



Empower Every Montanan Through Work and Opportunity

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY

ANNUAL PLAN

FY2025

Executive Summary

The Montana Department of Labor & Industry (DLI) is mission driven to:

Empower Every Montanan Through Work and Opportunity.

DLI is committed to modernizing Montana's workforce system by ensuring every Montanan has a pathway to a career and a plan to achieve it, and every Montana employer can find the talent they need to thrive. Our agency safeguards fair workplaces, delivers critical benefit programs, and leads efforts to build the skilled workforce that drives our state's economy into the future.

Our programs connect jobseekers with employers, expand registered apprenticeships and work-based learning, and administers unemployment insurance with integrity. We oversee professional and occupational licensing, improve building and permitting processes and timeliness, and ensure safe, fair workplaces. Through regional Job Service offices, licensing boards, and community partnerships – DLI serves as the front door to work, training, and opportunity in Montana.

Our mission drives us to promote and protect the well-being of Montana's workers, employers, and communities. Our vision is a state where every individual has a pathway to prosperity, every business can hire the skilled workers they need, and government services are modern, simple, and responsive.

In 2025, we are focused on goals within three priority areas that align with our OGSM strategies:

1. **Modernize Montana's Workforce System** – Launch the 406 JOBS framework through executive order, stand up Montana's first Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program in at least 40 schools (including 12 in frontier or tribal communities), engage 100 new businesses in full-scope of Job Service workforce services, integrate Medicaid workforce verification into existing DLI data systems, expand OSHA-10 trainings in schools, and consistently tell Montana's workforce story.
2. **Strengthen Unemployment (UI) Integrity & Customer Service** – Complete centralization of collections and call centers, implement full scope UI security and program training, expand prosecution of UI fraud with county attorneys, and ensure UI benefits are delivered with integrity, efficiency, and improved customer and employer experience.
3. **Drive Operational Excellence** – Host Montana's first DLI Data Summit, onboard an Agency Chief Data Officer, digitize and modernize prevailing wage survey processes, increase job site inspection capacity, streamline building code licensing and permitting, and reduce unnecessary regulations, fees, and cycle times to improve service delivery.

By advancing these priorities, DLI is modernizing systems, expanding pathways, and reducing barriers—ensuring Montana continues to lead from the front in workforce and economic development.

Modernize Montana's Workforce System

The purpose of this strategy is to ensure Montana's public workforce system is responsive to the needs of both workers and employers, equipping Montanans with the skills that align with the state's economy. By launching 406 JOBS and expanding registered apprenticeships, youth pre-apprenticeships, and Jobs for MT's Graduates (JMG), we are building a talent pipeline that is future-focused and grounded in opportunity. This includes working closely with schools, industry partners, and rural and tribal communities to expand access to career pathways and work-based learning.

At the same time, modernizing the workforce system means addressing both training and safety needs. Increasing OSHA-10 trainings in schools and integrating Medicaid workforce verification into existing systems ensures Montanans are safe, skilled, and connected to opportunity. Collectively, these initiatives advance a workforce system that is modern, data-driven, and centered on citizens, while telling our story and promoting Montana as a place where both people and businesses thrive.




Strategic Outcome

#1

Key Measures

- 406 JOBS Launch with Executive Order 5-2025
- Launch Registered Apprenticeship (40 schools, 12 frontier/tribal, 160 apprentices, 40 youth/pre-apprentices)
- Increase workforce program participation (JMG & Apprenticeship)
- Engage 100 new businesses in full scope of workforce services
- Increase OSHA-10 trainings in MT schools
- Support/Integrate DPHHS Medicaid workforce verification(s) into newly modernized DLI software

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| <div>  <p>Strategic Outcome</p> <p>#2</p> </div> | Strengthen Unemployment (UI) Integrity & Customer Service | |
| | <p>This strategy protects the trust Montanans place in their unemployment system by ensuring benefits are managed with accountability integrity, and responsiveness. Through modernization efforts such as centralizing collections, expanding county attorney fraud prosecution partnerships, and implementing federal prohibitions on improper payments, DLI is strengthening financial stewardship. These efforts reduce fraud, ensure fair treatment of workers and employers, and protect taxpayer resources.</p> <p>Equally important is our renewed focus on customer service. Training staff, deploying NASWA learning tools, and standardizing response systems for tax and employer interactions that ensure UI is accessible, efficient, and reliable for every citizen. Initiatives like finalizing the sale of the former Billings Call Center and expanding communications reinforce our citizen-first approach, ensuring Montanans can depend on timely and effective service while maintaining the integrity of the system.</p> | |
| | Key Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement USDOL Millionaire Prohibition on UI Benefits • Complete Centralization of Agency Collections & Collect 15% • County Attorney partnership on UI Fraud Prosecutions • UI Security Training and NASWA Learning Plan for every UID Employee • Implement bulk-filing for responses for TPA's to reduce tax filing errors • Finalize former Billings Call Center sale |



Strategic Outcome

#3

Driving Operational Excellence

Driving operational excellence means transforming DLI into a high-performing, results-oriented agency that delivers better citizen service with fewer barriers. This strategy includes modernizing core business functions like occupational licensing, prevailing wage, and building permit processing – ensuring programs reflect the true cost of regulation while also reducing processing times. These reforms directly benefit businesses and citizens by making government more efficient, predictable, and transparent.

At the same time, operational excellence requires a culture shift inside the agency. Efforts like hosting a DLI data summit with DOA, aligning division budgets with measurable outcomes, reevaluating every agency program for efficiency, ROI, and budget authorization, and reconfiguring staffing models to program needs are all focused on making DLI more agile and citizen focused. By setting clear performance expectations, reducing unnecessary bureaucracy, and digitizing and modernizing outdated systems, DLI is building an agency that can meet today's needs while preparing for the future of work in Montana.

Initiatives

- Implement Registered Apprenticeship with in DLI hiring
- Host Agency Data Summit with State CIO & Recruit/Hire/Onboard Agency CDO
- Analyze all licensing board/program costs to ensure licenses reflect the true cost of regulation, and fees cover all costs incurred
- Digitize & Modernize Prevailing Wage Survey Process for FY26
- Increase Job Site Inspection Numbers to 35 per inspector per month
- Reduce Commercial Building Permit Issuance Time by 20%
- Reconfigure HRB staffing & case management to meet work demands while reducing bureau resource pressures