

Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet Strategic Plan (2025)

The Education and Labor Cabinet was created on July 1, 2022, pursuant to Senate Bill 180, which was enacted by the 2022 General Assembly and signed into law by Gov. Andy Beshear. The Cabinet operates under the authority of KRS 151B.015, KRS 12.020 and KRS 12.250.

The Cabinet consists of the Office of the Secretary, Department of Workplace Standards, Department of Workers' Claims, Office of Unemployment Insurance, Kentucky Unemployment Insurance Commission, Office of Educational Programs, Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives, Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and the Department for Disability Determination Services.

The DWD includes the following units: Career Development Office, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Office of Industry and Apprenticeship Services, Office of Adult Education, Division of Technical Assistance, and the Office of the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board. The Kentucky Apprenticeship Council is attached to the DWD for administrative purposes only.

The following agencies are attached to the Office of the Secretary for administrative purposes: Early Childhood Advisory Council, Governor's School for Entrepreneurs Program, Governor's Scholars Program, Board of the Kentucky Center for Statistics, and the Foundation for Adult Education.

The following agencies are attached to the Cabinet for administrative purposes: Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; Board of Directors for the Kentucky Center for School Safety; Kentucky Educational Television (KET); Kentucky Environmental Education Council; Foundation for Adult Education; State Labor Relations Board; Kentucky Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission; Kentucky Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board; Kentucky Commission on Proprietary Education; Kentucky Work Ready Skills Advisory Committee; Kentucky Geographic Education Board; Kentucky Employers' Mutual Insurance Authority; Workers' Compensation Nominating Committee; and the Workers' Compensation Funding Commission.

The Education and Labor Cabinet is charged with primary responsibility for the workforce development system in the Commonwealth and, as such, houses the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) and the Office of the KWIB, which facilitates the Board's directives. The KWIB is the state workforce development board and serves in a strategic advisory role to the Governor by providing business-driven direction for the Commonwealth in setting the vision for workforce development. The Board, led by business and assisted by government, labor, education, and nonprofits, has established a strategic plan to ensure Kentucky continues to grow and lead in

economic resilience through workforce development. This strategic plan contains four primary goals: employer engagement and success; education attainment; workforce participation; and organizational and resource alignment. Kentucky's workforce vision is to create a workforce development system that is value-driven for employers, aligns education with industry demands, prepares Kentuckians for the future of work, and drives economic development.

The four primary goals identified by the KWIB are at the core of the work the Education and Labor Cabinet carries out on a daily basis. The Cabinet serves all Kentuckians by providing workforce information and analysis while connecting Kentuckians with employers, businesses, education, state agencies, and the private sector resources they need. We also connect students with post-secondary education and training to help them achieve career success.

The Cabinet also administers Kentucky's workplace standards and workers' compensation laws through education, mediation, adjudication, and enforcement, which promotes fair compensation, and safe, healthy, quality working environments for employees and employers. Vocational rehabilitation services are provided to Kentucky's disabled community to assist them remaining in or entering Kentucky's workforce.

Cabinet resources also assist in the development of the statewide public libraries system; provide services for the deaf and hard of hearing community; issue accurate and timely social security disability decisions to individuals with disabilities unable to work; and provide unemployment benefits to qualified applicants.

Fulfilling the Cabinet's vision and mission promotes economic development while simultaneously protecting, sustaining, and advancing Kentucky's working families. The Education and Labor Cabinet plays a vital role in ensuring Kentucky is a desirable place for all to work, thrive, and succeed.

Vision

The Education and Labor Cabinet fosters opportunities for lifelong learning, training, and career services while protecting the well-being of Kentucky's workforce.

Mission

Educate – Promote early childhood through 12th grade, postsecondary education, adult education, and credentialed training to provide lifelong opportunities for Kentuckians.

Encourage – Use of resources and data to improve the prosperity of Kentucky's workforce.

Employ – Actively engage employers and drive Kentucky’s workforce system by creating career opportunities, removing employment barriers, and supporting employer success.

Enforce – Create a culture of accountability to promote best practices, fairness, and compliance with Kentucky's wage and hour, worker safety and health, and workers’ compensation requirements.

ELC Core Values

Accountability: Accept responsibility for our actions by being ethically, fiscally, and professionally responsible in carrying out our duties. Welcome feedback and use this information for continuous improvement.

Transparency: Promote public confidence and trust by continuously improving the way we communicate accurate information and data.

Collaboration: Leverage the abilities of our agencies and employees through a collaborative approach to problem-solving and project development.

Continuous Improvement: Dedicate time and resources to performing our duties to the best of our abilities while promoting innovation and systematic improvement to ensure the highest levels of organizational efficiency and performance.

Customer Service: Work pro-actively on behalf of our customers while being courteous, respectful, and professional. Put our customers at the center of all policies and service delivery decisions.

Integrity: Adhere to the highest standards of public service by performing our duties ethically, impartially, professionally, and consistently while demonstrating commitment to the cabinet’s mission.

ELC Goals and Objectives

GOAL 1: DELIVERY OF OPERATIONS: Deliver workforce services in a flexible, seamless manner to engage customers and effectively connect job supply and demand.

Objective 1.1: Ensure all workforce partners work collaboratively to deliver services and agree upon shared workforce outcomes through a unified business plan.

Objective 1.2: Modernize and utilize technological platforms to connect agency information systems to improve transparency and to provide consistent case management, performance reporting, and data sharing.

Objective 1.3: Leverage internal and external funding to ensure comprehensive support services are available to all customers.

GOAL 2: EDUCATION & WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT: Align education and workforce programs with labor market demands to connect job creators with qualified employees and prepare Kentuckians for productive employment.

Objective 2.1: Align agency resources to support high-demand degree and credential attainment.

Objective 2.2: Develop partnerships and incentives to encourage lifelong learning and career development.

Objective 2.3: Increase post-secondary degree and credential attainment in high-demand sectors.

GOAL 3: ADMINISTER WORKPLACE STANDARDS, WORKERS' COMPENSATION, DISABILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES AND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE: Protect Kentucky's workforce by implementing programs in an impartial and effective manner.

Objective 3.1: Effectively communicate information to Kentuckians ensuring they have the knowledge to establish safe, healthy, and quality working environments and information necessary to access available benefits.

Objective 3.2: Identify technologies to develop, expand, and improve services.

Objective 3.3: Ensure staff are competently trained to ensure they can educate, mediate, adjudicate, administer, and enforce the statutory requirements.

GOAL 4: RESOURCE ALIGNMENT: Align internal and external resources to ensure efficient allocation across programs and initiatives.

Objective 4.1: Utilize shared data across the Cabinet for decision-making processes and efficiencies.

Objective 4.2: Ensure all funds are used to their greatest advantage.

Objective 4.3: Identify alternative means of providing Cabinet services.

Goal 5: SECURE DATA: Engage in efficient practices while securing and preserving the privacy of data received or published and other personal information.

Objective 5.1: Develop a privacy plan for implementing applicable privacy controls.

Objective 5.2: Update and review privacy and security plans, policies and procedures.

Objective 5.3: Ensure staff are continually trained in security plans, procedures and policies.

GOAL 6: ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH: Leverage new and existing strategic partnerships and innovative communication to engage and support all Cabinet programs and initiatives.

Objective 6.1: Develop a communications plan that promotes all Cabinet programs and initiatives.

Objective 6.2: Implement accessible, digital outreach strategies to promote resources to target populations.

Objective 6.3: Develop outreach strategies that promote resources available to all Kentuckians.