligible by the OSBM.
- 19 (1c) With strict guidelines to achieve adherence to the requirements of the federal
- 20 CARES Act.

21 **SECTION 4.** Notwithstanding any provision of Chapter 96 of the General Statutes
22 to the contrary, the Department of Commerce, Division of Employment Security (DES), is
23 granted maximum flexibility in determining eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits
24 during the coronavirus pandemic to assist the unemployed and to help individuals return to
25 suitable work. This flexibility shall be liberally construed.

26 **SECTION 5.** This act is effective when it becomes law. Section 4 of this act expires
27 December 31, 2020.