



Performance Plan FY

# 2024-25

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# Overview

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## CDLE Overview

The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) is a roughly 1,700-person state agency that oversees seven major divisions and three special initiatives.

CDLE serves Colorado, now more critically than ever, by helping workers and businesses thrive. We help keep our workforce competitive while supporting the business community with resources and information that saves them valuable time and money.



CDLE services and resources support Colorado's economy in the following ways:

Building Colorado's talent pipeline

Connecting unemployed workers to job opportunities

Helping businesses recruit employees

Assisting workers who have been injured on the job

Ensuring employers across the state are following fair labor practices

Helping people with disabilities obtain, maintain, or regain employment

Contributing to a stable economy through wage-replacement programs including unemployment insurance, workers' compensation and paid family and medical leave insurance

Presenting labor market information providing an up-to-date and accurate picture of the economy

Protecting our communities through a variety of consumer protection and safety programs



## Letter from the Executive Director



**Dear Coloradans,**

It's been a very impactful twelve months for the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. Whether we're educating employers about their responsibilities under new labor laws, building new online platforms, modernizing our legacy systems or orchestrating new work based learning models, we've put an emphasis on process improvement this year. We deployed technologies, expanded customer service options and facilitated new partnerships that will ultimately help us execute our mission to create a *thriving employment environment with opportunity for every Coloradan to prosper.*

The Division of Labor Standards and Statistics promptly updated existing and published new formal guidance for Colorado's complex labor laws, ensuring employers have access to free support with as many specific examples as possible to help maximize compliance and minimize complaints. The Division's focus on compliance assistance helped avoid formal investigations and resulted in employers fixing an overwhelming majority of violations.

The Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) Division successfully deployed its online application system allowing more than 80,000 Coloradans to apply for FAMLI leave and issue more than \$280 million in payments in less than six months of benefits becoming available in January of 2024. On top of launching a brand new product, the FAMLI Division also enhanced its employer services portal—adding a benefit management tool for employers to monitor the status of their employees' claims. We're proud to lead the way in this public absence management space as Colorado is the first of any state with a paid family leave program to offer a service of this kind to their employers.

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) Division also deployed a modernized employer services portal, My UI Employer+, streamlining the wage reporting and premium payment process for Colorado employers and the third party administrators that serve them. In the midst of that critical modernization project, the UI Division continues to fight fraud and make enhancements to the claimant application process. UI's ongoing fraud prevention tools combat the ever-evolving tactics criminals use to take advantage of public benefits and saved the UI Trust Fund \$425.53 million dollars in fraudulent payments this fiscal year. The team also added the ability for claimants to monitor the life of their claim with the addition of the Claim Status Tracker in My UI+.

Our Employment and Training Division is on deck for our next major modernization project: this fiscal year the State's labor exchange, Connecting Colorado, will get its facelift. Bringing new life to this legacy system will not only improve the self-service and individualized case management support available to jobseekers navigating their careers, but will also provide a better experience for employers in need of growing their talent pipelines. Ahead of that modernization, the Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium (CRWC)'s creation of dedicated Business Services and Work-Based Learning teams are not only ensuring the needs of Colorado businesses and industries are met with tailored solutions, but that by fostering community development we're bridging the gap between education and employment. This critically important work means Coloradans have opportunities to earn while they learn, and employers have the opportunity to shape their future workforce to their business needs.

Internally, we hold true to our values and operate our agency as a *Model Employer*. Over the last year, we've rebranded our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) committee from EDI to EDIA, adding *Accessibility* to the acronym. Being a leader in accessibility standards is imperative to the work we do every day. It's the work of our 1,700+ employees statewide that bring our vision to fruition: *A working economy that elevates all of Colorado.*

I'm proud to see the commitment of our staff result in our agency meeting and exceeding our Wildly Important Goals. In this year's performance plan, you'll find more about what we've accomplished in the past fiscal year and what we look forward to tackling in the coming year. We have summarized the successes achieved relative to our key priorities and outlined our strategies for amplifying our future workforce through youth engagement; supporting immigrants and refugees integrate into our civic, cultural and economic life; protecting more injured workers through employer compliance; easing the stress of those experiencing a period of joblessness; and ensuring individuals and families don't have to worry about receiving partial wage replacement during life events that pull them away from their jobs. None of which are easy, and all of which I'm confident we will achieve.

**Joe Barela**  
Executive Director  
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

# CDLE Mission, Vision, Values and Priorities

The work done at the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment is not just what is done, but how it gets done. Our department has a values-based culture that is rooted in its employees. The values of accountability, agility, collaboration and respect were created by our own employees to help guide decision making and cultivate our work identity and culture.

## Mission

Working together to promote a thriving employment environment with opportunity for every Coloradan to prosper.

## Vision

A working economy that elevates all of Colorado.

## Values

### Accountability

The personal choice to demonstrate ownership for achieving key results

### Agility

The ability to renew, adapt, change quickly and succeed in a rapidly changing, ambiguous environment

### Collaboration

The action of working together with someone to produce or create something, joint effort, working together

### Respect

The intentional consideration of the feelings, wishes, rights or traditions of others

## Priorities



### Model Employer

Lead the state in becoming a model employer.



### Workers Prosper

Through meaningful employment, every Colorado worker prospers.



### Exceptional Services

Exceptional execution of core services.



### Employers Thrive

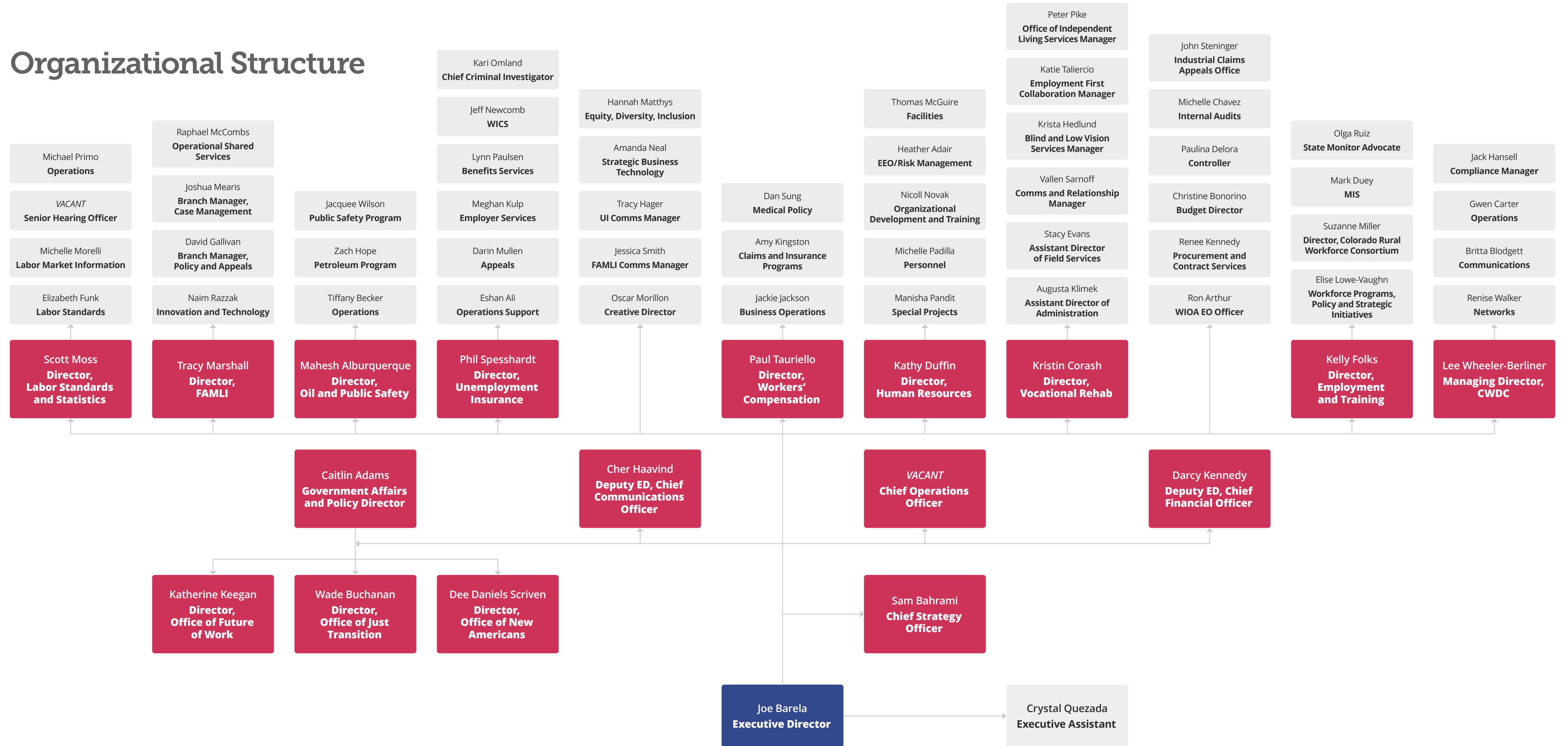
Cultivate processes and policies that help employers thrive.



### Future of Work

Ensure Colorado is prepared for the future of work.

# Organizational Structure



## CDLE Budget Breakdown FY25

Total FTE

1690.8

Total Funds

\$431,228,870

General Fund

\$35,372,471

Cash Funds

\$159,744,815

Reappropriated Funds

\$24,708,795

Federal Funds

\$211,402,789





## Divisions

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**DIVISION OF**  
**Unemployment Insurance**

**Overview**

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) Division helps Coloradans who have lost their jobs by providing temporary wage replacement through UI benefits. The provision of UI benefits helps workers pay their bills and contributes to the economic stability of the state. The UI Division strives to provide unemployment insurance benefits in a fair, timely, accurate and efficient manner to the citizens of Colorado. The provision of these benefits helps stabilize the workforce and minimize the impact of unemployment on Colorado’s economy.



**The UI Division consists of four primary operating branches:**

**1**

**Employer Services**

- Determine employers’ liability, assign premium rates and collect premiums.
- Conduct random and targeted audits of businesses to ensure proper classification of workers and premiums paid.

**2**

**Benefits Services**

- Provide customer service to inform unemployment claimants of their responsibilities and rights and answer claimants’ questions about the UI process.
- Research, analyze and interpret the law to determine a claimants’ eligibility and entitlement to receive benefits.
- Prevent, detect and recover overpaid benefits.

**3**

**Operations Support**

- Investigate and refer fraud cases for criminal prosecution.
- Conduct quality reviews of benefit-related and employer premium-related functions to ensure compliance with federal and state unemployment laws, policies and guidelines.
- Identify and address major root causes of improper payments
- Provide efficient maintenance and retention of records and access and storage of all UI correspondence, forms and reports.

**4**

**Appeals**

- Provide a hearing venue at locations throughout the state for decisions issued by the Employer Services, Benefits Services, and Operations Support branches that are appealed by a claimant, employer or other interested party.

**During the last fiscal year, the UI Division has:**

- Served roughly **169,800** claimants
- Paid more than **\$631 million** in partial wage replacement benefits
- Issued the first payment to approved claimants within **45 days** on average
- Prevented **\$425.53 million** from going to fraudulent claims

**Funding**

The UI Division’s funding includes an estimated \$62,261,088 (79%) federal funds provided by the United States Department of Labor and \$16,404,109 (21%) by state cash funds (Unemployment Revenue Fund and Employment and Training Technology Fund).

**DIVISION OF**  
**Employment and Training**

### Overview

The Division of Employment and Training (E&T) provides a wide range of services for businesses and job seekers. Services are delivered by state and county-run local workforce areas that support strong regional economies. Programs are funded by federal grants, state general funds and cash funds. The division consists of two distinct program areas - Workforce Development Programs and the Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium.

Workforce Development Programs (WDP) is responsible for policy guidance, program oversight and program administration in accordance with federal and state guidelines. WDP administers several major programs, including Wagner Peyser Act, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Veterans Employment and Training Program, Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA), Trade Readjustment Allowance Program (TRA) and Displaced Homemaker Program. Additional programs for employers include the Work Opportunity Tax Credit program (WOTC), Federal Bonding and Foreign Labor Certification. Federal discretionary grants include: the Pathways Offender grant, the Employment Recovery Grant and the Disaster Recovery Grant. State-legislated programs include the Employment Support & Job Retention program, Work-Based Learning Incentive Program, Veterans' Service-to-Career program, the Hospitality Education grant program, and others.

The Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium (CRWC) is one of ten federally designated local workforce areas in the state of Colorado. The CRWC serves 51 rural counties through rural Workforce Centers, providing jobseeker assistance and employer services. The CRWC is made up of the 10 sub-areas: Pueblo, Broomfield, Upper Arkansas, Rural Resort, Northwest, Western, Eastern, Southeast, Southwest, and South Central.

### Funding

The E&T Division's funding consists of 76% federal funds (Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act and other grants from the U.S. Department of Labor), and 24% state funds (Employment Support [cash], Workforce Enterprise [cash], and state general fund appropriations).

The FY25 funding will consist of the following:

- **WIOA:** \$35,626,886
- **Workforce Enterprise:** \$14,003,304
- **Wagner-Peyser:** \$12,238,027
- **ESF (DPN):** \$493,351
- **ESJR:** \$250,000
- **Hospitality:** \$500,000
- **SPARC:** \$97,436
- **Total State Appropriations:** \$15,344,091

The FY25 budget will total \$63,209,004 of new state + federal funding, with an estimated carry-forward of \$30 million of existing federal funding, which is multi-year funding.



**DIVISION OF**  
**Labor Standards and Statistics**

**Overview**

The Division of Labor Standards and Statistics (DLSS) is comprised of two units: Labor Standards and Labor Market Information (LMI).



1

**Labor Standards enforces and facilitates compliance with Colorado labor laws through:**

- Receiving thousands of wage and other labor law claims annually, then investigating and issuing individualized written determinations;
- Issuing and regularly updating binding regulations that implement, interpret and clarify Colorado labor law statutes;
- Facilitating labor law compliance with publications, outreach events and a call center that fields thousands of inquiries annually; and
- Administering union elections and, where appropriate, intervening to help resolve labor-management disputes.

2

**LMI produces several key data sets on Colorado’s labor force including:**

- **Current Employment Statistics**  
Monthly employment levels and wages, statewide and by locality and industry;
- **Local Area Unemployment Statistics**  
Monthly unemployment rates, statewide and by locality;
- **Occupational Employment Statistics**  
Compensation and employment levels by occupation, from surveys of data from employers statewide;
- **Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages**  
Wage data and employment levels by industry, from large-scale censuses of employers statewide and a range of projections of job growth by occupation and industry.

**Funding**

DLSS is funded through:

- \$3.3M from the Employment Support Fund (ESF), and funds generated by the work of Labor Standards fund the Labor Standard Unit.
- \$3.6M of federal funds and other funds provided by agencies for which LMI provides services fund LMI.



**DIVISION OF**  
**Oil and Public Safety**

## Overview

The Division of Oil & Public Safety (OPS) is responsible for a variety of regulatory functions related to environmental and consumer protection and public safety. Program oversight includes: amusement rides and devices, explosives use and storage, boilers, conveyances, fuel products, underground and aboveground petroleum storage tanks, cleanup of petroleum spills, and reimbursement of cleanup costs to qualifying storage tank owners/operators. The Division's oversight also includes the Underground Damage Prevention Safety Commission and Fund, which includes enforcement oversight for Colorado 811.

## Funding

The Division is primarily funded by \$6.4M in cash funds, along with \$0.7M of federal funding and \$0.3M of state general funds.



**DIVISION OF**  
**Workers' Compensation**

**Overview**

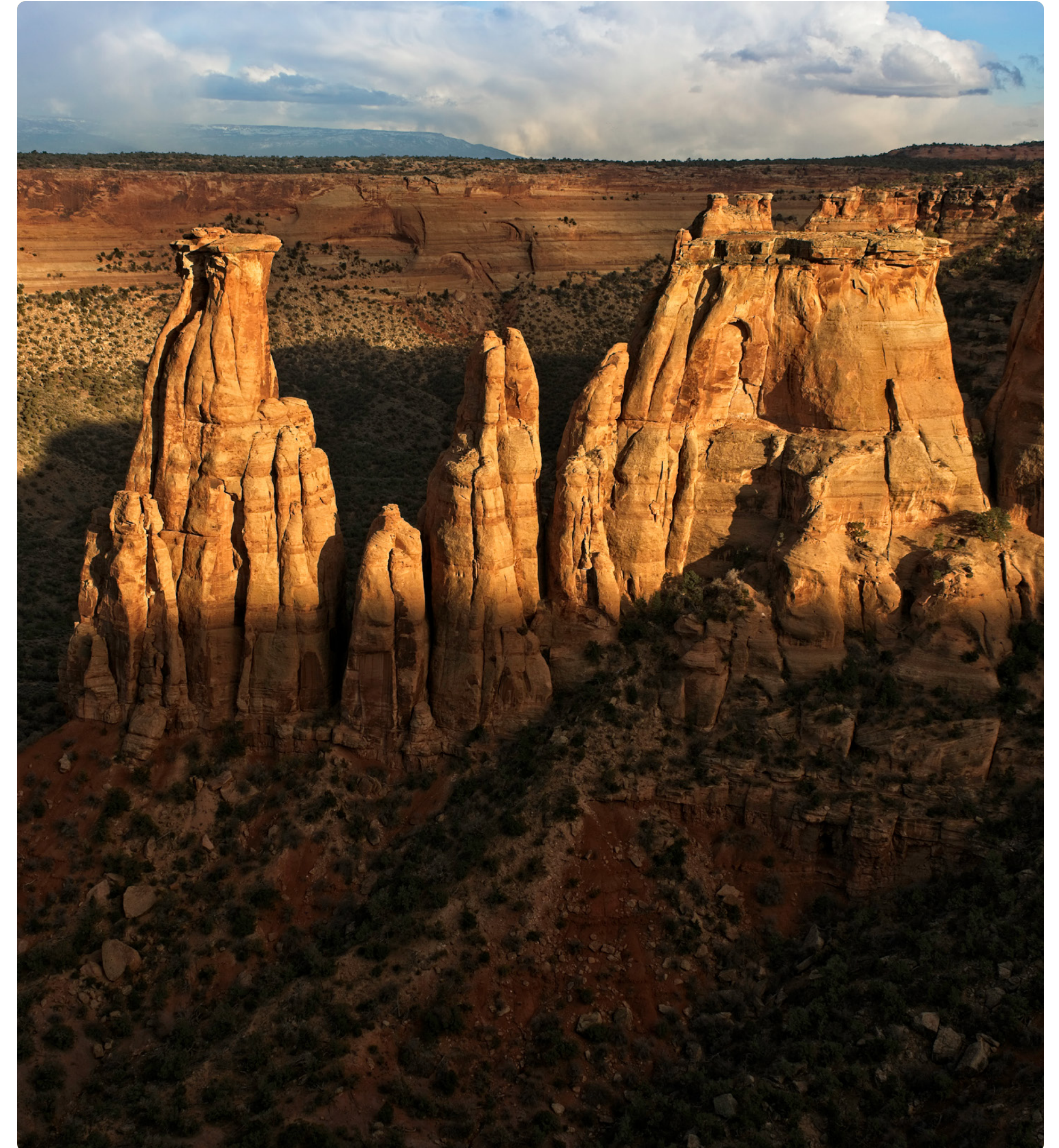
The Division of Workers Compensation (DOWC) administers and enforces the Workers' Compensation Act. The Division assures the quick and efficient delivery of disability and medical benefits to injured workers at a reasonable cost to employers, with minimum litigation.

The operations of the DOWC generally fall into the categories of claims, insurance or medical care along with mediating disputes related to these items. With some exceptions, the DOWC's role is primarily one of oversight and it does not pay wage replacement benefits like the Divisions of Unemployment Insurance and Family and Medical Leave Insurance. An exception is the Special Funds Unit which operates like an insurance company and pays benefits to injured workers. New injury claims are not accepted by the Special Funds Unit, but benefits continue to be paid to individuals who met the statutory criteria when their claims were opened in the early 1990s. Recent legislation has also created the Colorado Uninsured Employer Fund which provides financial relief to workers who were injured while working for employers who failed to carry workers' compensation insurance.

Additionally, the Premium Cost Containment Program offers employers a discount on premiums for demonstrating workplace safety above and beyond the stated requirements. The Self Insured Program assists qualifying employers in self-insuring their own workers' compensation liability.

**Funding**

The Division of Workers' Compensation is funded by cash funds that receive their primary revenue as a surcharge on worker's compensation insurance premiums paid by commercial insurance companies and self-insured employers. The approximate revenue for FY24 is \$26.9M.



## DIVISION OF Vocational Rehabilitation

### Overview

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provides a range of individualized vocational rehabilitation services. These services help eligible individuals with disabilities prepare for, obtain, maintain, regain or advance in competitive integrated employment. Employment is consistent with individuals' strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice. Services include education, vocational training, physical or mental restoration, rehabilitation technology, job placement and on-the-job support. DVR also provides pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities in order to prepare them to enter the world of work as they begin their transition from secondary education. The services DVR provides directly to Coloradans with disabilities are supplemented by a statewide employer outreach program focused on developing relationships with businesses to increase employment opportunities for the people DVR serves.

The U.S. Department of Education, through a grant administered by the Rehabilitation Services Administration, provides reimbursement for 78.7% of eligible rehabilitation expenditures up to the total annual federal grant. The matching funds for federal dollars are either General Fund dollars or local government funds, primarily from school districts in the School to Work Alliance Program.

DVR also administers state and federal grants for the Centers for Independent Living (CIL), the Business Enterprise Program and Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB). The Division participates in two fully federally funded research projects including SEEKS (Securing Employment and Economic Keys to Stability), a five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration

on Community Living which ends September 2025. DVR was also awarded technical assistance from the National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network for benefits counseling and developing a statewide strategic plan.

DVR's Youth Services and Transition team was recently awarded a \$14 million Disability Innovation Fund - Pathways to Partnership grant to broaden access to transition services for youth with disabilities and to strengthen collaborations between vocational rehabilitation, CIL, state and local education agencies, and local community rehabilitation partners over the next five years. The grant will include a partnership with Utah State University researchers, to develop an interactive website called "Map My Transition" for parents and youth with disabilities.

### Funding

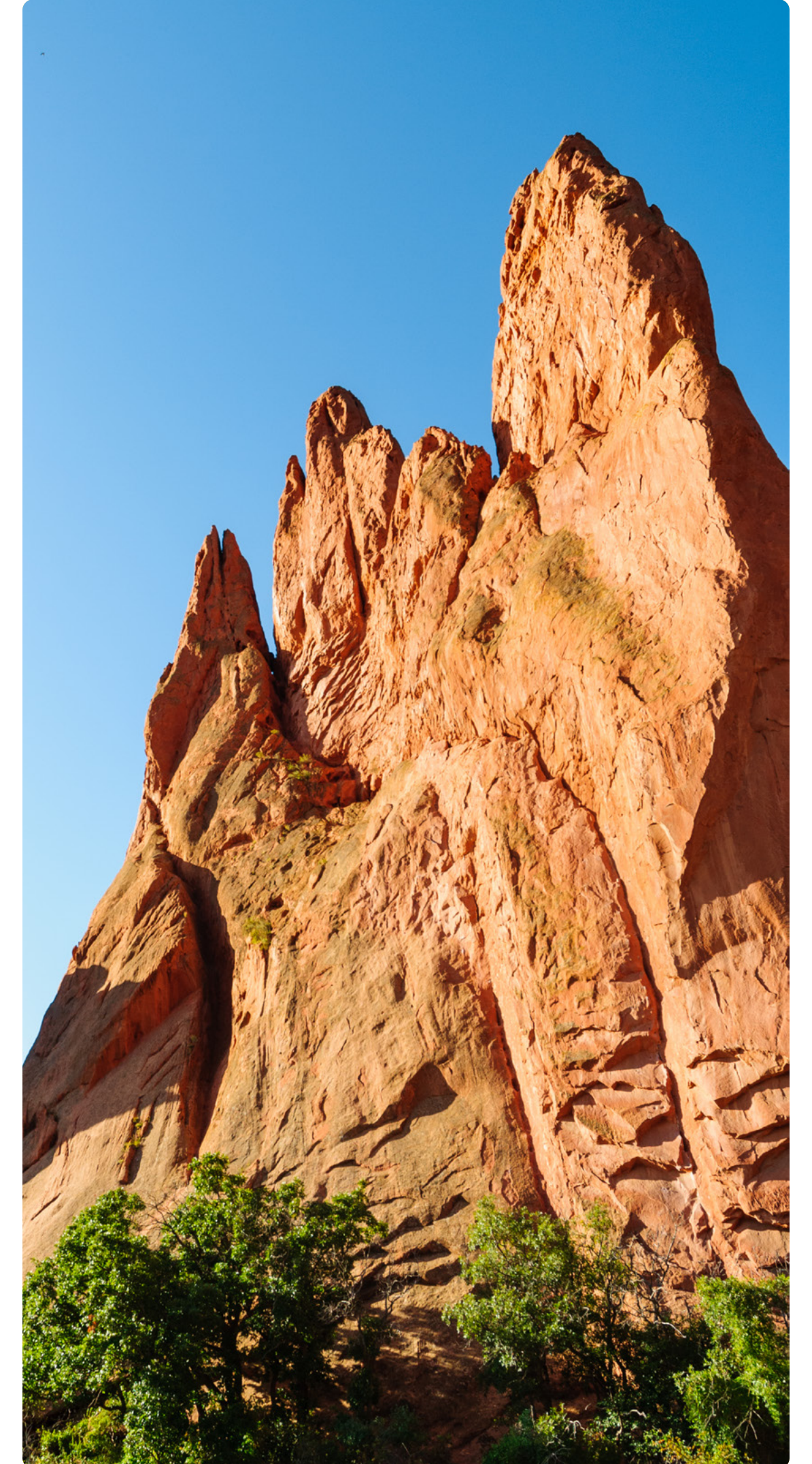
DVR is primarily funded by the Vocational Rehabilitation Services grant, which is awarded to states based on the statutory formula that takes into account a variety of factors, such as population and per capita income, in determining the amount of Federal funds made available to each grantee. The award typically includes an annual cost of living adjustment increase, but for Federal Fiscal Year 2024 there was no increase to the DVR grant. Colorado received the same grant amount as FY 2023, \$51,750,757. DVR receives a separate Supported Employment Services grant of \$300,000 each Federal Fiscal year. Grant funds are administered under the approved DVR services portion of the Combined State Plan in accordance with WIOA Combined State Plan Requirements.

DVR is appropriated \$1.1M in General Fund within the Vocational Rehabilitation Services line. An additional \$4M in General Fund is appropriated for Personal Services. These General Fund appropriations account for just under 30% of DVR's required non-federal match. Remaining match is reappropriated from partner agencies.

The Independent Living Services for Older Individuals with Blindness (OIB) grant provides DVR with \$483,331, which is passed on to subgrantees.

The Part B Independent Living Services Grant was awarded to the Office of Independent Living Services within DVR \$348,060 for FFY24, which is passed on to Centers for Independent Living as subgrantees. Centers for Independent Living are almost completely funded with General Fund, with a small portion of Part B Federal as described above.

FY24/25 total funding is \$81.1M, \$12.58M in general funds, \$0.87M in cash funds, \$22.3M in re-appropriated funds and an estimate of \$45.2M in federal funds.



# Colorado Workforce Development Council

## Overview

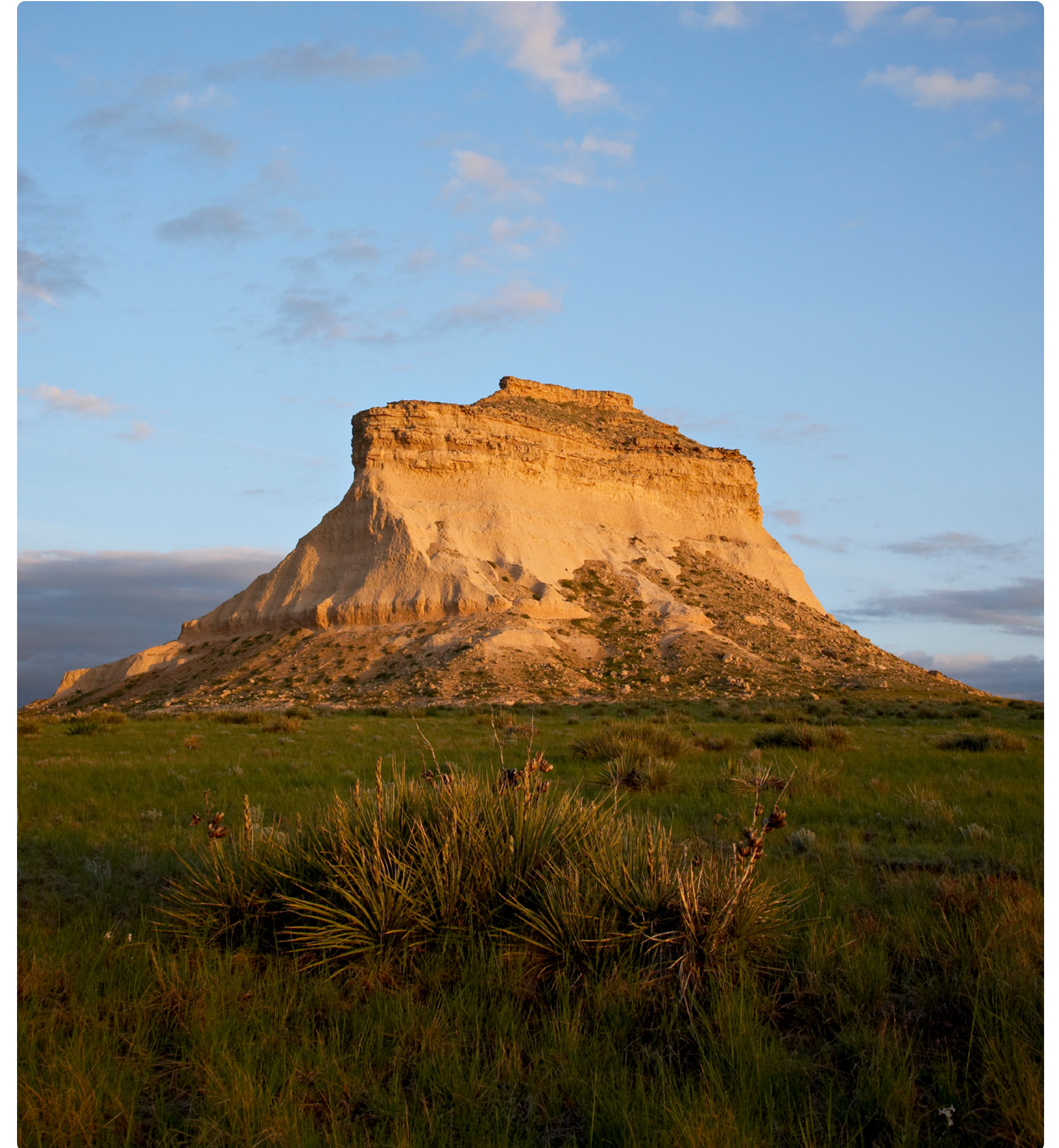
The Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) is a governor-appointed, business-led public-private coalition leading the integration of efforts to build the Colorado talent pipeline. The Council and the CWDC Office provide recommendations to the Governor on issues related to talent development. The CWDC facilitates collaboration among state agencies and partners to ensure effective and efficient leveraging of resources and reduction of redundancies, including managing the support needed to ensure the success of this collaboration of partners and agencies.

The CWDC's mission is to enhance and sustain a skills-based talent development network that meets the needs of employers, workers, job seekers, and learners for today and tomorrow. To fulfill that mission, the Council champions skills-based practice including competency-based hiring and promotion and work-based learning - learning about work, through work, and at work. As the champion of the TalentFOUND brand and network, the Office connects and engages the business community to lead competency-based talent development in Colorado, which requires commitment from business to work with public partners to identify competencies (knowledge, skills and abilities), to use these competencies in their hiring practices, and work with public partners to create integrated work-based learning opportunities.

The CWDC Office provides strategic, administrative, technical, and logistical support to the Council, its steering committees, and task groups; the Governor's Business Experiential Learning Commission; and other oversight boards responsible for integration of talent development efforts in meeting the needs of the current and future worker and economy.

## Funding

Funding for the Council comes from WIOA through the Colorado Departments of: Labor and Employment, Human Services, Education, Local Affairs and the Colorado Community College System. Additional funding comes from state legislation and private grants.





DIVISION OF

# Family and Medical Leave Insurance

## Overview

The Division of Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) was established through a vote of the people in Proposition 118 on the 2020 ballot, and mandates that all employers in the state offer paid Family and Medical Leave, with the exception of local governments who may opt out of the program. Private employers are required to engage with the FAMLI Division either by fully participating in the program or by applying for private plan approval to ensure their employees have access to the same or greater benefits as the FAMLI program.

FAMLI covers most workers, including self-employed individuals and independent contractors, and ensures Colorado workers have access to paid leave during certain life events like caring for a new child during the first year after the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of that child; caring for one's own serious health condition or a family member with a serious health condition; making arrangements for a family member's military deployment and addressing the immediate safety needs and impact of domestic violence.

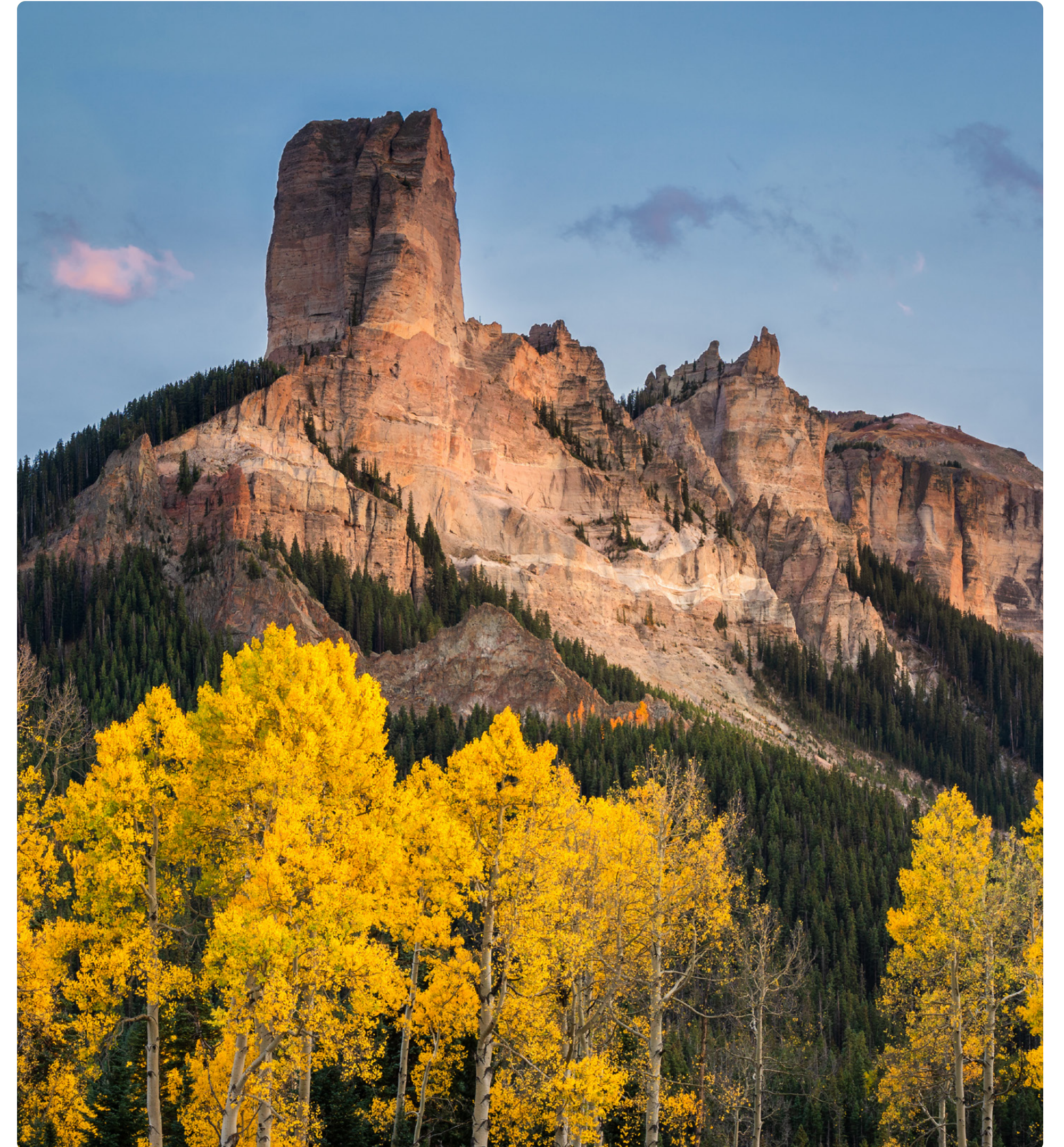
FAMLI provides 12-16 weeks of leave benefits with up to 90% wage replacement on a sliding scale based on wages and relative to the State's average weekly wage. The Division began collecting premiums in January of 2023 and began paying benefits in January 2024.

## In the first six months of FAMLI benefits being available to Colorado workers, the FAMLI Division:

- Processed more than **80,000** claims, **96%** of which claimants successfully used the Division's self-service options
- Issued more than **\$280 million** in payments
- Distributed the first payments on claims in less than **ten business days**
- Saw an average payment amount of roughly **\$915**
- Answered more than **123,000** phone calls

## Funding

The Division is 100% cash funded as an enterprise by employer and employee premiums, with \$1,498,307,098.75 collected by 5/31/24. Employers and their employees are both responsible for funding the FAMLI program. The premiums are set to 0.9% of the employee's wage, with 0.45% paid by the employer and 0.45% paid by the employee. Wage reporting and premium obligations began in January 2023.



## Special Initiatives

Office of Just Transition  
Office of Future of Work  
Office of New Americans

19  
20  
21



OFFICE OF  
**Just Transition**

## Overview

The Office of Just Transition (OJT) develops, coordinates, and manages programs to assist workers facing the loss of their jobs and communities facing economic disruption resulting from Colorado’s transition away from coal as a fuel for generating electricity and the subsequent closure of power plants, coal mines, and related businesses. OJT accomplishes its tasks primarily by working directly with local communities and individual workers to support community and worker-driven transition strategies, and by coordinating and collaborating with other state agencies responsible for economic and community development, workforce training and development, and related programs.

The Office of Just Transition manages several programs designed to support coal transition communities and workers. In January 2024, the Transition Worker program launched the first of seven pre-closure strategies by hiring a Transition Navigator in the Yampa Valley, who will assist workers and their families in preparing for their futures after the coal industry shutters. Since its inception in November 2021, the Community Assistance Grant program, in conjunction with the Office of Economic Development and International Trade, has awarded \$7.37 million

of the \$15.8 million available in grants to coal communities throughout the state to assist with economic development and diversification. Additionally, the Office will be expanding its grant-writing program to all coal transition communities, providing funding for communities to hire attorneys so they can intervene in proceedings at the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC), and launching a business retention and expansion program. OJT will continue to regularly publish news briefs and pursue policy objectives through the PUC, the state legislature, and Congress.

## Funding

OJT is funded with general funds through a long bill line item and the Just Transition Cash Fund to provide assistance for coal communities and coal industry and supply chain workers, as well as for implementing the Just Transition Action Plan. The Cash Fund is also authorized to accept gifts, grants, and donations from private and other public sources.



OFFICE OF  
**Future of Work**

## Overview

The Office of Future of Work (OFW) was established in September 2019 through an Executive Order from Governor Polis and codified in March 2023. The OFW was created to raise awareness about the future of work, and to identify policy and program solutions that ensure Coloradans are future-ready. To achieve this purpose, the OFW:

- Conducts new research to understand future of work trends and their impact
- Shares best practices, research, and data to inform new work and legislation
- Leads key initiatives on behalf of the state

## The OFW also leads two major statewide initiatives:

1

### Apprenticeship Colorado

Apprenticeship Colorado is the State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) in the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment that has the responsibility for:

- Registering and overseeing apprenticeship programs
- Providing technical assistance to current and prospective sponsors
- Aligning the registered apprenticeship system with Colorado's workforce, education, and economic development priorities
- Other duties as assigned in statute

2

### Digital Equity, Literacy and Inclusion

The OFW leads the Digital Equity, Literacy and Inclusion Initiative which includes the creation of the state's digital equity plan per the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The OFW also leads the state's Digital Navigator program, per SB22-140, which deploys community-based digital navigators to address digital inequities (access to technology, digital skills, and affordable internet) that prevent people from accessing work-based learning, job training, and employment opportunities.

## Funding

The OFW has approximately \$13 million funding from federal grants (64%), philanthropic grants (1%), and the general or other state fund (35%).



**OFFICE OF**  
**New Americans**

**Overview**

On June 25, 2021, Governor Jared Polis signed HB 21-1150, creating an Office of New Americans (ONA) in CDLE. ONA's vision is that all New Americans have equitable access to opportunity and wellbeing, and its mission is to facilitate the integration and inclusion of New Americans into Colorado's civic, economic and social life. In June 2024, ONA celebrates its second anniversary. Over the past two years, ONA has predominantly worked on launching and managing legislatively mandated programs and responding to the historic migrant influx in Colorado.

ONA is currently working on the following policy and programmatic priorities:

Through an Inter-agency Agreement with the Department of Public Safety, ONA is managing the state's migrant assistance grantees who are providing more permanent housing, case management, and immigration legal assistance to new Coloradans.

The Global Talent Task Force (GTTF) reviewed existing pathways in at least five in-demand sectors for global professionals and skilled workers living in Colorado to obtain credentials that will help them work in their professional field or occupation. The final report of the taskforce was submitted in December 2023.

The Integration of International Medical Graduates (IMG) program. The program launched in the fall of 2023, and the first cohort of IMGs are currently taking the clinical readiness program. The IMG program seeks to help IMGs navigate entry into Colorado's medical field, assess their clinical readiness, and assist entry into residency programs.

The Benefit Recovery Fund (BRF) launched in April 2024. The BRF is an unemployment program for eligible undocumented workers who lost employment through no fault of their own and are not receiving other state-administered wage replacement assistance.

The Virtual, Career-Aligned English as a Second Language (VCESL) program equips adults with the English proficiency they need to seize better employment opportunities, while expanding employers' talent pools. By statute this program ends June 30, 2024.

The Immigration Legal Defense Fund (ILDF) helps Colorado's immigrants with their immigration proceedings in order to promote family unity, due process, increase judicial efficiency, and protect civil liberties.

**Funding**

The Office of New Americans is funded through the following: SB 22-140 - one time appropriation of \$1.1M for the VCESL program and the GTTF (expires 6/30/2024); SB 22-234 - BRF, ARPA (through IAAs), private donations and General Fund of \$258,675.





## Wildly Important Goals

2023/2024 Performance Plan Evaluation

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Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) for FY 2024–25

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# 2023/24 Performance Plan Evaluation

**DEPARTMENT WIG**

## State Paid Family and Medical Leave Launch

WIG	Baseline	1 Year Target	3 Year Target	2023–2024 Actual
Ensure 75% of eligible claimants receive their benefit payments within 10 calendar days by June 30, 2024.	0%	75%	90%	>90%

**DEPARTMENT WIG**

## State Paid Family and Medical Leave Launch

Lead Measures	Baseline	1 Year Target	2023–2024 Actual
FAMLI will host 20 compliance assistance events for healthcare providers, including hosted webinars, private presentations, and/or trade show engagement by June 30, 2024	0	20	27
Ensure 40% of claims are eligible for auto adjudication by June 30, 2024.	0	40%	98.7%
Through the My FAMLI+ portal and VA, ensure 40% of claims are processed through self-service without agent intervention.	0	40%	96.76%
Enroll 95% of eligible Colorado workers in an eligible paid family and medical leave program by June 30, 2024	0	95%	>95%

## Results Summary

In the first six months of Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) benefits becoming available to Coloradans, the FAMLI Division not only reached but surpassed all of its one-year targets for its lead measures. Some highlights include:

- 237,000+ employers registered in My FAMLI+ Employer, representing roughly 4 million employees eligible for FAMLI.
- 849 wage reports have been submitted by employers, and \$1.3 billion in premiums have been collected through Q1 2024.
- More than 80,000 Coloradans applied to take FAMLI leave, and more than \$280 million in payments have been distributed from My FAMLI+.

**DEPARTMENT WIG**

**In-Demand Industries**

WIG	Baseline	1 Year Target	2023–2024 Actual
Enroll 3,000 Coloradans in training programs that prepare them for careers in energy and infrastructure-related fields, enabled by new federal funding by June 30, 2024.	1,043	3,000	2,476

**DEPARTMENT WIG**

**In-Demand Industries**

WIG	Baseline	1 Year Target	2023–2024 Actual
Increase the number of training programs funded from 5 to 10 by June 30, 2024.	5	10	10
Increase the number of new grants received by the state that include funding for workforce development from 20 to 30 by June 30, 2024.	20	30	31

**Results Summary**

While we met and exceeded each lead measure, we narrowly missed our target for this WIG due to a few factors:

- Data validation took place after the fiscal year began, and our baseline was revised downward. Had the original baseline been used, the final target would have been exceeded.
- Individuals were not enrolled in training this year due to significant timing delays with grant awards from the Colorado Workforce Development Council. 154 individuals are anticipated to be enrolled in FY25 that had been expected to start prior to June 2024.
- While energy and infrastructure industries were prioritized in grant making, a number of training programs are being launched in education, early childhood education and IT.



**DEPARTMENT WIG**

## Youth Labor Force Participation

WIG	Baseline	1 Year Target	2023–2024 Actual
Increase the employment to population ratio for youth ages 16-24 from 57.2% to 60.0% by June 20, 2024.	57.2%	60%	56.3%

**DEPARTMENT WIG**

## Youth Labor Force Participation

Lead Measures	Baseline	1 Year Target	2023–2024 Actual
Add or expand 100 registered apprenticeship programs in Colorado by June 30, 2024.	0	100	103
Provide job readiness services to over 1,500 young adults including job search assistance, resume assistance, application assistance, job fairs and hiring events by June 30, 2024.	0	1,500	5,058
Support 20 youth-focused career events to increase awareness of career opportunities for Coloradans age 16-24 by June 30, 2024.	0	20	44

## Results Summary

While we surpassed all three lead measures for this WIG, the State's youth employment population ratio and labor force participation rates are both heavily determined by broader market trends driving both rates downward. Some of these trends are national e.g. the aging of the population, and stock market/real estate market increases that accelerate retirements; and some are Colorado-specific e.g., for ages 18 through 24 have better higher education options and incentives in Colorado which push labor force participation downward. These factors need to be considered when evaluating our progress to hitting the 60% target.

**GOVERNOR'S DASHBOARD**

# CDLE Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) for FY 2024–25

**DEPARTMENT WIG**

## Timely and Accurate Benefit Payments: UI

WIG	Baseline	1 Year Target	3 Year Target
Increase the percent of Colorado claimants who receive their first UI benefit payment within three weeks to 87% by June 30, 2025.	40%	87%	89%

### Background

Unemployment benefits help all individuals through periods of joblessness meet financial obligations while they pursue reemployment. Timely payment of wage replacement benefits means unemployed Coloradans will be able to stay afloat by being able to pay for necessities while seeking work, thus reducing the anxiety often felt during job transitions. Colorado's economy will also benefit from that financial security.

This is an ambitious but achievable goal as the Division of UI continues to face the challenges of ongoing fraudulent claims. Increasingly complex UI fraud schemes require the Division to adjust fraud detection and prevention tactics within existing resources. When fraud triggers are tightened to halt emerging schemes, legitimate claims may be impacted by the workflow. Claimants may have to respond to detailed fact finding which can lengthen the time it takes to receive their benefit payment.

### How We Will Achieve This Goal

We will achieve this goal through a variety of tactics including an agile recruitment, training and professional development model for UI staff, enhancements to our virtual assistant, a refined escalation process within the My UI+ application portal and new features to the claim status tracker.

### Lead Measures

Conduct eight claimant and staff focus groups to identify obstacles in the user experience, solve internal workflow blockers and prioritize needed improvements by June 30, 2025.

Create baseline skills and knowledge assessment for front line staff to determine retraining needs, develop training curriculum, assess proficiency by June 30, 2025.

Conduct intake workflow analysis to identify process improvements within the UI system by October 31, 2024.

Implement 6 process improvements based on workflow analysis by June 30, 2025.

**DEPARTMENT WIG**

## Timely and Accurate Benefit Payments: FAMLI

WIG	Baseline	1 Year Target
Increase the percent of eligible Colorado claimants who receive their FAMLI benefit payment within ten days to 90% by June 30, 2025.	85%	90%

### Background

Ensuring eligible workers receive their partial wage replacement benefits within ten business days is critical for Colorado individuals and families who are experiencing a life event that pulls them away from work. Timely FAMLI benefit payments means Coloradans can focus on their health and families without the stress of meeting essential financial obligations during an already stressful time.

The FAMLI Division is committed by statute to deliver benefits within ten business days to eligible workers. As we anticipate the volume of claims to increase, FAMLI’s efficiency will be put to the test in our efforts to achieve this goal. The remaining 10% of claims not paid within this window account for fraudulent or ineligibility issues and claims that are canceled or closed.

### How We Will Achieve This Goal

We will reach this goal by maintaining and enhancing the intuitive and accessible user experience within the online platforms that employers, health care providers and individuals and families use to apply for benefits, submit wages and pay premiums. We will also expand our robust training materials and resources in additional languages, improve our support services, increase our adjudication rates and decrease the time a claim has an incomplete status.

### Lead Measures

Cross train at least ten staff members as on-site navigators to provide in-person support to claimants by June 30, 2027.

Decrease the time a claim has an incomplete status prior to final submission from 20% to 12% by creating a pre-claim information process that promotes an easy, user-centric claim application by June 30, 2025.

Reduce the number of abandoned applications from 17,000 to 15,000 by June 30, 2025.



**DEPARTMENT WIG**

## Workers' Compensation Compliance

WIG	Baseline	1 Year Target	3 Year Target
Increase the number of Colorado employers with mandatory workers' compensation insurance by 1500 employers by June 30, 2027.	158,638	+500	+1,500

### Background

Employers with one or more employees in Colorado are required to maintain workers' compensation insurance. Just like other forms of mandatory insurance, compliance is never 100%. This can be due to confusion regarding coverage requirements or neglect to avoid paying the required premiums. Industries with the highest occurrence of workplace injuries include construction, transportation and warehousing, and agriculture. These industries are also more likely to employ underserved, marginalized, and vulnerable populations. Ensuring proper workers' compensation coverage ensures protections employees are entitled to including medical care, survivor benefits, disability, and rehabilitation benefits when accidents happen while on the job.

This is an ambitious goal, and achieving it will have a significant impact on injured workers across the state. Bringing more employers into compliance means workers injured on the job won't be at risk of falling into financial strain due to health care expenses and the inability to work after their injury.

### How We Will Achieve This Goal

The Division of Workers' Compensation's use of educational opportunities, investigations,, and targeted outreach to specific industries have proven to support an increase in employer compliance. We will reach this goal by continuing our education and outreach efforts, researching and identifying the state regions and industries that are most likely to be out of compliance.

### Lead Measures

Coverage Enforcement unit staff will review workplace injury data to identify the top five target industries and seek staff input on industry compliance trends recognized during investigations by August 31, 2024.

Launch 12 social media campaigns in both English and Spanish on the importance of workers' compensation coverage by June 30, 2024.

Meet monthly to update each other on progress, to enhance existing strategies and outreach opportunities and develop new ones. Complete first meeting by July 31, 2024, and complete twelve meetings by June 30, 2025.

**DEPARTMENT WIG**

## Supporting Colorado Business

WIG	Baseline	1 Year Target	3 Year Target
Achieve a 75% rate of participating businesses that experience a shorter time to hire vacant positions as a result of utilizing the public workforce system by June 30, 2025 and increase that to 77% by June 30, 2026 and 80% by June 30, 2027.	0%	75%	80%

### Background

When Colorado businesses underutilize the public workforce system to find talent there are missed opportunities to create optimal economic outcomes. By ensuring businesses experience shorter times to fill their vacant positions, we're connecting more job seekers to the right roles. As a result, our businesses are able to hire and retain the talent they need to support growth, ultimately strengthening Colorado's economy.

### How We Will Achieve This Goal

In early 2025, CDLE will launch the modernized state labor exchange, Connecting Colorado. Once the improved Connecting Colorado is up and running, we will launch an integrated marketing campaign targeting both employers and job seekers to ensure both users are familiar with the system's new features.

As part of the modernization to this critical state database, we will include data from a survey of businesses receiving support from the state's workforce system to efficiently track our targets and following lead measures:

### Lead Measures

Increase business utilization of the public workforce system by 10% from 13,125 to 14,437 by June 30, 2025.

Update business engagement strategies and train 100% of the business service representatives across Colorado by March 31, 2025.

Integrate the workforce needs of agency partners into Connecting Colorado (the statewide labor exchange and case management system) to enable stronger employer-employee connections for Colorado's businesses. April 30, 2025.

Complete 1st annual combined Economic Development Council and Workforce Business Services conference in November 2024.

**DEPARTMENT WIG**

## Youth Engagement in the Workforce

WIG	Baseline	1 Year Target
Elevate Colorado's Lead in Youth Workforce Engagement by maintaining a lead of 6% above the National Average of Youth Labor Force Participation Rate by June 30, 2025.	61.2%	63%*

*\*6% above national average*

### Background

While Colorado's overall labor force participation rate is considered one of the best in the United States, we still have much more work to do. Predictions for labor shortages continue across at least the next decade. Focusing on youth labor force participation is a strategy that can support adding more workers to the State's labor force, while providing youth in Colorado with ultimately supporting Colorado's economy, while also preparing youth with the skills they'll need to succeed in the future workforce.

Increasing the youth labor force participation rates is difficult to do due to a variety of market factors outside of our control. Currently, Colorado is a national leader in youth workforce engagement compared to the national average of youth labor force participation, and we intend to keep and expand that lead despite the downward trends.

### How We Will Achieve This Goal

Increases are achievable overtime by executing strategies that create more interest and opportunity in a variety of services that lead to jobs. We will achieve this ambitious goal by pulling all levers that exist within the agency to increase the overall youth we serve across our programs.

### Lead Measures

In collaboration with the Career and Technical Education and Workforce systems, add 5 additional pre-apprenticeship pathways that lead into registered apprenticeships by June 30, 2025.

Increase the number of registrations for youth employment services for youth between 14 and 24 years old by 15% from 12,673 to 15,207 by June 30, 2025.

Enroll 4 teachers in STEM externships by December 31, 2024 and 30 teachers by December 31, 2025 to learn about real skills needed in current high-demand jobs in order to impact future curriculum in the classroom.

Add or expand 100 registered apprenticeship programs in Colorado by June 30, 2025.

Support more than 40 youth-focused career events across the state to increase awareness of career opportunities for Coloradans age 16-24 by June 30, 2025.

Increase the percentage of youth who are placed in jobs after receiving youth employment services from 24.7% to 27.4% by June 30, 2025.

**DEPARTMENT WIG**

## ONA Migrant Support

WIG	Baseline	1 Year Target
Increase the number of New Americans served statewide by Colorado's Workforce System from 2,500 to 3,000 by June 30, 2025.	2,500	3,000

### Background

Over 40,000 migrants have arrived in Denver since January 2023. According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, more than 31,000 individuals self-reported wanting to call Colorado home. This does not include hundreds of Nicaraguans that arrived in the central mountains during the Spring and Summer of 2022, nor does it include the hundreds of Mauritians that arrived in Aurora in 2023.

With this influx of new Americans to our state, Colorado desperately needs to find viable pathways for new Americans to fully integrate into our civic culture on their path to self-sufficiency.

### How We Will Achieve This Goal

To do that, new Americans need support entering the workforce through job training, education services and apprenticeships. The Office of New Americans will increase the number of New Americans served statewide by working directly with workforce development programs at CDLE, our statewide Workforce Centers, our Worked Based Learning teams, and Apprenticeship Colorado to engage and inform those who choose to call Colorado home about the services that are available to them and their families. This will increase the number of people entering the labor force, and will provide new Americans with access to services that will assist them as they settle into Colorado.

### Lead Measures

CDLE will develop consistent reporting metrics shared through a policy guidance letter for workforce development centers to track services accessed by New Americans by December 31, 2024.

ONA will provide 20 training and technical assistance sessions to workforce centers statewide to increase their ability to serve New Americans by June 30, 2025.

In collaboration with ONA, CDLE Workforce Programs and local workforce centers meet with and provide 10 presentations to Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in the ONA network on workforce programs available to New Americans and where to find them by June 30, 2025.



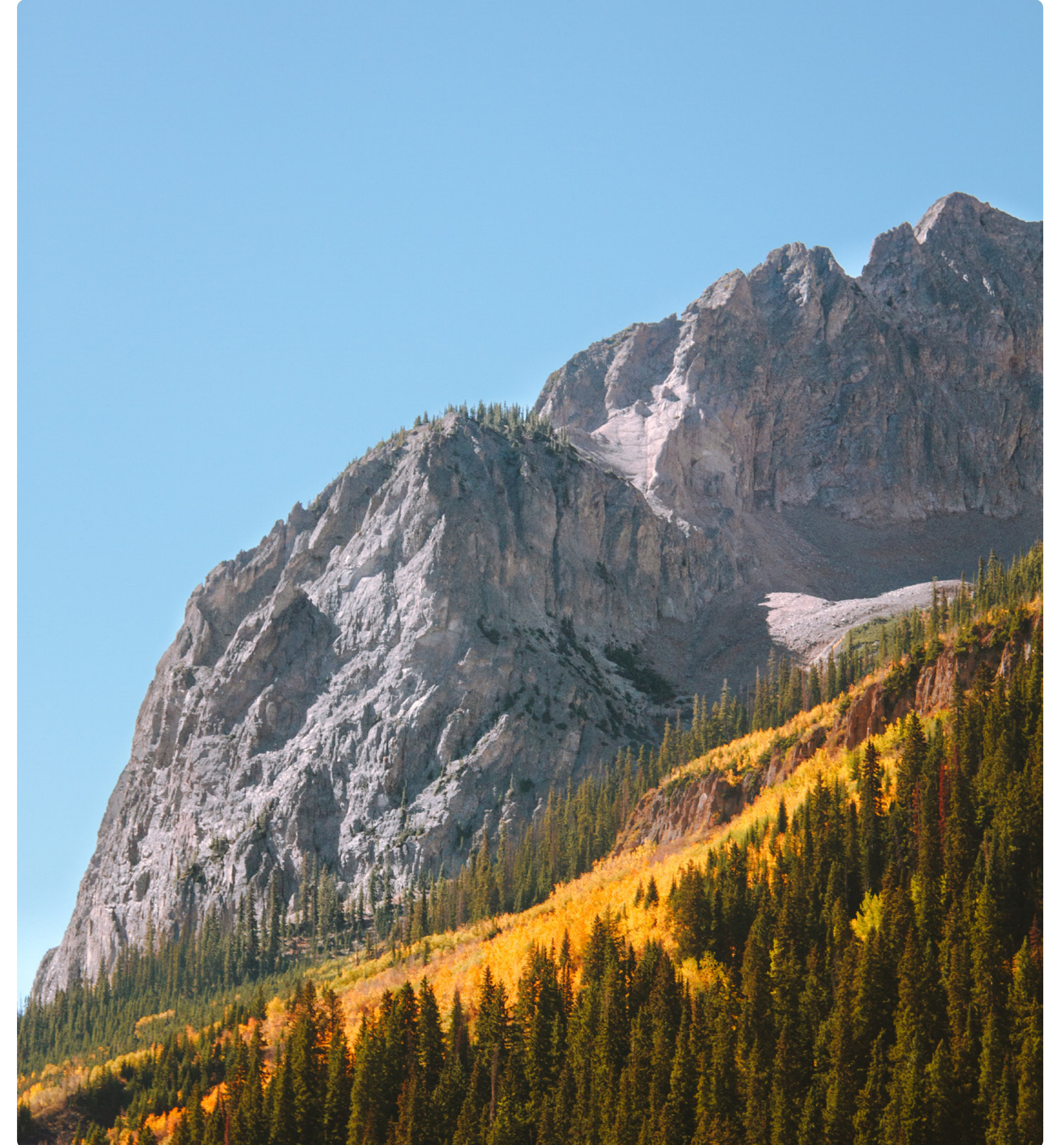
## Accomplishments

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With our commitment to gathering feedback from stakeholders, CDLE continues to implement changes in order to provide better services. Our approach to customer service enhancements and process improvement is aligned with the Governor’s Reimagine State Government directive to ensure we remain agile and responsive, leverage new innovations, and eliminate waste to deliver exceptional services to all Coloradans.



## Model Employer

CDLE continued to lead for the State in disability hiring preferences, enhanced our employee engagement strategy through new affinity groups and expanded EDIA efforts across the agency. Additional ways we've led the state in becoming a model employer include:

In the last year, CDLE's has successfully hired 30 employees using the Disability Hiring Preference. A true proof point of our priority to be a Model Employer, we're now in the process of presenting our recruitment and hiring models to other state agencies to encourage their adoption of a Disability Hiring Preference.

As the organizer of the National State as a Model Employer (SAME) Community of Practice, SAME Colorado is leading the efforts in the planning of the first National SAME Virtual Summit which will be held in October 2024.

DVR's Strategic Staffing Model, first developed in 2022 to address obstacles in recruitment and increase the retention of staff, now has six districts in DVR utilizing the model including Southwestern Colorado, Grand Junction, Mountain, Northeast, Northglenn and Loveland.

The Division of Workers' Compensation partnered with Government Performance Solutions (GPS) to complete a division-wide process improvement workshop. In this exercise, every employee had the opportunity to express their ideas for future innovation and have their voices heard for current pain points in their workflows. Employees also had the opportunity to explore and understand more about how each of their roles aligned with the mission and vision of the Division of Workers' Compensation.

The Employment and Training Division hosted the first Career Services Symposium in partnership with Rocky Mountain Workforce Development Association October 24-25, 2023 in Loveland, Colorado. The event was a great success, and brought together over 100 Workforce Development professionals from across Colorado for two days of Career Services related presentations, activities, and networking. Thirteen presenters shared information on topics including Job Quality, Elevating Service Delivery and Digital Navigation Programs, Mastering Technology for Job Seekers, Practical Strategies for Job Seekers 55+, Best Practices for Community Outreach, and Getting the Job Coaching.

The Division of Labor Standards & Statistics (DLSS) holds bimonthly internal trainings, with professional continuing education credit offered, on labor standards law and policy. It also funds and supports training and coaching beyond DLSS to help employees learn in their roles as well as learn skills to help elevate them into new roles.

## Workers Prosper

Through meaningful employment, every Colorado worker prospers. The impact CDLE’s programs have on workers across the state is critical to Colorado’s economy, and we continue to keep our hard-working citizens top of mind with every initiative. Examples of how we ensure Colorado workers prosper include:

The Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) Division processed more than 80,000 claims and issued more than \$280 million in payments in the first six months of FAMLI benefits becoming available. FAMLI’s highly efficient processes resulted in approved claimants getting their payment within a week of successfully filing their claims.

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) Division launched a new “My Claim Status” feature in MyUI+, the online system claimants use to file and manage unemployment insurance claims. Now upon logging into their online account, claimants will see the status of their claim(s) as well as pending issues and action items required to keep their claim(s) moving in the right direction. This new feature is the result of a collaboration between the Division and current/past claimants and meant to reduce claim processing times and provide users with more clear and concise information throughout the process.

The UI Division continues efforts to prevent the unlawful distribution of UI benefits by identifying fictitious employer accounts and fraudulent UI claims. The Division adopted a new in-person identity verification method in partnership with the United States Postal Service and a multi-faceted electronic verification method in TrueID. Fraud prevention will remain a priority for the Division as there continues to be high levels of fraud attempts.

The Colorado Uninsured Employer (CUE) Fund announced that they will remain open for all benefit levels in 2025. The CUE Fund was established in 2017 to provide relief to individuals injured while working for employers who failed to maintain workers’ compensation insurance. Prior to this legislation passing, workers’ in this situation faced incredible difficulty in receiving medical care and finding legal representation to pursue their claim without a significant financial burden. In 2024, \$461,050.30 was paid to injured workers for medical care, lost wages, and permanent disability, ensuring that the promises made under the Colorado Workers’ Compensation Act are upheld for all Coloradans.

With its commitment to prepare youth with disabilities to transition from high school to college and beyond, DVR also surpassed its goal to increase pre-employment transition services to youth from 3,408 in 2023 to 3,500 by June 30, 2024. In May 2024, DVR had already served 3,745 youth. Holistically, DVR set out to serve 16,108 people with disabilities in fiscal year 24 and met and surpassed that goal in April 2024 serving 16,201 individuals.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) achieved their goal of increasing the average wage of the people served to \$19.94 per hour by June 30, 2024. The goal was met in February 2024 and continues to increase each month. By April 2024 the average wage was \$21.66.

The Employment and Training Division in partnership with DVR successfully passed legislation for the Disability Program Navigator (DPN) initiative. This legislation provides statewide funding to ensure DPNs are housed within the 10 local workforce regions. The role of the DPN is to assist people with disabilities access services, and support co-enrollments in WIOA and DVR services using braided funding resources to ensure greater success in obtaining and maintaining employment.

The Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium received funding through the CWSTEP grant in the amount of \$292,029. This funding is designed to provide subsidized employment opportunities to individuals who are chronically unemployed or underemployed, often with barriers to employment, establish work history and develop workplace skills with a goal of obtaining unsubsidized employment.

By the second half of FY24, DLSS was on pace for its highest-ever number of orders to remedy wage violations it found after investigating. That includes some of the Division’s most significant orders to remedy systemic misclassifications in construction with significant back pay awarded to numerous immigrant drywallers and framers.

DLSS also celebrated its legislative win to use its fines fund to pay wage theft victims who fail to recover from employers ordered to pay them. The Wage & Hour Outstanding Losses Expenditure Fund was authorized as of April 2024, and payments are anticipated to begin during FY25.

## Exceptional Services

Exceptional execution of core services in partnership with customers and stakeholders. In order to ensure CDLE is meeting the standard of exceptional services, Divisions achieved the following to help us get there:

FAMLI took an intentional design approach to the benefit application portal to ensure accessibility for all including those in rural underserved areas and those who may be technologically challenged. As part of this approach, FAMLI conducted extensive usability testing before My FAMLI+ launched in November 2023 before benefits became available in January 2024. Some examples of the testing included the ability for claimants to submit claims over a diverse group of older and unsupported devices and browsers, and those with access to limited connectivity due to being in remote or unsupported areas of the state. As a result of doing this work, FAMLI is proud to share that more than 97% of claims are submitted through the self-service online portal and claimants frequently report how easy and accessible FAMLI's systems are.

From November 2023 to May 2024, Employment & Training staff developed and implemented an improved reporting procedure for the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), providing transparency on federal spending to the general public. Some additions to the reporting process include enhanced accounting verification, monthly reporting timelines and required review from senior leadership prior to report submissions. As a result of these improvements, the division has developed a process in line with the spirit of FFATA, demonstrating a continued commitment to providing accurate and timely information on federal spending to give the public access to the tracking of their money.

The UI Division implemented changes to external customer service resources to provide individuals, employers, and other stakeholders more timely assistance. The new artificial intelligence (AI) based Virtual Assistant can help answer basic questions users have online and over-the-phone to reduce call holding times and reliance on UI staff. The Customer Service Lobby has introduced a new appointment scheduling form designed to help claimants find more self-service resources to help them in the claims process before scheduling an in-person appointment.

DVR has implemented an online referral system available in both English and Spanish. This system allows individuals to refer themselves to DVR and enables other organizations to refer people to DVR. Since its inception, the form has decreased wait time for individuals to access our services by more than 50%.

Going beyond the minimum requirements of Colorado's accessibility laws, DLSS made its labor market information offerings – economic data, traditionally heavy in visuals—accessible by the end of the fiscal year, a significant effort that improved the quality and readability of those tools for all.

Legislative changes in the 2023 session empowered the DOWC to pursue a streamlined and more predictable Division Independent Medical Exam (DIME) process that utilizes the latest technology and navigation support from the DOWC to foster efficiency, transparency, and compliance, ultimately leading to the launch of the DIME Transformation Project. As part of the project, the DOWC developed an advisory team of 20 external stakeholders to represent the various stakeholder groups and review proposed DOWC changes. The primary areas that have been identified and will be considered for revisions to our Rules of Procedure are improvements to the medical record packet, payment of medical providers that more closely aligns with industry standards, updates to indigency standards and additional options to ensure access to interpreters for medical appointments.

The Division of Oil and Public Safety (OPS) Public worked to support owners and responsible parties maintain safety and compliance within their programs. The Boiler Inspection Section inspected 10,115 boilers and pressure vessel systems. The Conveyance Program issued 8,762 Certificates of Operations. The Explosives Program conducted 383 tests for blaster permits. The Amusement Rides and Devices Program conducted 893 site inspections to ensure safety for riders of the devices.

## Employers Thrive

CDLE is committed to cultivating processes and policies that help employers thrive. We have helped Colorado employers succeed by expanding our engagement and increasing our compliance assistance efforts in the following ways:

In addition to a successful launch of its claimant application system, FAML I also enhanced its employer services portal My FAML I+ Employer with a national first—adding an online HR Benefits Dashboard to support employers more effectively track the status of their employees’ FAML I benefit claims. Authorized users can access the new dashboard to view certain claim details including the length of leave and benefit payment amounts. Colorado is the first state with a family and medical leave program to offer this level of service to its employers. FAML I worked with medium and large employers like UCH ealth, Colorado State DPA, Amazon, Wal-Mart and many others to gather requirements and feedback on the most essential functionalities that may help employers as they work to support the administration of FAML I in tandem with other benefits. In its first few weeks of being live the more than 23,000 Colorado employers have registered to use the HR Dashboard and are sharing insightful feedback that FAML I is using to develop and schedule future enhancements.

Driven by CDLE’s E&T Division, the Teacher Externship Program supported by HB23-1198 is a state-led commitment to bridge the gap between education and industry and is a catalyst for diverse and inclusive workforce development efforts in high-growth, high-demand STEM fields. The program connects teachers with STEM-based employers offering hands-on, immersive, work-based learning opportunities. These experiences provide teachers with a deeper understanding of industry practices, empowering them to deliver more relevant content to students to better prepare them for the workforce. Even in its infancy, the program has already launched three externships including a three-day “QCaMP” program with Sandia National Laboratories at CU Boulder focusing on Quantum technology – an in-demand industry expected to bring major investments to Colorado after being designated as a Tech Hub.

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) Division modernized its employer services portal now known as MyUI Employer+. The new platform is now fully integrated with MyUI+, the online system UI claimants use to file and manage claims. The integration of these two systems allows the Division to streamline critical processes for employers and claimants with more accuracy and efficiency. As part of the Employer Services Modernization project, UI continues to make regular upgrades to improve the readability, accessibility, user experience, and overall system performance.

The Division of Workers’ Compensation’s Coverage Enforcement Unit partnered with a number of organizations from across the state to ensure employers are aware of the requirements to carry workers’ compensation insurance. These efforts included outreach to a number of high risk industries including the construction, restaurant, and mortuary industries. Through these efforts, nearly 4,700 employers have obtained workers’ compensation insurance coverage in Colorado, ensuring they are protected from loss in the event of a workplace injury.

DLSS also launched a pilot program, the Strategic Wage Education with Employers Program that after learning of apparent violations that may be inadvertent, engages in outreach and compliance assistance to help those employers remedy their practices in advance of, and to avoid, a possible investigation or lawsuit by workers. The pilot program outperformed expectations, fixing the overwhelming majority of violations, and yielding a legislative appropriation to make these efforts a more permanent part of DLSS’s portfolio.

Within the Employment and Training Division, the Workforce Business Service team is demonstrating its dedication to supporting Colorado employers by completing 8,353 services and successfully connecting businesses with 838 new employees through April 2024.

DVR’s Business Relations Unit launched the inaugural Employer Challenge: “Conquering Your DEIA Journey.” This series is a deep dive into Disability Inclusion and Accessibility for People with Disabilities in the workplace. The Business Relations Unit has invited several strategic partners from across the state and over 45 employers have signed up to participate in its first year.

As the legislature continues expanding the range of labor rights and responsibilities mandated by law, DLSS has published new or updated guidance by the effective date of virtually all new laws within its jurisdiction. This service ensures employers have as much free assistance and as many specific do-and-don’t examples as possible to help them minimize not only complaints and lawsuits, but also the need for expensive legal assistance to understand complicated new laws.

## Future of Work

We ensure Colorado is prepared for the future of work. With our dedicated Office of Future of Work (OFW), our Office of New Americans (ONA) and our Office of Just Transition (OJT) we are spearheading several initiatives to ensure all Coloradans—both those new to the state and those whose families have been here for generations—are not only set up for success for the workforce of today but also gain the ever-evolving skills and talent needed for tomorrow.

### Office of Future of Work (OFW)

In July 2023, Apprenticeship Colorado, currently housed under the Office of Future of Work, was awarded funding through [USDOL's State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula grant program](#). As part of this grant, Apprenticeship Colorado established a [Five Year Plan for Apprenticeship Colorado](#) that will ensure the launch of the State Apprenticeship Agency culminates in a more sustainable, innovative, equitable, accessible and high quality apprenticeship system in Colorado.

To ensure that Coloradans interested in exploring apprenticeships can find the information they need, Apprenticeship Colorado launched a [new website](#), [Apprenticeship Data Dashboard](#), and an [upgraded Apprenticeship Resource Directory](#).

Governor Polis also doubled down on his commitment to promoting Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) and work-based learning by [signing a new Executive Order](#) requiring state agencies to launch work-based learning programs, increase the number of RAPs in state agencies, and encouraging the private sector to do the same by setting a goal of creating 100 new or expanded RAPs across Colorado. As of June 2024, 86 RAPs have been launched or expanded, and we are on track to hit 100 by the end of the fiscal year.

Colorado's first Digital Access Plan was approved by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration in April 2024. The State of Colorado expects to receive about \$12M in capacity funds from the Digital Equity Act in 2024 which will be used to implement the objectives established in the Digital Access Plan.

The [Digital Navigator Program](#) launched in March 2023 with \$1.7 million in funding from state legislation, [SB 22-140](#). Since then the Learning Source and Loveland Public Library have been selected as grantees, and CDLE has hired five digital navigators that are serving at multiple sites across the state. In November 2023, the OFW also launched the Colorado Digital Navigator Community of Practice to support staff and volunteers who provide digital navigation services in Colorado. In June 2024, OFW hosted a Digital Navigator Summit for 70+ digital navigators across the state.



## Office of New Americans (ONA)

When the Biden administration extended Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Venezuelans who arrived in the U.S. prior to July 31, 2023, ONA quickly organized Colorado’s nonprofit and low bono immigration legal service providers to establish free TPS and employment authorization legal clinics. This prompted the development of an innovative “virtual law firm” model which leveraged low bono immigration attorneys nationwide to serve applicants at a scale that would have been impossible with Colorado attorneys alone. By the end of June 2024, over 3,250 individuals will have applied for Temporary Protected Status and/or employment authorization through the free legal services ONA established.

ONA published a three-part webinar series titled, “Working with New Americans: From Recruiting to Upskilling.” This webinar series is built to support employers with: starting an initiative to hire new Americans, improving management structures to best serve New Americans, and upskilling current New American employees.

The Integration of International Medical Graduates (IMG) program launched in the fall of 2023, and the first cohort of IMGs are currently taking the clinical readiness program. The IMG program seeks to help IMGs navigate entry into Colorado’s medical field, assess their clinical readiness, and assist entry into residency programs.

In January 2024, ONA co-hosted a hiring fair with Centro De Los Trabajadores, Emily Griffith Technical College, and the Spring Institute. The event featured 10 employers representing different workforce sectors and over 140 work-authorized New Americans attended. In March 2024, ONA hosted another job fair, and 14 employers attended with over 617 work-authorized new Americans in attendance emphasizing the need for a bridge for new Americans into Colorado’s economy that is desperate for talent.

The Global Talent Task Force (GTTF) reviewed existing pathways in at least five in-demand sectors for global professionals and skilled workers living in Colorado to obtain credentials that will help them work in their professional field or occupation.





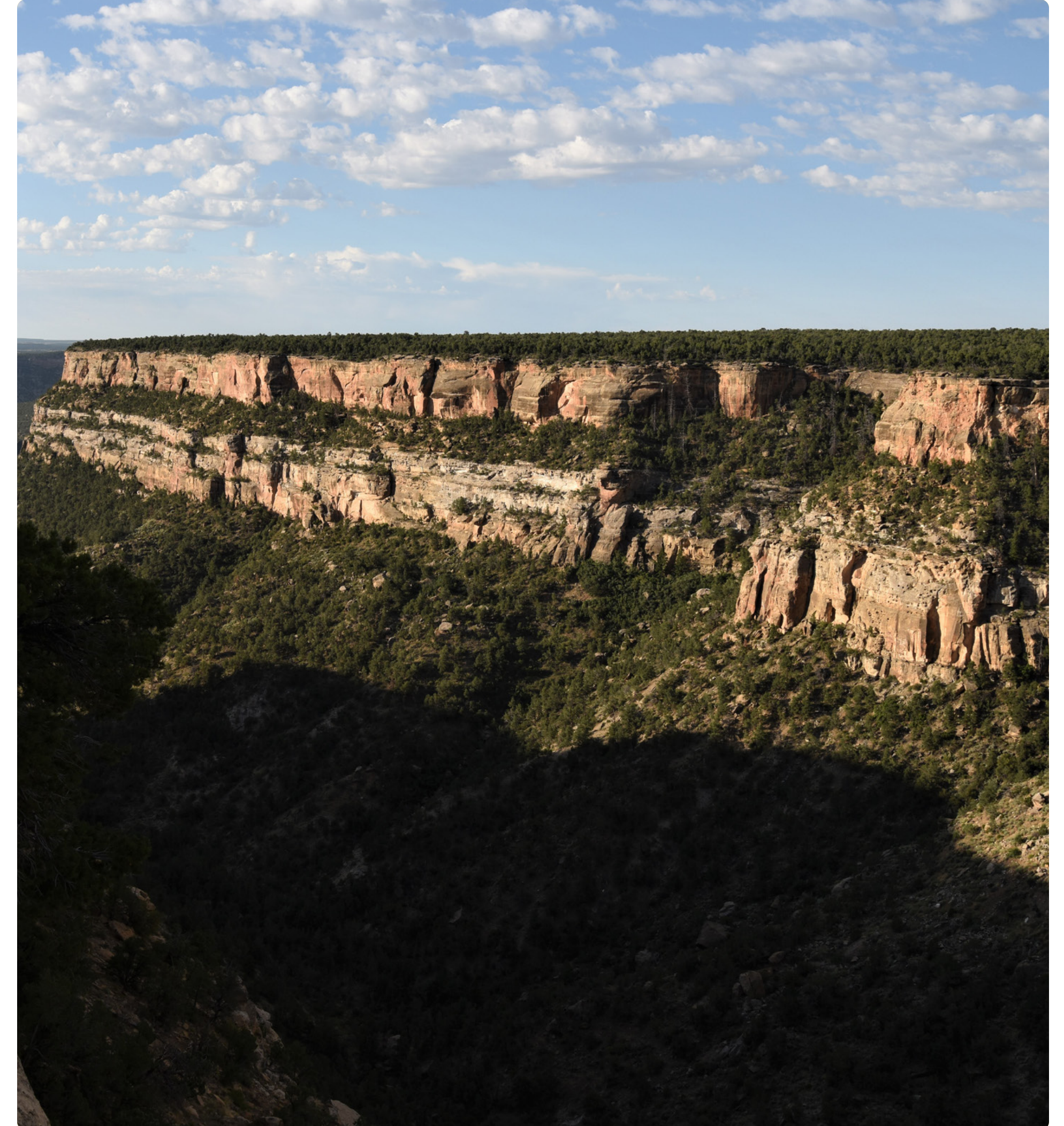
## Office of Just Transition (OJT)

OJT's Coal Transition Worker Program launched with the hiring of a transition worker navigator in Craig, Colorado. This person will be the primary contact for workers and families transitioning out of the coal industry as coal plants and mines are shuttered in the latter half of this decade. This is the first of seven pre-closure strategies which also include financial and retirement planning; tuition, education, and trade assistance; and small business start-up assistance, among others.

OJT's pilot grant-writing program is expanding to all coal transition communities. The program provides a grant writer to work with the communities, grant navigators, and other state agency regional representatives to write federal and state grant applications to fund transition projects within the communities.

OJT and the Office of Economic Development and International Trade have partnered in a Community Assistance Grant program for coal transition communities that to date has encumbered \$7.2 million for transition communities. Projects funded include capacity building and strategic planning, business park development, an entrepreneurship center, river recreation improvements, support for medical tourism, town water infrastructure, business retention and expansion, and more.

OJT is launching a Business Retention and Expansion program in the West End of Montrose County to help support and grow existing businesses and diversify local economies. The Office intends to expand this program to other transition communities around the state, in part by funding a customer relationship management tool for participating businesses.







## Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility



# Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility

CDLE'S commitment EDI is a priority agency-wide. This year our EDI Committee strategically decided to rename itself as the EDIA Committee, incorporating the "A" for "Accessibility."



The addition to our name was not taken lightly, and the decision was made for two very important reasons:

1 We believe it was necessary to add accessibility to our name to stand in solidarity with the state's new accessibility law. One in four Coloradans identify as having a disability. As a government entity, it's our responsibility to make sure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from our services due to accessibility barriers.

2 We also recognize that accessibility is a part of all EDI work. It's important to draw attention to accessibility specifically, because the disability community is a population that is traditionally overlooked. At CDLE, we want to be intentional about making sure accessibility is never an afterthought.

Here are some highlights from the [2023-2024 EDIA Success & Priorities Plan](#):

## 2023–2024 EDIA Accomplishments

- Added two new OneCDLE Groups (SHALOM and OWL) to make a total of seven OneCDLE Employee Resource Groups
- Organized CDLE participation at the Marade, Juneteenth, and Pride. And organized Longmont Pride for the State of Colorado.
- Reignited the EDIA Committee, gaining commitment for at least one EDIA Ambassador from each division.

## 2024–2025 EDIA Goals

- Pilot the Allyship Academy with the EDIA Committee
- Re-imagine Allyship Affinity Group
- Provide a playbook on how to embed accessibility and inclusion into Software Modernization Services (using the ESM Modernization project's work as a case study/model)