



June 2, 2023

DIRECTIVE: JOB CORPS PROGRAM INSTRUCTION NOTICE NO. 22-19

TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF
 ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF
 ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
 ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS
 ALL FOREST SERVICE JOB CORPS CENTERS
 ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS
 ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS, AND CTS CONTRACTORS
 ALL CENTER USERS

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 Office of Job Corps by Rachel Torres

SUBJECT: Promoting and Advancing Job Corps Centers as Infrastructure Academies

1. Purpose. To instruct the Job Corps community on steps to promote Job Corps Centers as Infrastructure Academies, workforce system integration, and cross-collaboration with state and local entities in light of recent infrastructure investments.
2. Background. Investing in America’s physical infrastructure – from roads, to bridges, waterways, ports and airports, highways, and power plants – can stimulate economic growth both nationally and locally and unleash job creation across the country.

Landmark federal investments in critical industries via the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Inflation Reduction Act, and Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors and Science Act have accelerated the need for highly skilled workers in infrastructure, climate, and advanced manufacturing sectors. With a nationwide network of 121 centers and 43 nationally accredited training pathways in advanced manufacturing, construction, renewable resources and energy, and transportation, the Job Corps program is a natural partner for states and cities laboring to develop their talent pipelines.

- **Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).** The BIL is a historic investment in our nation’s infrastructure and our communities, and implementing BIL with integrity requires a readily available, well-trained, and highly skilled workforce.¹ The current supply of infrastructure workers is insufficient to meet the need that BIL presents; new investments in education and workforce training and pathways to high-quality jobs will be necessary to implement federally-funded opportunities offered by the

¹ [President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law | The White House](#)

Departments of Transportation (DOT), Commerce (DOC), Energy (DOE), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and other Federal agencies.

In addition to meeting growing labor needs spurred by the billions in new BIL investments, there is an urgent need to emphasize diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) within the infrastructure workforce and its variety of talent pipelines. The BIL includes multiple provisions – like local and economic hire provisions and new flexibilities for workforce development spending – which empower federal investments to support local infrastructure talent development and training. Infrastructure occupations have no geographic exclusivity—every metropolitan area stands to benefit from more infrastructure jobs given the economic importance of these facilities over several decades.²

- **Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).** The IRA significantly invests in clean energy and combatting climate change, while also prioritizing good-paying union jobs that will further the nation's climate goals. The IRA incentivizes prevailing wages and apprenticeship in federally funded projects, boosts domestic production of clean energy technologies like solar, wind, carbon capture, and clean hydrogen, and supports tax incentives and credits that support workers and environmentally-impacted communities.³
- **Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) and Science Act.** The CHIPS and Science Act provides \$52.7 billion for American semiconductor research, development, manufacturing, and workforce development, while also requiring recipients of Federal funding to demonstrate significant worker and community investments, including opportunities for small businesses and disadvantaged communities. CHIPS investments primarily incentivize activities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and workforce development activities which are critical to developing skills needed for taking on the highly skilled jobs of the emerging industries built on technologies of the future. This investment requires a robust talent pipeline of skilled workers at varying levels of expertise and technical education to support domestic manufacturing and infrastructure-related projects.⁴

The Job Corps program, authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), is embedded in the public workforce system as an effective direct services and training hub for opportunity youth, including Black, Indigenous, and people/youth of color (BIPOC), LGBTQ+ young people, youth with disabilities, young parents, victims of human trafficking, and refugees. Job Corps provides in-demand training and credentials across ten industry sectors, many of which – including carpentry, heavy

² <https://www.bls.gov/opub/btn/volume-7/the-employment-outlook-for-occupations-tasked-with-building-americas-infrastructure.htm>

³ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/08/19/fact-sheet-the-inflation-reduction-act-supports-workers-and-families/>

⁴ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/08/09/fact-sheet-chips-and-science-act-will-lower-costs-create-jobs-strengthen-supply-chains-and-counter-china/>

equipment operations, plumbing, and cement masonry – are directly aligned to high-demand jobs necessary to fill infrastructure talent pipelines and reinvigorate the nation’s physical infrastructure.

While Job Corps is well-positioned to create talent pipelines into these careers, many centers struggle to create and sustain partnerships which successfully transition graduates into Good Jobs⁵ and career pathways with quality wages and growth potential (e.g., Registered Apprenticeship programs). Recipients of infrastructure investments and infrastructure project leads are encouraged to leverage Job Corps’ program model to create partnerships that enable co-enrollment, work-based learning, training integration, and graduate placements.

From Program Year (PY) 2018 to PY 2021, Job Corps had 16,643 students trained in the infrastructure clusters (i.e., construction, advanced manufacturing, and/or renewable resources energy.) This data shows that approximately 9,500 completers of infrastructure-related trades found jobs that matched their specialty training. State and local governments and workforce development partners may not be universally aware of the significant opportunities to be leveraged through a partnership with local Job Corps centers as it relates to academic and career technical training for the youth and young adult workforce—including, for example, pre-apprenticeship as an on-ramp to Registered Apprenticeship. Recent research indicates that opportunity youth could thrive in apprenticeship opportunities when coupled with supportive services.⁶ Recipients of federal infrastructure funds and infrastructure project leads can leverage Job Corps’ effective program model through concurrent training for on-the-job training and workforce training opportunities. See also PRH Chapter 3.1 R.12.

3. Action. Centers operators must take the following actions:

- A. Conduct Local Asset Mapping.** The Office of Job Corps plans to conduct an asset mapping exercise with all centers. The objective is for each center to identify its network of prospective local and regional partners, understand the mutual benefits of partnering with these organizations, and use this information as the basis for strategic planning and subsequent partnership development. Guidance on how to conduct asset mapping is forthcoming, but in the interim, centers should take the following steps:
- i. Identify the state and local workforce development boards as well as other relevant WIOA-mandated partners in the center’s recruitment areas.
 - ii. Strategize how the center and these partners, including state and Job Corps workforce councils, plan to deliver infrastructure-related workforce development training that responds to priorities and/or critical skill and

⁵ The Department of Labor defines “good jobs” as those which lift up workers and families and make businesses more competitive globally. The Departments of Labor and Commerce partnered to identify what comprises a good job. These eight principles include: Recruitment and hiring, Benefits, Diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA), Empowerment and representation, Job security and working conditions, Organizational culture, Pay, and Skills and career advancement. For additional information, see the Department of Commerce and Department of Labor Good Jobs Principles page here: <https://www.dol.gov/general/good-jobs/principles>

⁶ https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/AAI/AAI_Brief-Underrepresented_Pops_Final_508_9-2022.pdf

- occupational demand referenced the various infrastructure-related federal investments (e.g., BIL, IRA, CHIPS). See also PRH Chapter 5.1 R33.
- iii. In coordination with the Office of Job Corps, identify key infrastructure implementation personnel, active and planned infrastructure projects, and review the project labor agreements, community workforce agreements, and community benefits agreements to determine whether there are opportunities for Job Corps students in infrastructure-related work-based learning opportunities. For more information, review the Training and Employment Notice (TEN) 08-22, Building Pathways to Infrastructure Careers: Framework for Preparing an Infrastructure Workforce, available here: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/advisories/ten-08-22>.

B. Develop a Strategic Action Plan. Formalize your asset map, in coordination with the Office of Job Corps, by developing an action plan with clear details on engagement with state and local leaders to access available resources to improve and/or expand opportunities for Job Corps students in infrastructure-related career pathways. Action plans must be submitted to the Contracting Officer Representative 30 calendar days after completing asset mapping. Once approved, OJC and the Office of the Senior Procurement Executive will coordinate to memorialize the plans as a part of the center operations contract. The strategic action plan should outline concrete actions to be taken before or by the end of the fiscal year for all items listed below and address the following questions at a minimum:

- i. **Partnership Development.**
- What are the key infrastructure opportunities that your center can leverage?
 - How are your center's current career technical training offerings aligned with infrastructure-related jobs?
 - What state and local relationships or partnerships has your center fostered? When did this partnership(s) begin and how often does your center representative(s) engage with these stakeholders?
 - How many of your center's active work-based learning opportunities with employers are focused on infrastructure-related careers?
 - How does your center engage with city and local officials, such as the Mayor's Office? Have you developed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or similar partnership agreement to formalize the partnership? Does that agreement outline current opportunities to leverage state and federal infrastructure investments?
 - How does your center leverage transition support services within the workforce system, including but not limited to housing, childcare, legal, financial, and health-related assistance programs? Identify these partnerships and resources. For more information, review the Training and Employment Notice 12-21, Practitioner's Guide to Supportive Services.
 - The plan must also outline how the center will develop or expand employer partnerships that are directly linked to infrastructure-related jobs. 20 CFR 686.800(a) mandates that Center Directors must "ensure

the establishment and development of mutually beneficial business and community relationships and networks.”⁷ See also PRH Chapter 5.1 R.32. A key resource provided in TENs 08-22 and 12-21 focuses on supportive services.⁸ The Office of Job Corps continues to explore ways to increase and improve transition supports to Job Corps graduates, including partnering with vocational rehabilitation (VR) for ongoing disability support needs after students graduate from the program, and leveraging community-based organizations for assisting with placement opportunities.⁹

ii. **Planning and Procurement.**

- How the center plans to connect with recipients of infrastructure funds and infrastructure project leads plan to provide work-based learning opportunities for Job Corps youth. The Office of Job Corps encourages not only leveraging of resources but additional opportunities for centers to partner with state and local governments, academic institutions, and non-profit organizations as training providers for opportunity youth within Job Corps.
- How the center plans to coordinate with state and local governments and industry partners to promote the braiding of funds to access state and federal infrastructure resources as it relates to job training opportunities for students in the trades.
- How the center plans to engage with any state-appointed or local infrastructure coordinators, partner with local construction companies, engineering firms, material suppliers, trade schools, and other stakeholder organizations that can offer work-based learning opportunities connected to infrastructure jobs and careers.¹⁰

In completing action plans, **centers should also review the available White House supplemental resources**, including:

- **A Workforce Development for Infrastructure Jobs Guidebook**, which provides an overview of federal funding resources to support workforce development

⁷ Establishing and developing networks includes relationships with: (1) Local and distant employers; (2) Applicable one-stop centers and Local WDBs; (3) Entities offering apprenticeship opportunities, including registered apprenticeships, and youth programs; (4) Labor-management organizations and local labor organizations; (5) Employers and contractors that support national training programs and initiatives; and (6) Community-based organizations, non-profit organizations, and intermediaries providing workforce development-related services; available at [eCFR :: 20 CFR 686.800 -- How do Job Corps centers and service providers become involved in their local communities?](#)

⁸ [Attachment I: Practitioners Guide to Supportive Services \(dol.gov\)](#)

⁹ See also Department of Labor’s Frequently Asked Questions: Competitive Integrated Employment and Blending, Braiding, and Sequencing Resources (Services and Funding), available here: <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ODEP/pdf/FAQs-CIEBlendingBraidingSequencingResources08-03-22Final.pdf>

¹⁰ White House asks governors to name infrastructure coordinators, available at <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/588249-white-house-asks-governors-to-name-infrastructure-coordinators/amp/>

- The **Rural Playbook**, which identifies programs set aside for rural communities under the law, and overviews key flexibilities and other benefits available
- The **Tribal Playbook** to identify programs and sources of funds for Tribal communities and provide a guide to Tribal eligibility for other programs in the BIL
- An **Action Plan for Accelerating Infrastructure** to focus attention on, and fast-track, innovation in the delivery of infrastructure projects
- A list of **Open Funding Opportunities** is published every few weeks (See also the Brookings Institution's [Federal Infrastructure Hub](#)).

C. Develop a Sustainable Partnership Network/Alliance. The purpose of the alliance is to leverage and expand existing workforce councils to include state and local workforce development agencies to discuss anticipated or expected infrastructure investments for the state.¹¹ The alliance should promote effective communication, collaboration, and coordination among participants. The alliance will be memorialized and embedded as a partnership in the current but also future Job Corps center contract to ensure sustainability of efforts. The alliance at a minimum should:

- i. Establish a recurring meeting schedule;
- ii. Facilitate knowledge sharing and support to engage with and aggregate local employers around infrastructure needs;
- iii. Support access to work-based learning for all students regardless of geography or socioeconomic barrier;
- iv. Ensure students are supported during their programs and fairly paid in recognition of the Good Jobs Principles;
- v. Support real-time reporting on student learning, skill development, participation, engagement, and performance at work.

4. Effective Date. Immediately.

5. Expiration Date. Until superseded.

6. Inquiries. Questions about this Program Instruction Notice should be directed to Jobcorpspartnerships@dol.gov.

¹¹ See 20 CFR 686.810 available at [eCFR : 20 CFR 686.810 -- What is the makeup of a workforce council and what are its responsibilities?](#)