

# Texas Workforce Press Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## *Texas Back to Work* Offers \$15 Million to Texas Employers Incentives available for hiring out-of-work Texans

AUSTIN – Texas employers can receive monetary incentives for hiring unemployed workers under a two-year, \$15 million program promoted by Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst and funded by the Legislature last session. *Texas Back to Work* offers employers subsidized-wage reimbursement, retention bonuses and other incentives for hiring qualified out-of-work Texans, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) announced today.

“Texas employers are standing strong during tough economic times. Businesses, small and large, can earn *Texas Back to Work* incentives to expand their operations and offer new opportunities to unemployed Texans,” said Lt. Gov. Dewhurst.

*Texas Back to Work* is available to employers through the 28 Texas local workforce development boards, which also provide employers with workforce recruitment assistance, pre-screening of qualified applicants and training programs. More than 1.8 million customers were served in more than 240 workforce centers across Texas last year.

“We will help people get back to work by helping employers defray part of the cost of wages and on-the-job training,” said TWC Chairman Tom Pauken.

Through the new program, some employers who hire people receiving unemployment benefits can receive a portion of the new employees’ wages for a set period of time. Another possible incentive would provide employers with up to \$2,000 in wage-retention bonuses if they continue to employ the formerly out-of-work employees for at least 120 days.

“Valuable programs like *Texas Back to Work* exemplify the progressive vision of our leaders and make Texas a great place to do business,” said Will Newton, Texas Executive Director, National Federation of Independent Business.

Employers interested in participating should contact their local workforce development boards to learn about all options available in their areas and to help put *Texas Back to Work*. Employers also are encouraged to take advantage of WorkInTexas.com, TWC’s online job matching Web site where more than 250,000 employers already are registered to post job openings and find great employees. Local workforce board contact information can be found on the TWC Web site at <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/news/txback2work.pdf> or by calling 512-463-8556.

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Here is what employers across the state are saying about the *Texas Back to Work* program:

- “*Texas Back to Work* allows our workforce to diversify to populations that have previously been untapped, while also providing flexibility and allowing us discretion in fulfilling our growing and changing needs.” – *Tory Parker, Vice President of Manufacturing, Lauren Engineers & Construction Inc.*
- “The *Texas Back to Work* initiative has provided S&B Engineering, our partnering companies and community colleges with an opportunity to deliver extensive occupational training for women in alternative careers. It is particularly difficult for women to move off of unemployment and into a better paying, high-skill/high-demand occupation while caring for families and maintaining a household.” – *Ralph Riley, Workforce/Safety Programs Manager, S&B Engineers and Constructors*
- “The workforce center will screen the individuals and only send you the qualified candidates in the first place, so it’s really like having your own little HR recruiting agency working for you for free. Then, you get new employees on board, and if they’re successful and stay for a certain number of weeks, you get paid back...you would be crazy not to [participate].” – *Bonnie Best, Human Resource Manager, Nestle Waters, North America Inc.*
- “In Tarrant County, our Texas Leaders have definitely shown their interest and concern of the needs of the employer during this economic time, and they have diligently worked with programs offered, that are much needed, to help constituents of Texas get back to work. The money put aside for these programs is well spent.” – *Sharlynda Bedford, Director of Human Resources, Sheraton Arlington Hotel*

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*The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the services it offers in unison with its network of local workforce development boards, call (512) 463-8556 or visit [www.texasworkforce.org](http://www.texasworkforce.org).*