



Workforce Development Funding in Cuyahoga County



March 2026

Introduction

The workforce development system exists to ensure adults have the skills needed to obtain and maintain employment and that employers can find qualified workers. Common services within the workforce development system include job preparation and readiness, training, job search and employment services, post-secondary education and credentialing, job matching and career planning, addressing barriers to employment, and employer services. Workforce development bridges education and economic development. It is a varied and complex system which spans all levels of government.

While the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is the single largest source of dollars for workforce development, the U.S. Government Accountability Office identified nine federal agencies that support workforce development via 43 funding streams.¹ The most common services include employment counseling and assessment and job readiness training, but there are many programs which target specific populations. There are also myriad state programs and a vast array of local stakeholders who are engaged in the workforce development system. In addition to services at agencies or institutions, substantial dollars help individuals pay for their education and training, including scholarships and subsidies, and there are tax credits and other incentives for employers who hire workers.

For the purposes of this study, we focus on dollars supporting employment and training services which usually go to organizations and institutions clearly identified as part of the workforce development system. General education and higher education funding is excluded, as are scholarships or subsidies. With an increase in opportunities for high school students to begin their post-secondary training and education before graduation, the line is blurring between the education and workforce development systems. In most cases, we excluded funding for school districts from our analysis.

This research was commissioned by Deaconess Foundation and is an update of the “Funding for Workforce in Cuyahoga County” produced by The Center for Community Solutions in 2021. This analysis goes beyond simply updating the information contained in the previous report to provide a more complete picture of the workforce funding landscape in Cuyahoga County.

Community Solutions gathered information about government and philanthropic funding that supports workforce development efforts, with a focus on dollars flowing to service providers. To collect the data, we utilized online databases showing federal, state, and local government funding as well as resources from Candid.² Unfortunately, Candid often has a lag in reporting spending information. Noting this we used the recently available data

¹ U.S. Government Accountability Office, “Employment and Training Programs: Department of Labor Should Assess Efforts to Coordinate Services Across Programs” March 2019, <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-19-200>.

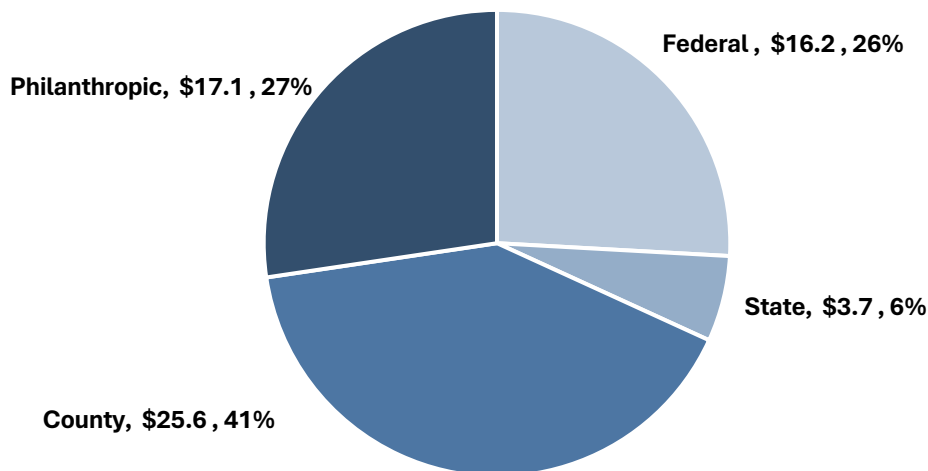
² Candid was formed by the merger of Guidestar and Foundation Center.



for all data sources. For Candid this was 2023 and for all government sources this was FY 2025. Where possible, future funding information was included as well.

Funding was included if it was identified as being for a workforce development purpose or related to programs included in Ohio’s Combined State Workforce Plan. A more detailed description of what is included in each bucket can be found in subsequent sections. We traced the dollars flowing to entities in Cuyahoga County. For some programs, identifying specific funding amounts supporting services in Cuyahoga County was not possible. These programs are described in this report, but unfortunately, we are not able to include the amounts in the pie chart below. For example, vocational rehabilitation services are funded by both federal and state dollars. When services are tied to an individual, rather than an agency, it is not clear how much of this funding is supporting Cuyahoga County residents. Although this is a limitation of the analysis, we describe the programs in the narrative because they are important to the workforce development landscape.

Sources of Funding for Workforce Development Programs in Cuyahoga County, In Millions, 2025



More than \$62 million was invested in employment and training services and other workforce development programs supporting Cuyahoga County residents in 2025.³ Cuyahoga County government has the most control over funding that funds the workforce development system in Cuyahoga County at 41% or \$25.6 million. This is the result of federal dollars for two federal programs, TANF and SNAP E&T, being administered at the county level. While these dollars *could* have been classified as federal funds as the federal government provides the funding for the county, it was decided that they would be

³ Due to changes in what is included in the analysis, it is not possible to compare these totals to the previous research examining spending in 2019. In particular, several additional federal funding sources were included and conducted the research into county spending differently.



classified as County dollars as the County decides which organizations receive funding. These are the only dollars treated this way. The next largest source of funding was philanthropic at \$17.1 million or 27% of all funding. Federal funding came in just behind philanthropic at \$16.2 million or 26%. Again, if TANF and SNAP E&T funding was classified as federal funds, federal funding would have been the largest source of funding and County would have been the smallest source of funding. The State of Ohio provided \$3.7 million or 6% of all funding for workforce development.

Funding for Workforce Development in Cuyahoga County for 2025		
Level	Source/Funder	Amount
Federal	WIOA - Youth, Adult, Dislocated Workers	\$ 14,038,823
Federal	Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE)	\$ 2,170,457
Federal Subtotal		\$ 16,209,280
State	Career-Tech Ed Enhancement	\$ 1,002,793
State	Industry-Recognized Credentials High School Students	\$ 789,062
State	Adult Education Programs Allocations	\$ 84,350
State	Ohio Technical Centers	\$ 1,112,679
State	Adult Basic Literacy Education	\$ 738,173
State Subtotal		\$ 3,727,058
County	Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program*	\$ 9,700,000
County	Adult Employment*	\$ 6,600,000
County	The Prevention, Retention, and Contingency Program – Emergency Assistance*	\$ 5,500,000
County	Bridges Beyond Benefits*	\$ 2,070,000
County	Job Retention*	\$ 1,200,000
County	Scholarship at GCW	\$ 500,000
County Subtotal		\$ 25,570,000
Philanthropic	Cleveland Foundation	\$ 3,488,026
Philanthropic	Deaconess Foundation	\$ 2,177,548
Philanthropic	The George Gund Foundation	\$ 877,000
Philanthropic	Fund for Our Economic Future of Northeast Ohio	\$ 603,209
Philanthropic	Jack Joseph & Morton Mandel Foundation	\$ 590,000
Philanthropic	Philanthropic Organizations Outside Top 5 Donors	\$ 9,393,377
Philanthropic Subtotal		\$ 17,129,160
ALL SOURCE TOTAL 2025		\$ 62,635,498
* Programs funded from federal sources (TANF; SNAP E&T) but included at County level as funding decisions for this are made at the local level. See federal and county sections for more detail.		
**Using 2023 Philanthropic Funding to Ensure the Most Complete Data Possible		



Important Considerations

There are two important considerations prior to proceeding into the report. The first is that depending on how workforce development is defined, this report could represent only a small portion of money which is used to prepare the workforce and improve employment prospects for individuals in Cuyahoga County. The second is the expansion of work requirements for federal benefit programs. The House Resolution 1 of 2025, a federal reconciliation bill, included numerous changes to SNAP and Medicaid. Included in the changes were the expansion of work requirements for SNAP recipients and a work requirement for those receiving Medicaid coverage as part of the expansion population.⁴ While these changes will not be reflected in the data examined in this report it will have an impact on the workforce development system moving forward. The most likely impact from this change on the system is an increase in demand as more individuals attempt to meet the newly established work requirements, which could provide strain on the system.

Federal Support for Local Workforce Development

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is the central funding mechanism for workforce development systems in the United States. The U.S. Department of Labor describes WIOA as “landmark legislation that is designed to strengthen and improve our nation’s public workforce system and help get Americans, including youth and those with significant barriers to employment, into high-quality jobs and careers and help employers hire and retain skilled workers.”⁵ Under WIOA, states must prepare and submit a State Plan to the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education. Six federal programs are required to be included, and states have the option to incorporate several more. Unified plans must include: WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, WIOA Youth, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (ABLE), Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation Program. Ohio has opted to include other programs, creating a Combined Plan. These include Technical and education services under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program, and Senior Community Service Employment Program.⁶

Since they are part of Ohio’s combined plan, these programs are all considered to be integral to workforce development in the state and therefore form the center of the analysis of federal funding supporting employment and training programs. Although not part of the state plan, part of Ohio’s federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grant is used to support workforce development. Another source of federal funding providing reimbursement for some employment and training programs in Cuyahoga County

⁴ SNAP, Medicaid, and Medicare in the federal reconciliation bill. *The Center for Community Solutions*. https://www.communitysolutions.com/resources/snap-medicaid-medicare-federal-reconciliation-bill?mc_cid=18de0c9b36&mc_eid=35b54e3222

⁵ U.S. Department of Labor, “Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act” <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa/>

⁶ Ohio’s State Combined Plan for Program Year 2024-2027 is available at https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/jfs.ohio.gov/owd/WIOA/Ohio_PYs_2024-2027.pdf

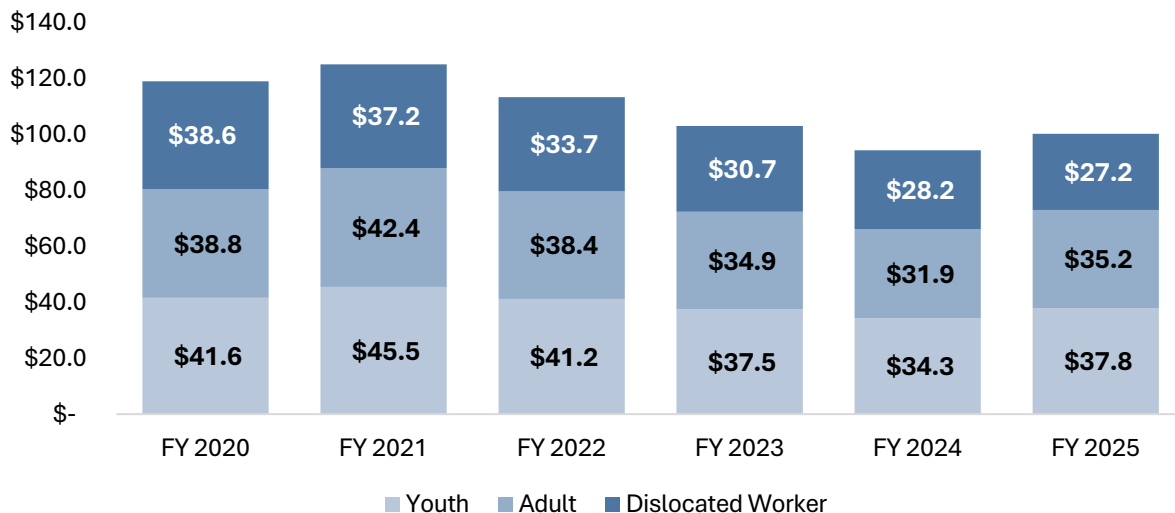


is Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment & Training (SNAP E&T). Both programs will be discussed briefly below and in more detail under the County Section of this report.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth/Adult/Dislocated Workers⁷

The U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration funds workforce and training programs via WIOA. Much of this funding is allocated by Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), Office of Workforce Development via OhioMeansJobs (OMJ) locations. In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025, which is WIOA Program Year (PR) 2024, Ohio received \$100.3 million in WIOA funder for youth, adults, and dislocated workers. WIOA is essentially a block grant meant to enable the workforce development system to respond to regional labor force and economic needs, but there are significant restrictions on the use of funds which limits flexibility for local entities.

**Ohio WIOA Funding (Youth, Adult, Dislocated Worker),
by State Fiscal Year, in Millions**



Seven of the 20 Workforce Development Areas in Ohio are composed of a single county and three of those are officially labeled as city/county collaborations. These include Cincinnati- Hamilton, Cleveland-Cuyahoga, Columbus-Franklin, Lake, Lorain, Lucas, and Trumbull. Cuyahoga County is Ohio’s Workforce Investment Area 3. Cuyahoga is by far the largest single- county recipient of WIOA allocations at \$14.0 million in SFY 2025. The only area which receives more funding is Area 7, which covers 43 counties in 4 regional groups.

The local one-stop is OhioMeansJobs Cleveland |Cuyahoga County (OMJ|CC), which is operated out of Greater Cleveland Works (GCW). GCW is covered in more detail under the county section of this report.

⁷ All WIOA funding data for Ohio was retrieved from: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/budget/formula/state>



Wagner-Peyser

WIOA integrated Employment Services under the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 into the national One-Stop system of which GCW is the local example. Like other parts of WIOA, Wagner-Peyser is administered in Ohio by the Office of Workforce Development within ODJFS. According to USASpending.gov, Cuyahoga County was not a subgrantee for Wagner-Peyser Act funds during Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2025.

Adult Education – Basic Grants to States

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act formula grant program provides basic adult and literacy education and was incorporated as Title III of WIOA. Often known as adult basic literacy education (ABLE) and called Aspire in Ohio, this program is administered by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education. Federal dollars are awarded to the Ohio Department of Higher Education which provides grants to individual Aspire providers. Ohio also budgets state funds for ABLE which serve as the required match for the large amounts of federal ABLE funding.

According to Ohio's Open Checkbook, Aspire providers in Cuyahoga County received a total of nearly \$2.1 million in SFY 2025. This included \$1.0 million for Cuyahoga Community College, \$0.9 million for Cuyahoga County Public Library, and \$0.3 million for Polaris Career Center.

Career and Technical Education

Career and Technical Education (CTE) is the most overt connection between the traditional education system and the workforce development system. Sometimes called vocational education, career and technical education programs begin as early as middle school and provide targeted instruction and training so students can learn specific career skills. According to the Association for Career and Technical Education, 16 career clusters are included in CTE, including health science, business, information technology, logistics, manufacturing, construction, and science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Partnerships between K-12 education, postsecondary institutions, and employers are critical for career and technical education programs to be successful.

The main federal law that governs and funds CTE is known as the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, the most recent iteration of which is commonly known as Perkins V. The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce is recipient of these funds. In FY 2025, Ohio received \$52.7 million in Perkins V funding. Of this appropriation, 85% or approximately \$44.8 million is distributed to local CTE providers.⁸ While this funding would

⁸ Funding Career and Technical Education in Ohio. *The Thomas B. Fordham Institute*.
<https://fordhaminstitute.org/sites/default/files/publication/pdfs/funding-career-and-technical-education-ohio-web-final.pdf>



flow to entities in the county such as school districts, career centers, and Cuyahoga Community College, that information is not readily available at the award level.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Vocational rehabilitation programs provide training, services and support to individuals with disabilities to help them attain and maintain employment. Vocational rehabilitation provides individualized services to people who want to work; the services help them overcome barriers to employment. Federal vocational rehabilitation funds and Social Security Vocational Rehabilitation dollars are funneled through Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD). The Ohio Operating Budget allocated more than \$168 million statewide from these federal funds for vocational rehabilitation. Because services are individualized and largely provided by staff from OOD, it is impossible to identify how much of these federal dollars helped Cuyahoga County residents based on readily available information.

Jobs for Veterans State Grant

Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) is a formula grant allocated among states which funds dedicated staff to provide career and employment and training services for veterans. Ohio utilizes these funds to assign Local Veterans' Employment Representatives throughout the state. Locally, these individuals work out of GCW. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services spent \$6.6 million in SFY 2025 from federal funds, which included JVSG and several other initiatives.

Senior Community Service Employment Program

Although a required part of State Plans under WIOA, the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is authorized and funded through the Older Americans Act, rather than WIOA. Focused on older adults, the program provides training and subsidized employment for low-income unemployed people over the age of 55. There are three SCSEP providers who serve Cuyahoga County: Vantage Aging, AARP, and National Center and Caucus on Black Aged. All three serve many other communities across the state and country with their SCSEP funding so it is impossible to know how many Cuyahoga County residents are benefiting from these services at any given time.

SNAP Employment and Training

Although not included in Ohio's Combined State Workforce Development Plan, SNAP E&T provides federal reimbursement for providers of employment and training services under certain circumstances. Cuyahoga County has participated in SNAP E&T since 2018. Federal funds administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) can be used to reimburse half of the non-federal cost of providing certain employment, training, and supportive services to SNAP recipients. Covered services include job search, job training,



basic education and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), work experience, vocational training, and job retention services. SNAP E&T is discussed more under the county section of this report.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a block grant for states created by welfare reform in the 1990s. States have flexibility in how they utilize TANF dollars. In Ohio, TANF funds childcare and other work support, cash assistance for extremely low-income families and a wide variety of other initiatives. Most people who receive TANF cash assistance, known as Ohio Works First (OWF), must participate in work or education activities to receive the benefits. Most counties have established Work Experience Programs (WEP) to help cash assistance recipients meet their work requirements.

For the past several years, Ohio has used part of its TANF grant to support the Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP). The goal of CCMEP is to help low-income young adults get the training and support necessary to enter a career and break the poverty cycle. In addition to TANF funds, Ohio also dedicates some WIOA Youth funding to CCMEP. TANF is discussed more under the county section of this report.

State Support for Local Workforce Programs⁹

According to Ohio's Combined State Plan, there are 11 state agencies which offer numerous programs related to workforce development. As outlined in Ohio's WIOA State Plan, the Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT), led by Governor Mike DeWine, is the leading agency that ensures consistency of workforce services and activities across all state agencies.¹⁰ OWT does *not* implement programs itself, but works to coordinate the programs that are offered throughout the different state agencies.

We identified 8 line items in Ohio's Operating Budget which provide state funding for workforce development programs using General Revenue Funds.¹¹ In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025, these programs supported \$121.6 million in workforce development. The most recently approved state operating budget increases funding for these programs to \$134.0 million for SFY 2026 and \$135.0 million for SFY 2027.

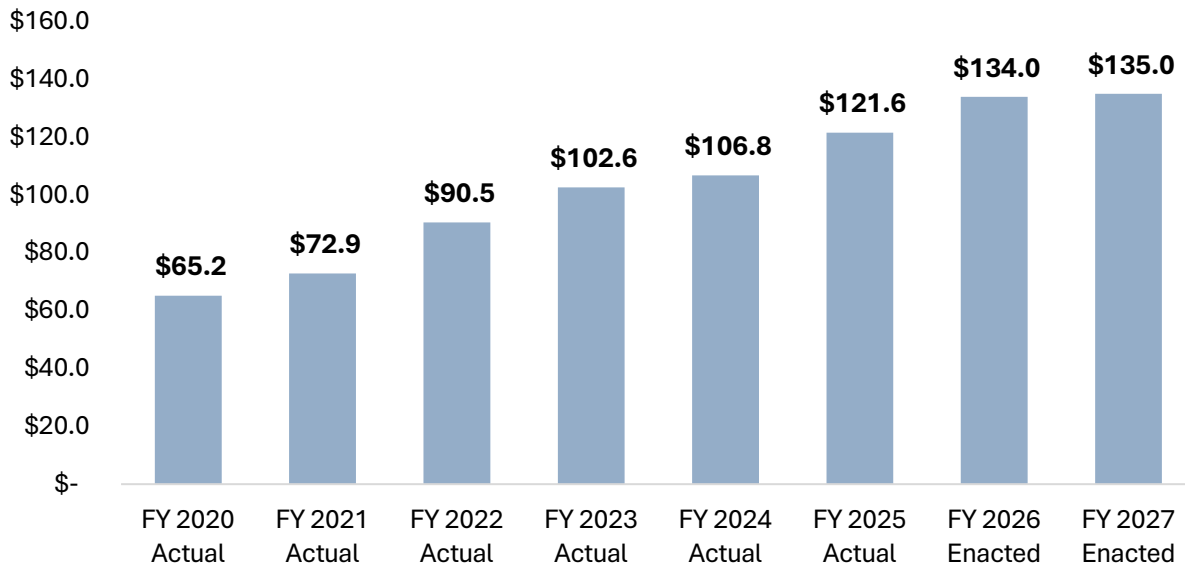
⁹ The Center for Community Solutions collected state funding information by analyzing Ohio Legislative Service Commission documents including the Catalogue of Budget Line Items, Comparison Documents and Analysis of the Main Operating Budget – HB 96. For allocations to entities in Cuyahoga County, we examined spending data available via Ohio's Online Checkbook administered by the Treasurer of Ohio and accessible at ohiocheckbook.com.

¹⁰ Ohio's State Combined Plan for Program Year 2024-2027 is available at https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/jfs.ohio.gov/owd/WIOA/Ohio_PYs_2024-2027.pdf

¹¹ The 8 line items are Adult Basic Literacy Education – State, Adult Education Programs, Career-Technical Education Enhancement, Industry-Recognized Credentials High School Students, Ohio Technical Centers, Services for Individuals with Disabilities, TechCred Program, and Technology Maintenance and Operations.



Ohio Statewide Funding for Workforce Development, by Year, in millions



This increased investment in workforce development and related programs over the past few years follows a national trend that has been ongoing since the last time this report was released. Spending by states on workforce preparation and development more than doubled since 2011, reaching \$7.6 billion nationwide in 2020. Minnesota, New York, New Jersey, California, and Alabama spent the most on workforce development.¹²

Unfortunately, updated data will remain unavailable as the State Economic Development Expenditures (SEDE) database has been discontinued and is no longer being updated. Despite the discontinuation of the SEDE database, research shows that there are high-demand careers that states have been making a concerted effort to encourage individuals to gain the necessary credentials to fill the gap. This includes health care, energy, education, technology, infrastructure, and manufacturing.¹³

To determine state funding going to entities in Cuyahoga County from the 8 line-items that have been identified we utilized Ohio’s Online Checkbook. This tool allows individuals to see what organizations receive state money. After collecting data on who receives funding, we manually check to see which organizations are located within Cuyahoga County. The Ohio Budget also allocates a significant amount of federal pass-through funding, and much of Ohio’s General Revenue Fund spending on workforce development represents matching funds allowing the state to draw down federal grants. It is allocated biannually via Ohio’s

¹² State Investment in Workforce Development on the Rise. *The Council for Community and Economic Research*. <https://www.c2er.org/2019/10/state-investment-in-workforce-development-on-the-rise/>

¹³ Workforce Development State Strategies: A 50- State Scan of Best Practices From Recent Action. *The Center for American Progress*. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/workforce-development-state-strategies-a-50-state-scan-of-best-practices-from-recent-action/>

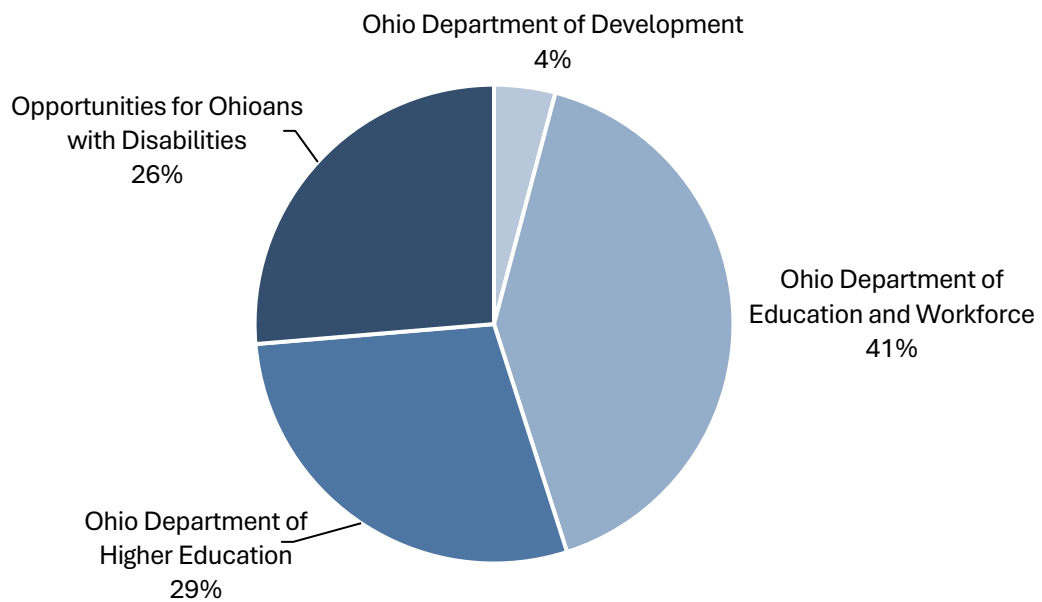


State Operating Budget. For the purposes of this analysis, we focus on GRF line items since they represent state investments in workforce development.

State Agencies

While Ohio’s WIOA State Plan highlights 11 different state agencies that offer workforce development programs, the 8 line-items identified reside in the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (EDU), Ohio Department of Higher Education (BOR), Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), and the Department of Development (DEV). The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (EDU) is responsible for 41% of all state spending and is the largest state agency in workforce development. The next largest state agency is the Ohio Department of Higher Education (BOR) at 29% of spending. Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) is slightly below the BOR at 26%. The smallest agency of the four identified is the Ohio Department of Development (DEV) at 4%. The state agencies and the programs within each of them are highlighted below.

2025 State Workforce Spending by Department



Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (EDU)

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (EDU) leads several initiatives supporting the state’s workforce strategy. It ensures Business Advisory Councils operate in local school districts to align high school programs with employer needs. EDU manages the Innovative Workforce Incentive Program, which funds high-demand credential programs and helps schools expand offerings in emerging career fields. Also, it promotes

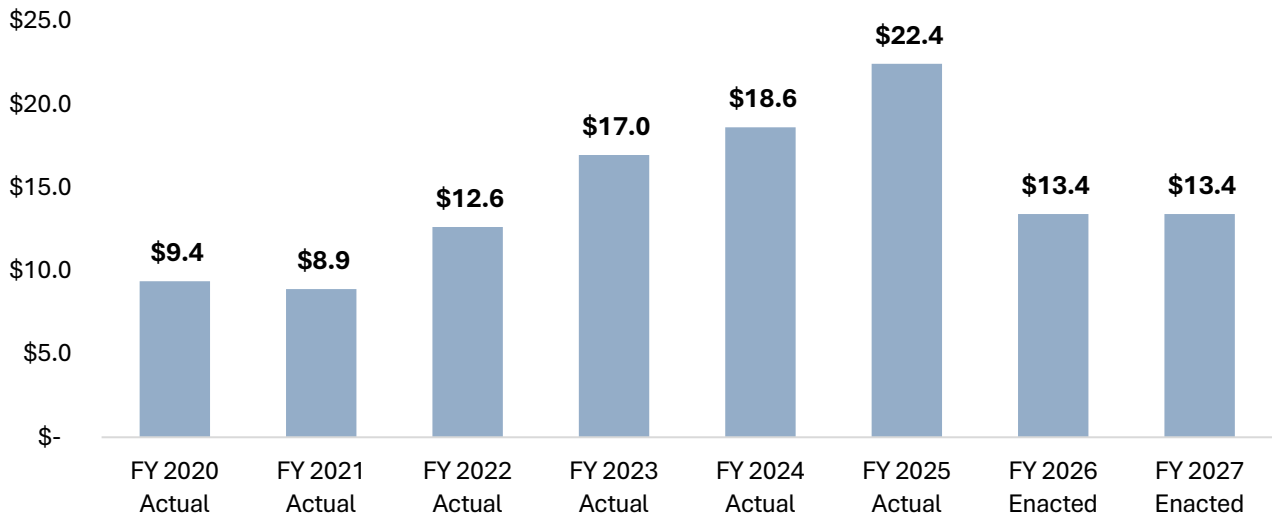


the job-readiness seal as part of diploma requirements. Through SuccessBound, EDU exposes students to career opportunities and preparation pathways, and it developed a Work-Based Learning Toolkit to strengthen occupational knowledge for students and teachers. Additionally, ODEW is working to advance literacy through its statewide framework for improving reading, writing, and oral language skills. Finally, the department will continue supporting career-technical education for justice-involved youth and adults in Ohio’s correctional facilities.

Career-Technical Education Enhancement (GRF 200545)

Several career and technical education initiatives are supported by this line item including competitive grants to technical prep consortia and support for career planning via the OhioMeansJobs website and the Jobs for Ohio’s Graduates (JOGS) program. In SFY 2025, more than \$1.0 million came to Cuyahoga County entities. Recipients of this funding included Cuyahoga Community College (\$491,078), Cuyahoga Valley Career Center (\$298,077), Polaris Career Center (\$201,207), Cleveland Metropolitan School District (\$7,531) and Euclid Board of Education (\$4,898). Funding for this line item steadily increased from SFY 2021 through SFY 2025 but decreased significantly in the most recent state budget. This decrease is the result of the per-pupil amount for the career-technical planning districts going from \$10 in SFY 2025 to \$3 in each of SFY 2026 and SFY 2027.

Career-Technical Education Enhancement Allocations, by Year in Millions



Industry-Recognized Credentials High School Students (GRF 200478)

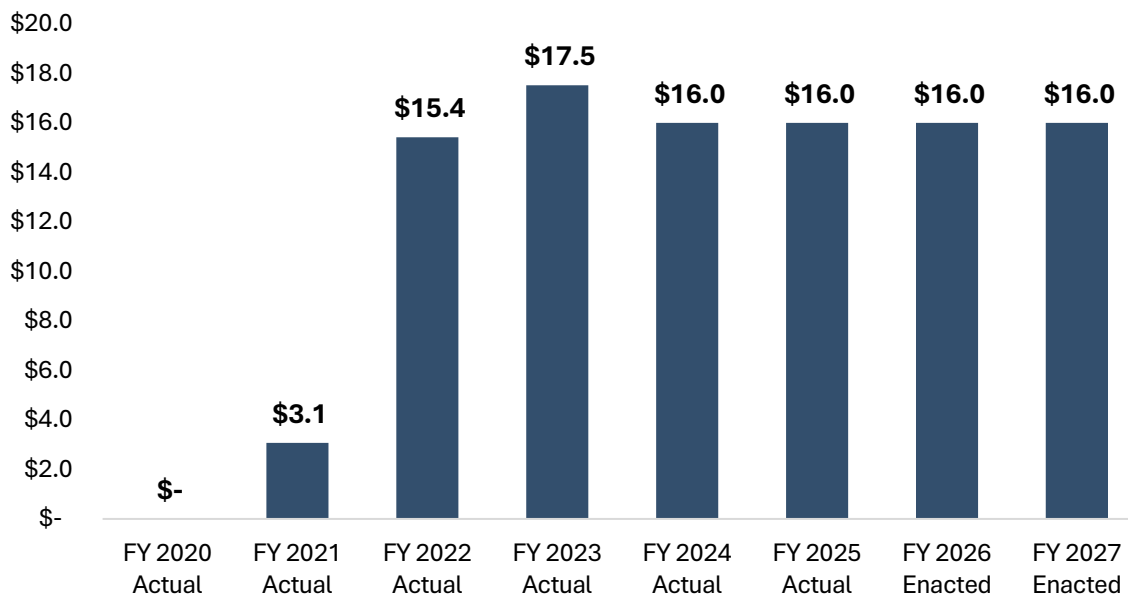
Up until SFY 2026, this line-item funded reimbursements to school districts and other public schools for testing fees associated with earning any industry recognized credentials. Districts and schools were eligible for up to \$1,250 per qualifying credential prior to FY 2024, but prorated payments to \$550 per credential in SFY 2024 and \$471 in SFY 2025 due



to the high volume of credentials earned. The state has noticed that a substantial share of spending under the reimbursement program supported large numbers of students earning a small number of “lower value credentials”, such as CPR/First Aid and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 10Hour credential. In SFY 2025, this line-item made payments to 24 school districts in Cuyahoga County totaling over \$789,000.

Noting the high rate of “lower-value credentials” the state discontinued reimbursing all credentials, while still requiring districts and schools to cover these costs. Instead, the state operating budget created the Innovative Workforce Incentive Program (IWIP). IWIP seeks to increase the number of high school students who earn industry-recognized credentials in priority industry sectors, reimbursing schools \$725 per credential earned from the IWIP-approved list. The approved list includes credentials in fields such as information technology and cyber security, advanced manufacturing, construction, engineering, and the skilled trades. Under the program, the Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT) maintains a list of credentials that qualify for the program. This program received \$16.0 million in SFY 2026 and SFY 2027.

Industry-Recognized Credentials High School Students Allocations, by Year, in Millions



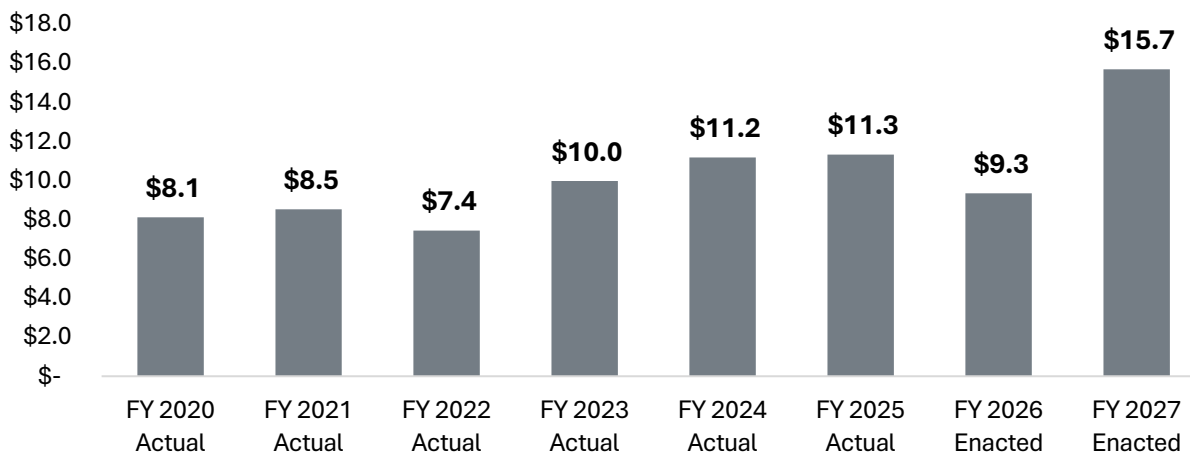
Adult Education Programs (GRF 200572)

The Adult Education Programs line-item assists people who dropped out of high school who are seeking to obtain a high school diploma or equivalence certificate. It includes the Adult Diploma Program, the Adult 22+ High School Diploma Program, vouchers to lower the cost of equivalency exams for first-time test takers, and Ohio Department of Education’s High School Equivalence Office. In SFY 2025, Cuyahoga Valley Career Center received



\$72,685, Cuyahoga Community College received \$9,295, and Polaris Career Center received \$2,370. The state appropriated \$9.3 million in SFY 2026 and \$15.7 million in SFY 2027. The increase in SFY 2027 reflects the most recent state budget transferring administration of the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) program to the Department of Education and Workforce, with the state match appearing in this line-item.

Adult Education Programs Allocations, by Year, in Millions



Ohio Department of Higher Education (BOR)

The Ohio Department of Higher Education (BOR) works to continue expanding Ohio Technical Centers into full-service training hubs that offer customized workforce training for employers. It uses College Credit Plus to allow prepared middle- and high-school students to earn college credits early, and it will strengthen STEM education through the Choose Ohio First scholarship program. BOR also permits approved community colleges to offer applied bachelor’s degrees to meet workforce needs. Additionally, it will continue leading the ABLE program during SFY 2026, expanding access to adult education and literacy services, including virtual learning options.¹⁴ BOR plays an important role in the workforce development ecosystem as it hosts many of the credential programs that allow individuals to move into family sustaining careers, can provide scholarships to help them do so, and is historically a path to help individuals move up the economic ladder. It is important to note that a lot of higher education funding supports the traditional transition of students from K-12 to higher education and it can be difficult to see in the data which dollars are supporting more traditional students, and which are supporting adult learners looking to transition into higher, more consistent earning careers. Additionally, funding within this department tends to be appropriated for a very specific purpose, leaving very little flexibility in how funding is spent.

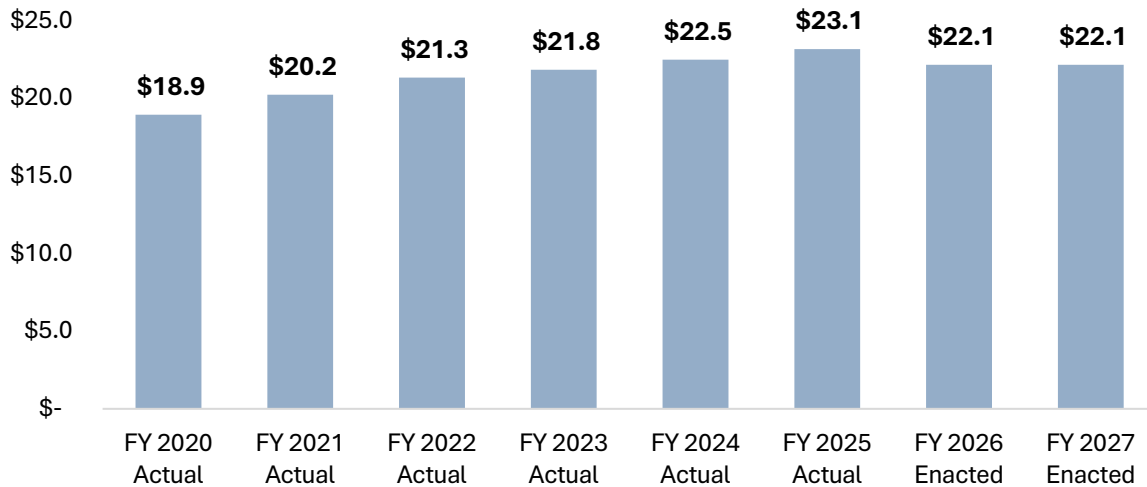
¹⁴ In 2017, Ohio’s ABLE program was rebranded as Aspire. We continue to use ABLE in this report since it remains the name of the federal program.



Ohio Technical Centers (GRF 235444)

Ohio Technical Centers provide adult career-technical training programs and adult workforce education across the state. In Cuyahoga County, this line-item provided over \$1.1 million in funding to Polaris Career Center (\$741,476) and Cuyahoga Valley Career Center (\$371,203) during SFY 2025. Funding for Ohio Technical Centers has remained consistent throughout time and remains consistent moving forwards with \$22.1 million appropriated in SFY 2026 & SFY 2027.

Ohio Technical Centers Allocations, by Year, in Millions



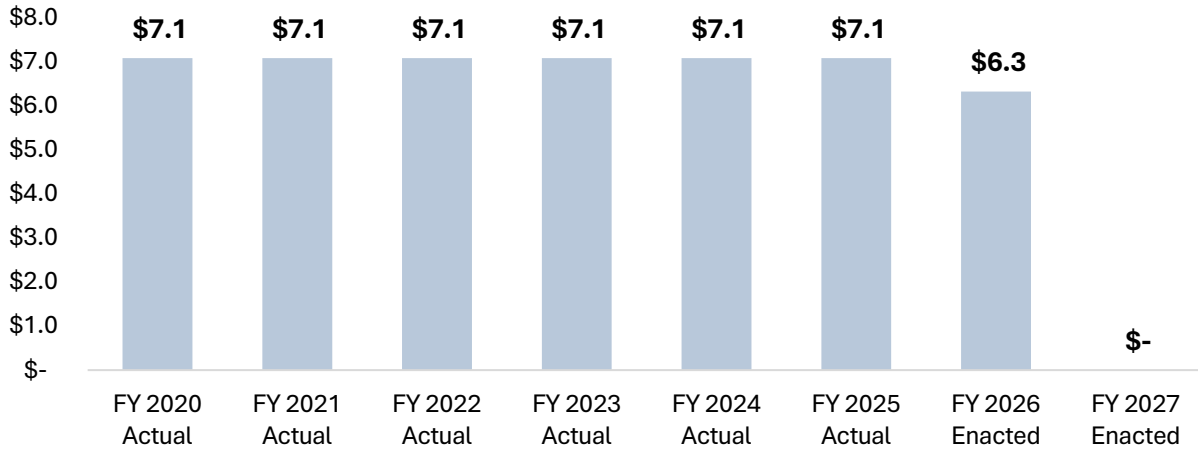
Adult Basic Literacy Education – State (GRF 235443)

The state match for federal Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE)¹⁵ funding supports adult courses in basic math, reading, and writing skills; workplace literacy; life skills; family literacy, English for speakers of other languages; and high school equivalency test preparation. In SFY 2025, Cuyahoga Community College (\$325,337), Cuyahoga County Public Library (\$307,457), and Polaris Career Center (\$105,380) all received payments bringing the County’s total spending through this item to over \$738,000. It is important to note that beginning in SFY 2027, the budget transfers administration of ABLE to the Department of Education and Workforce, with the state match that fiscal year provided in GRF line item 200572, Adult Education Programs. The decrease in SFY 2027 in the chart below reflects that change.

¹⁵ In 2017, Ohio’s ABLE program was rebranded as Aspire. We continue to use ABLE in this report since it remains the name of the federal program.



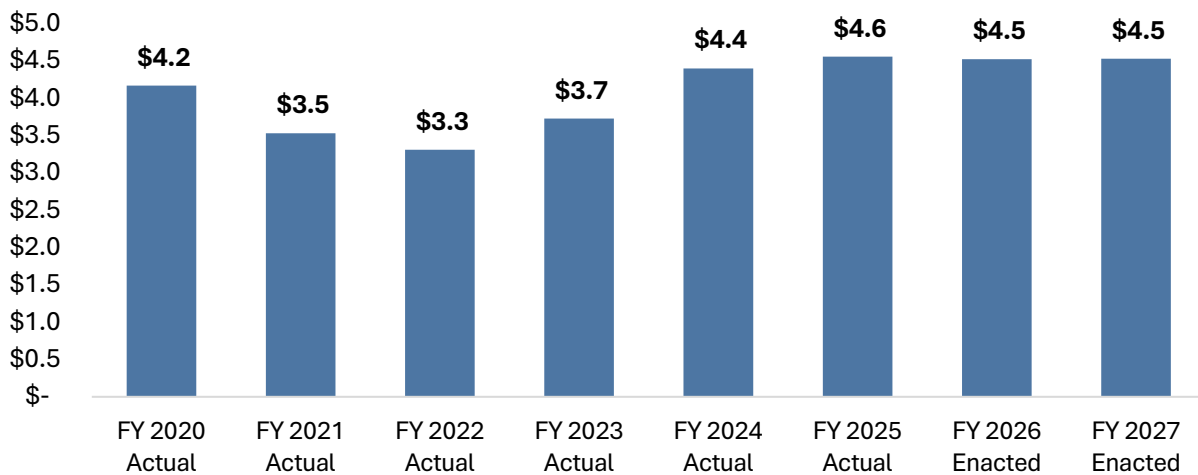
Adult Basic Literacy Education - State Allocations, by Year, in Millions



Technology Maintenance and Operations (GRF 235417)

This line item funds a variety of information technology activities within the BOR. The most relevant are online tutoring and eStudent Services, which is a state-of-the-art statewide collaborative electronic education system and is a member of Ohio Technology Consortium (OH-TECH), along with Ohio Academic Resources Network (OARnet), Ohio Library and Information Network (OhioLINK), and Ohio Supercomputer Center (OSC). All of which work together to provide supportive services and information that students need to succeed, such as a searchable catalog of online or distance learning courses, degrees, and certificates. Unfortunately, information readily available does not break down the line item into individual activities or programs, so by county spending is unable to be determined. Noting this, it is not included in the county total. The program spent \$4.6 million in SFY 2025 and received an appropriation of \$4.5 million in SFY 2026 and SFY 2027.

Technology Maintenance and Operations Allocations, by Year, in Millions



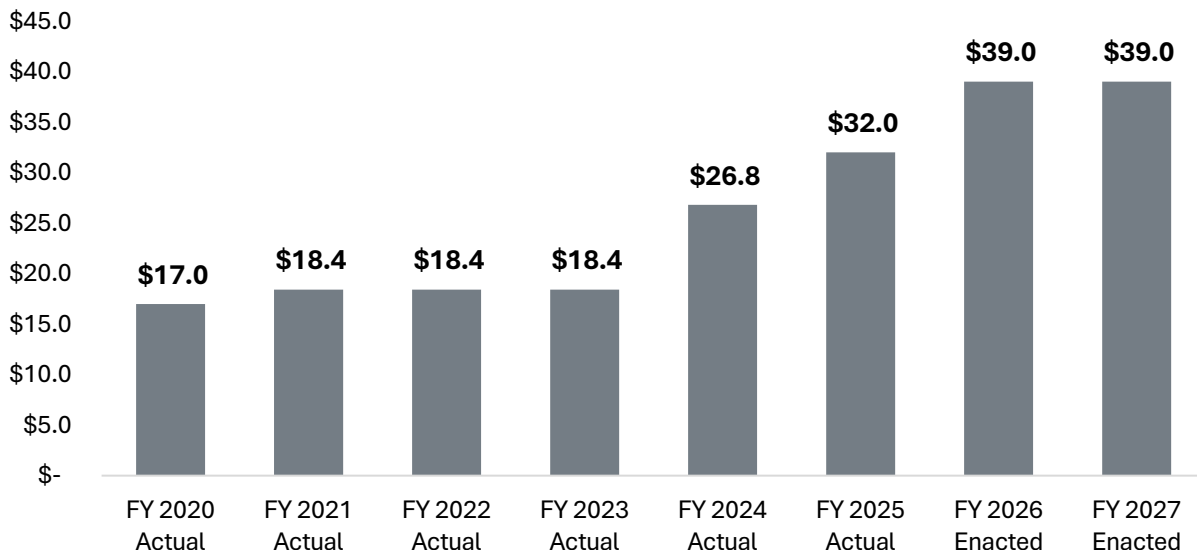
Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD)

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) works to empower Ohioans with disabilities through employment, disability determinations, and independence. OOD works to connect the people of Ohio who have disabilities with the resources, support, and opportunities that fit their unique needs, abilities, and interests so that they can find and retain meaningful employment. This agency, similarly, to the Department of Higher Education, plays a very important role in the workforce development ecosystem by engaging with a specific population of individuals who need to be connected to employment. By homing in on a specific population of individuals targeted approaches can be utilized to connect people to employment in the most effective way possible.

Services for Individuals with Disabilities (GRF 415506)

Providing the state match for federal vocational rehabilitation funding, this line item funds programs that help individuals with disabilities prepare for and obtain employment. During SFY 2025, the state spent \$32.0 million for this purpose. This line item received increased funding in the recent biennium budget with \$39.0 million for each year. OOD, the primary provider of vocational rehabilitation services in Ohio, utilizes staff at local OOD offices throughout the state. Therefore, only a very small portion of these funds flow through County governments or local agencies and is not included in our county total.

Services for Individuals with Disabilities Allocations, by Year, in Millions



Ohio Department of Development (DEV)

The Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) oversees the Industry Sector Partnership Grant, which funds initiatives that develop skilled workers to meet business needs. The state budget also allocates \$50 million for the TechCred program line-item over the biennium, and ODOD is responsible for helping employers upskill their current workforce through these technology-focused training opportunities.

TechCred Program (GRF 195556)

The TechCred Program line-item supports numerous different aspects of workforce development. First, it supports the TechCred Program which provides grants to students and workers pursuing in-demand jobs who enroll in short-term training courses in specific industries. Employers who submit successful applications under the program are reimbursed up to \$2,000 per credential when current or prospective employees complete eligible technology-focused credentials. These credentials take less than a year to complete. Under the program, employers are eligible to receive up to \$30,000 per funding round.

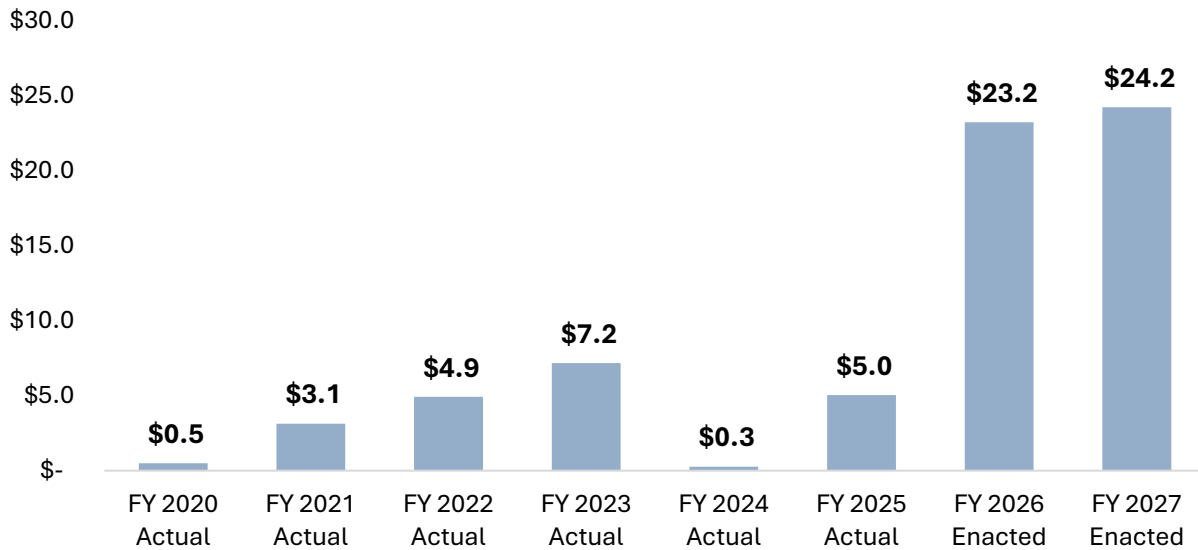
The line-item also supports the Individual Microcredential Assistance Program (IMAP). This program assists low-income individuals who are partially unemployed or totally unemployed by participating in a training program to receive a credential at no cost. Similar to the TechCred Program, IMAP credentials are short-term, industry-recognized, and technology-focused. IMAP training providers are reimbursed up to \$3,000 per completed credential. Each microcredential training provider may be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$500,000 per fiscal year.

Prior to the budget being passed, the 136th General Assembly created the Institutional Platinum Provider Program (IPPP) for state institutions of higher education participating in IMAP under which institutions receive advance payment to train individuals to earn a microcredential. The state budget increases the total advance payment or reimbursement amount an institution participating in IPPP may receive in a fiscal year from \$500,000 to \$1.0 million. Additionally, the budget created the Platinum Provider Program for Ohio technical centers, state institutions of higher education, private businesses, or institutions participating in IMAP under which an eligible participant may receive one or more advance payments to train individuals to earn microcredentials.

In SFY 2025, this line-item supported \$5.0 million for just the TechCred program. Due to the expansion of what is supported by the line-item, funding for this program increases in SFY 2026 to \$23.2 million and \$24.2 million in SFY 2027. This funding is by far the most flexible of the state dollars appropriated for workforce development and allows the greatest flexibility for employers and individuals looking to earn credentials.



TechCred Program Allocations, by Year, in Millions



Other State Agencies and Funding

In addition to the state agencies and funding listed above there are others that play a smaller role in workforce development in the state. For state agencies this includes Departments of Rehabilitation and Correction, Job and Family Services, Youth Services, Veteran’s Services, Aging, Medicaid, and Children and Youth, and the Bureau of Worker’s Compensation. Additionally, there is other funding which supports workforce development activities that are important to note but are not included in the broader analysis. These funding sources were excluded because it is impossible to determine how much funding came to Cuyahoga County for workforce development using readily available sources or because they support workforce development but not specifically in Cuyahoga County.

Program and Project Support (GRF 235533) & Priority Projects (ALI 1956H2)

The Program and Project Support line-item is included as it is often used for earmarks for higher education programs, some of which are workforce development related. During SFY 2020, no earmarks were included for workforce development work in Cuyahoga County. Starting in SFY 2026, these earmarks were moved to Priority Projects within the Ohio Department of Development. \$17.0 million is funded in SFY 2026 and SFY 2027 from the Priority Projects line-item. Many of which include a workforce development element, but none are exclusively located in Cuyahoga County and are not included in our analysis. The table below shows the earmarks.



Earmarks for Priority Projects in Millions (ALI 1956H2)

Recipient	Project or Purpose	FY 2026	FY 2027
Board of Regents	U.S. Route 30 OARnet Broadband Extension	\$ 10.5	\$ 9.6
Southern State Community College	Ohio Code-Scholar Program	\$ 1.0	\$ 1.0
Ohio Life Sciences Foundation	Workforce Development	\$ 1.0	\$ 1.0
Marietta College	Center on Appalachian Innovation	\$ 0.8	\$ 0.8
Youngstown State University	Excellence Training Center	\$ 0.6	\$ 0.6
Clark State Community College	Unmanned and general aviation STEM pilot programming expansion	\$ 0.5	\$ 0.5
Ohio Aerospace Institute	Space Grant Consortium	\$ 0.5	\$ 0.5
Showers Family Foundation	High School Education of students with multiple disabilities	\$ 0.4	\$ -
Fairfield County Workforce Center	Operational Support	\$ 0.4	\$ 0.4
ODOT	U.S. Route 30 Expansion	\$ 0.3	\$ 0.3
S.U.C.C.E.S.S. for Autism	Interprofessional training pilot program	\$ 0.1	\$ 0.1
Eastgate Regional Council of Governments	Student and construction of an oil and natural gas pipeline	\$ 0.3	\$ -
Voices of America County Music Festival	Public safety services	\$ 0.2	\$ -
Mid-East Career and Technology Centers	CDL training simulators	\$ 0.2	\$ 0.3
Buckeye Lake Region Corporation	Community Development	\$ 0.2	\$ 0.2
The Ohio State University	East Side Dental Clinic	\$ 0.3	\$ 0.3
TOTAL		\$ 17.0	\$ 15.3

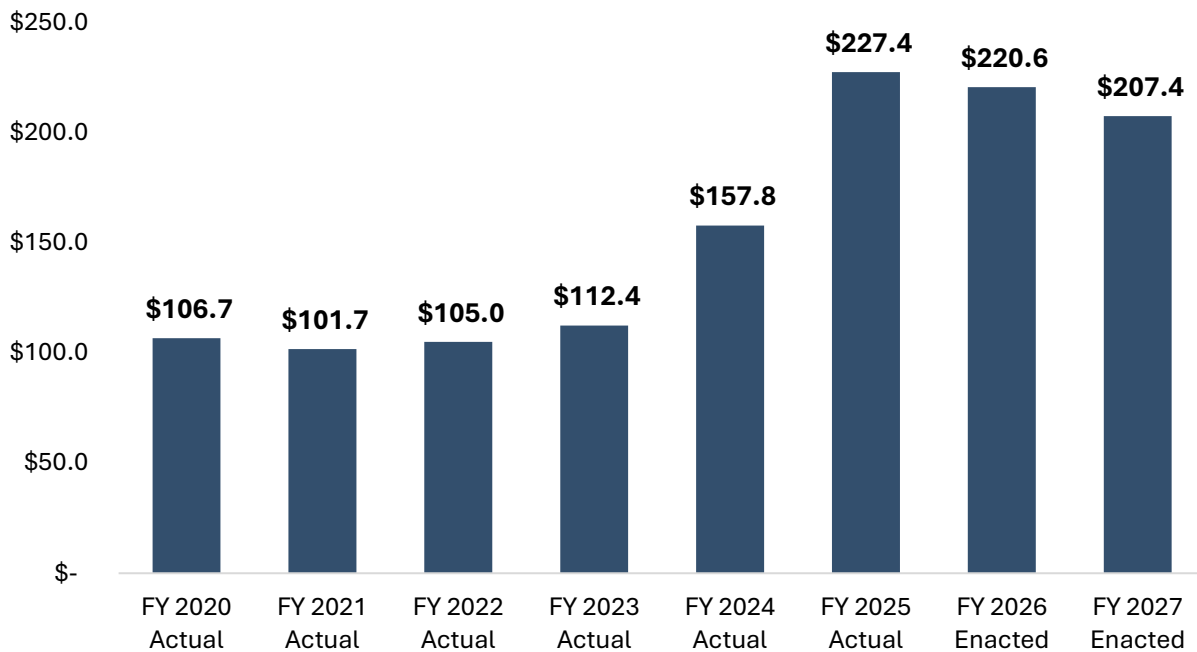


Ohio College Opportunity Grant (BOR GRF 235563)

The Ohio College Opportunity Grant (OCOG) is Ohio's primary need-based financial aid program. Awards are based on the remaining state cost of attendance after a student's expected family contribution (EFC) and federal Pell grant are applied to the instructional and general charges for the student's educational program. The vast majority of funds are required to go to students of public and nonprofit institutions. More than \$19.6 million in Ohio College Opportunity Grants came to institutions of higher education in Cuyahoga County in SFY 2025. This includes \$12.6 million to Cleveland State University, \$3.2 million to Baldwin Wallace University, \$1.8 million to John Carroll University, \$1.2 million to Case Western Reserve, \$0.9 million to the Cleveland Institute of Art, \$25,455 to Cuyahoga Community College and \$12,500 to the Cleveland Institute of Art. It is important to note that there is no way to know whether the students who benefit are from Cuyahoga County or reside here after graduation. This line item was appropriated \$220.6 million for SFY 2026 and \$207.4 million for SFY 2027.

Cuyahoga Community College does not receive much funding in SFY 2025 and some years does not receive any, which that is not necessarily surprising. The state purposely limits OCOG awards for students attending community colleges as the Pell/EFC combination exceeds the average tuition at community colleges and therefore, no awards are made.

Ohio College Opportunity Grant Allocations, by Year, in Millions



Cuyahoga County Investments in Workforce Development¹⁶

Cuyahoga County government plays an important role in the workforce development system. Many workforce development programs in Ohio are federally funded, state sponsored, and county administered. Therefore, Cuyahoga County government is responsible for utilizing federal, state, and local dollars to contract for and/or provide workforce, employment, and training services for residents. The two main entities that oversee workforce development in Cuyahoga County are the county government, specifically Cuyahoga Jobs and Family Services (CJFS), and Greater Cleveland Works (GCW). Up until June 2024, GCW was part of Cuyahoga County government as the Cleveland - Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board but separated from Cuyahoga County government to become the nonprofit organization it is today. GCW remains the designated workforce development board for Cleveland and Cuyahoga County and is the official conduit for federal WIOA funding and operates the OhioMeansJobs center in Cuyahoga County.¹⁷

Greater Cleveland Worker (GCW) - WIOA Funds

Cuyahoga County is the recipient of significant amounts of federal workforce development funding which passes through Ohio state government. This funding largely supports programs managed by GCW and other programs as determined by ODJFS. As highlighted in the federal section, WIOA allows Ohio to retain 15% of its federal allotment for state-initiated projects with the remaining 85% to be distributed to local workforce boards. This distribution illustrates meaning that most of the funding distributed to Cuyahoga County goes to GCW.

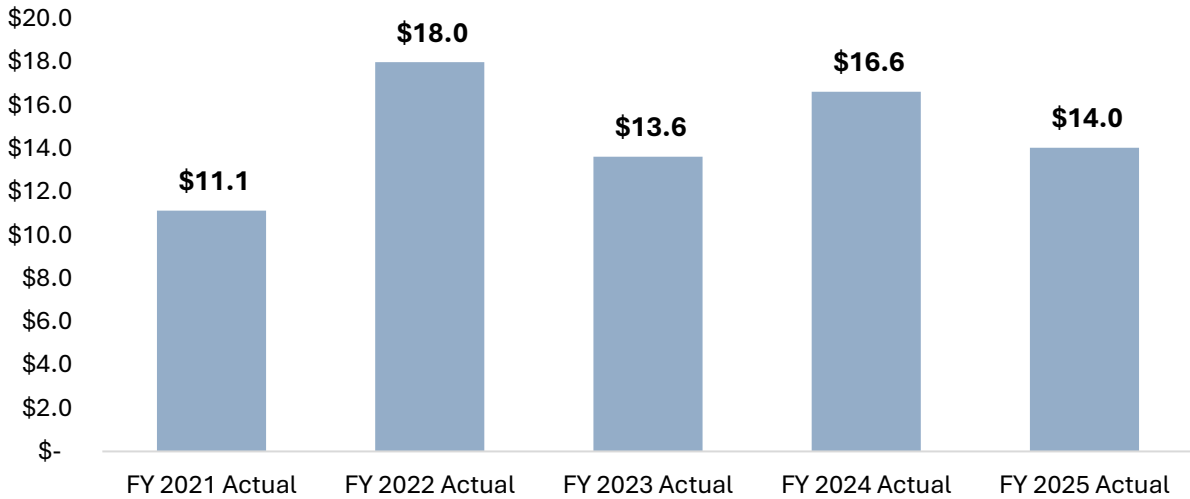
As shown in the chart below, Cuyahoga County received \$14.0 million in WIOA funding during SFY 2025 and has fluctuated between \$11.1 million and \$18.0 million over the past several years. These allocations from the state to local workforce boards are not included in the budget and are managed internally by the department, so allocations are not readily available currently for SFY 2026 and SFY 2027. While noting that, by looking at Cuyahoga County's lowest and highest share of total WIOA funding in the state a range can be created. Based upon this, we can predict Cuyahoga County will receive between \$16.2 million and \$23.9 million in SFY 2026 and between \$16.8 million and \$24.8 million in SFY 2027.

¹⁶ Data on Cuyahoga County's spending on workforce development was collected using Ohio's Open Checkbook and supplemented by an examination of press releases, quarterly performance reporting, and other online resources.

¹⁷ https://greaterclevelandworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Greater-Cleveland-Works-PRESS-RELEASE_120524.pdf

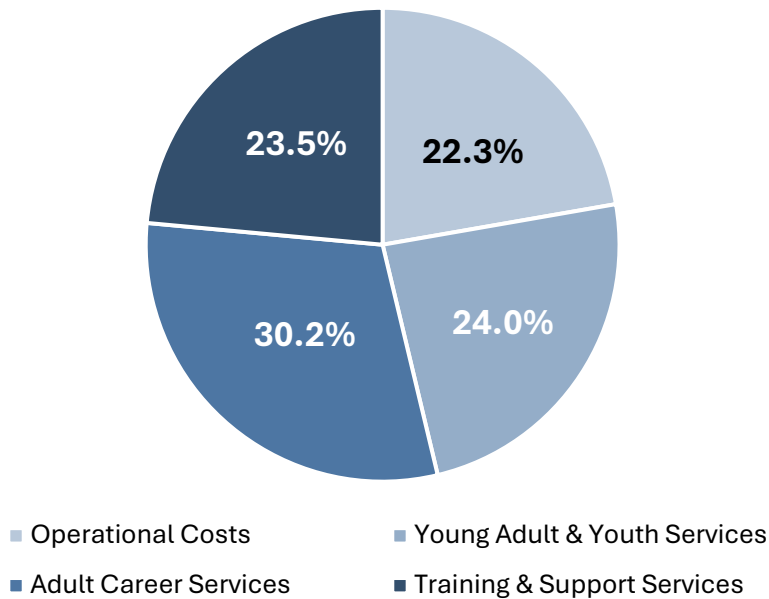


WIOA Payments from State to Cuyahoga County, by Year in Millions



WIOA spending by category for Cuyahoga County can be seen in the chart below. Spending on adult career services is the largest category of spending, accounting for 30.2% of all WIOA spending. The next largest category is spending on workforce development for young adults and youth at 24.0%. The third largest category is training and support services at 23.5% of spending, which is only a little higher than operational costs at 22.3%.

WIOA by Category Cuyahoga County



Adult career services work to provide training services to help adults find and qualify for quality employment and helps employers find skilled workers. These services fall under one of three categories.

1. Basic Career Service that helps with activities such as job search and outreach.
2. Personal Career Services that help with activities such as testing and career counselors or plans.
3. Training Services that work to link job seekers to openings in their area of basic skills training.¹⁸

Activities focused on young adult & youth services heavily focus on searching for and placing young individuals into employment to gain meaningful training and experiences. Training and support services cover a handful of different mechanisms to support individuals in getting trained in an in-demand field. This includes Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), which are a funding mechanism that provides payment or vouchers to eligible job seekers to pay for job-related training, On-the-Job-Training, which provides funding to employers to hire and train workers for long-term employment, or through Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), which provides funding to employers to help cover the costs of retraining an employee so that the necessary skills can be obtained to advance within an organization or avert a layoff. Finally, operational costs include the inevitable, necessary costs associated with operating these programs. This would include the administrative costs for GCW, program expenses associated with operating the different programs, and services specifically associated with operating the OhioMeansJobs center in Cuyahoga County.

Greater Cleveland Worker (GCW) – Other Funds

While WIOA is the largest, most consistent source of funding for GCW, it is not the only source of funding. GCW also receives funding for ODJFS special projects and due to its nonprofit status, can receive funding from foundations and other grantmakers. One source of funding worth highlighting that is not consistent but is currently making an impact is American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. The City of Cleveland allocated \$10.0 million in ARPA funding to support the Build Environment Collaborative, which draws on a network of partners to support residents and small businesses to gain skills, find employment, and thrive in the construction, infrastructure, and clean energy industries. This funding, while one-time in nature, has allowed GCW and its partners to not only expand its current workforce development practices, but also be innovative by testing new ideas to support individuals on their workforce development pathway.¹⁹

¹⁸ Adult Services. *Ohio Department of Job & Family Services*. <https://jfs.ohio.gov/job-services-and-unemployment/job-services/job-programs-and-services/workforce-innovation-and-opportunity-act/employment-services/adult-services>

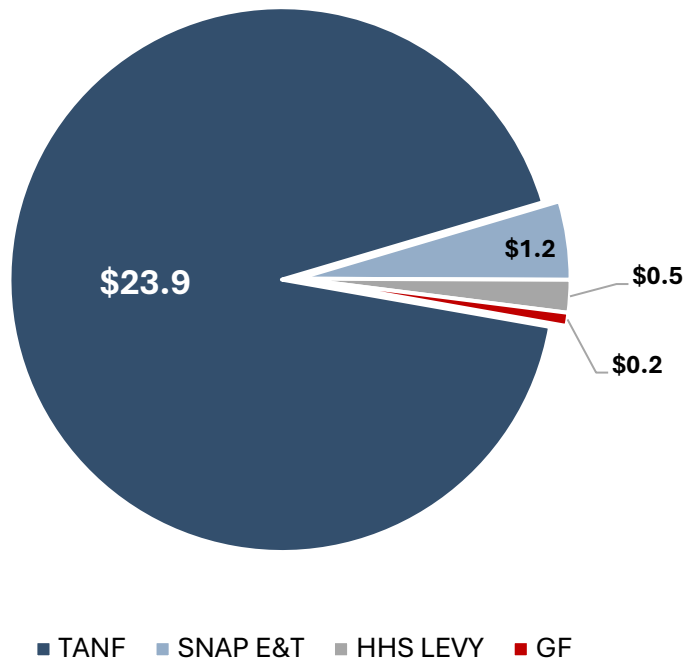
¹⁹ Built Environment Workforce Development retrieved from: https://www.clevelandfed.org/-/media/project/clevelandfedtenant/clevelandfedsite/events/policy-summit/2023-presentations/rose_06222023_infrastructure_act.pdf



Cuyahoga County Government

Economic development, which includes workforce development, is a primary responsibility of county government included in the Cuyahoga County Charter and while the majority of workforce development activities in Cuyahoga County are facilitated through GCW that does not mean that the county does not contribute to the workforce development system. During Calendar Year (CY) 2025, the county spent \$25.8 million on workforce support. The four sources of county investment in the workforce development system were the Public Assistance Fund (TANF and SNAP E&T funding), the Health and Human Services Levies (HHS Levy), and the General Fund (GF). The chart below illustrates the breakdown by source of funding.

**Cuyahoga County Workforce Spending CY 2025,
By Source in Millions**



The mechanism that the county primarily utilizes to support workforce development is the Public Assistance Fund. The Public Assistance Fund receives funding from Cuyahoga County's share of the TANF block grant and SNAP E&T, both of which originate at the federal level and then get passed through to the county. This funding supports approximately \$25.6 million in workforce support, which accounts for 97.3% of the county's investment.

During CY 2025 TANF funding supported approximately \$23.9 million or 92.6% of all workforce activities in Cuyahoga County funded by the county. This included \$9.7 million towards the Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP), which



works to assist youth and young adults with the transition to employment. CCMEP also receives WIOA funding. This also included \$6.6 million to assist adults find employment. The Prevention, Retention, and Contingency Program – Emergency Assistance can provide immediate work supports, such as tools, transportation assistance, and uniforms to individuals seeking employment, those who are employed, and those engaged in post-secondary education. This program is supported by TANF funding and is estimated at \$5.0 - \$6.0 million. The final workforce development program that receives funding from the county is the Bridges Beyond Benefits program, which provides intensive case management to individuals seeking employment and can help employers as well. TANF provides \$1.9 million for this program.

In addition to TANF, SNAP E&T funding is utilized to support workforce programs in the county through the Public Assistance Fund. During CY 2025, seven providers were contracted to provide job search training for \$1.2 million through SNAP E&T. This was the only program found that utilized SNAP E&T funding and accounts for 4.7% of the county's investment.

The Health and Human Services Levy Fund provides \$500,000 for workforce activities through scholarship funding at GCW. This accounts for 1.9% of the county's investment in workforce activities. The smallest source of funding for workforce activities by county government was the general fund, which only supports 0.8% of all spending with \$0.2 million to support the Bridges Beyond Benefits Program.

Other County Workforce Supports

As noted earlier, workforce development programs are spread throughout county government, not congregated into a singular program or office. Readily available and public information does not allow us to dig deeper into portions of health and human service levy funds which are used for workforce development and related services. Instead, other county funding for workforce development is included as part of larger initiatives. Job training and employment services are also components of other county initiatives, including those in the Office of Reentry, Office of Homeless Services, Fatherhood Initiative, and Family and Children First Council.

Philanthropic Funding for Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Services

Cuyahoga County is fortunate to have a robust community of philanthropic organizations with more than 2,900 non-profit organizations calling the Greater Cleveland area home.²⁰ Utilizing data from Candid's Foundation Maps online database, Community Solutions

²⁰ Greater Cleveland's largest non-profits, ranked 1 to 100 based on annual revenue. *Cleveland.com*. <https://www.cleveland.com/data/2022/11/greater-clevelands-largest-non-profits-ranked-1-to-100-based-on-annual-revenue.html>



identified more than \$17 million in philanthropic grants which supported certain categories of workforce services in 2023 with grant amounts ranging from \$50 up to \$3.5 million.²¹

Candid’s databases provide information on grants based on a classification taxonomy. Foundations and other philanthropic organizations *voluntarily* report to Candid, and provide information on their grants. The grantor identifies the categories under which a grant should be classified, and grants can fall under several categories. For the purposes of this analysis, we limited our examination of grant categories to Adult Education, Vocational Education, Job Services and Employment. This represents grants for basic and remedial education, continuing education, ESL and second language, vocational education, vocational rehabilitation, job benefits, job counseling, workforce development, job training, and retraining. Included categories fall under the broader headings of Education, Human Services, and Community and Economic Development. Due to the nature of the data inputted into Candid, it takes time for data to reach a point of being complete. 2023 appears to be the most recent year of complete data. 2024 was included as well to attempt to have more recent data, but it should not be complete. This is noted throughout this section by having an asterisk (*) next to the year to indicate that it should not be considered complete.

Historical Overview of Funders, Grants, and Recipients

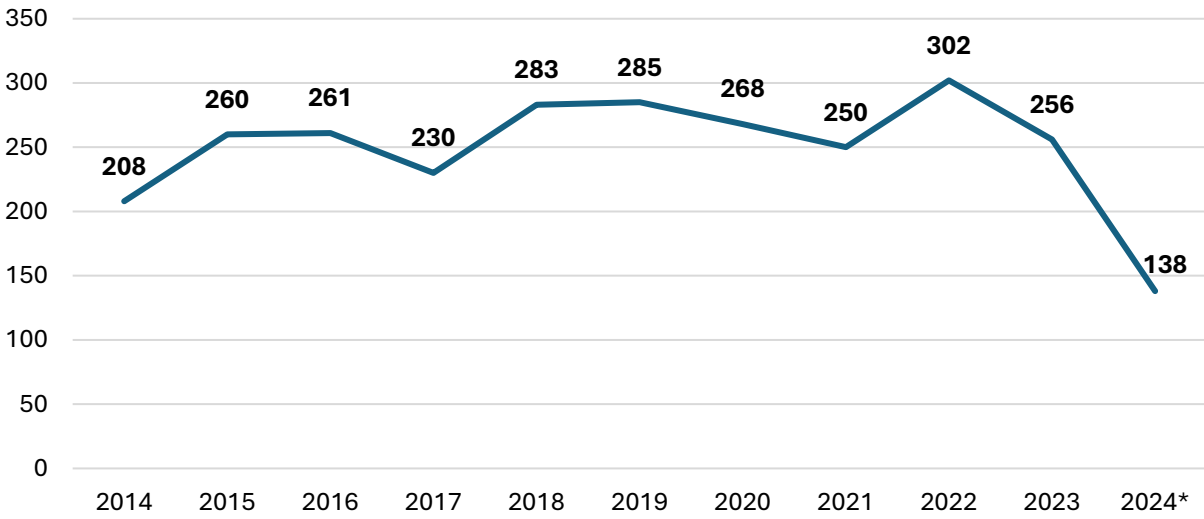
Overall, 447 unique funders awarded over 1,933 grants to 176 recipients in Cuyahoga County from 2021 through 2024 for the categories most likely to represent workforce services, for a total of \$66.7 million in philanthropic support.²² The number of unique funders that provide philanthropic grants for workforce development activities in Cuyahoga County has fluctuated overtime but has slightly increased when examining the ten-year period of 2014-2024. In 2014, there were 208 funders who provided grants for these activities in Cuyahoga County, and this had grown to 256 in 2023. 2022 has 302 funders provide grants to local organizations, the most observed during the period examined.

²¹ To compile information about philanthropic funding, Community Solutions utilized the Candid’s Foundation Maps online database. It should be noted that a foundations participation in Foundations Maps’ data collection is voluntary. While most major grantmakers in Cuyahoga County report to Candid, this information should not be considered exhaustive. We also added grants from Deaconess Foundation which appeared to be misclassified in Candid.

²² Grants captured in Candid were evaluated. When the grant was classified to be for a purpose other than those used in our analysis, we examined the grant description in Candid to determine if it should be included.

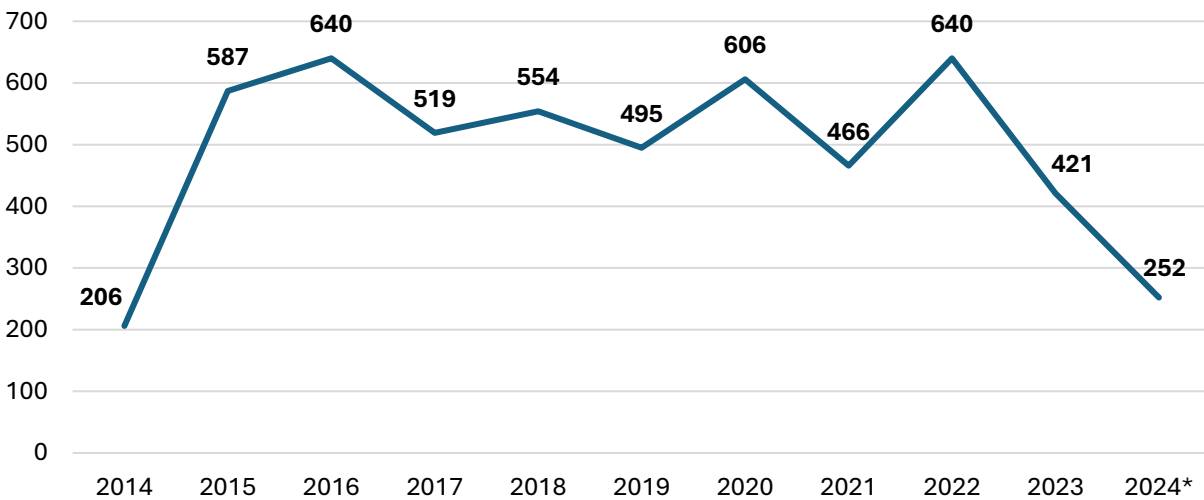


Number of Funders Providing Philanthropic Grants for Workforce Development in Cuyahoga County, 2014-2024

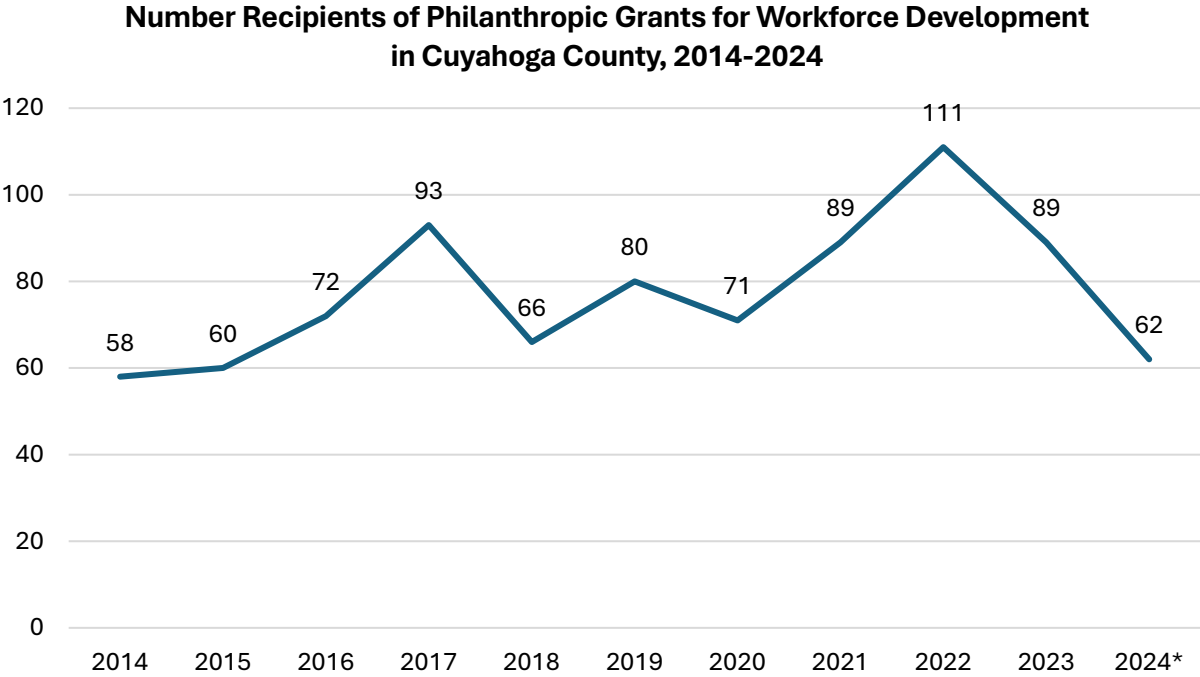


When looking at the number of grants over the same period, a similar pattern is witnessed. Two hundred and six grants were made to organizations in Cuyahoga County for workforce activities in 2014 and this rose to 421 in 2023. Like funders, the highest level of activities was in 2022 with 640 grants being awarded. Unlike funders, the number of philanthropic grants appears to be cyclical with even numbered years having more grants than odd numbered years. This could suggest that the grants captured within our data run on a two-year cycle.

Number Philanthropic Grants for Workforce Development in Cuyahoga County, 2014-2024



The final aspect of philanthropic grants examined during the historical period is number of recipients. In 2014, 58 different organizations received philanthropic grants for workforce development in Cuyahoga County. While there have been fluctuations over time, this number has been gradually growing. The number of recipients peaked in 2022 with 111 different organizations receiving funding. The number of recipients decreased slightly in 2023 to 89.



Two important considerations are that Candid’s data is self-reported so fluctuations could be the result of increased reporting and that Candid’s system does not discriminate against one-time awards of minimal financial value and larger consistent grants. Increases in funders, grants, or recipients do not necessarily reflect meaningful increases in funding for workforce development.

Philanthropic Funders 2021-2024

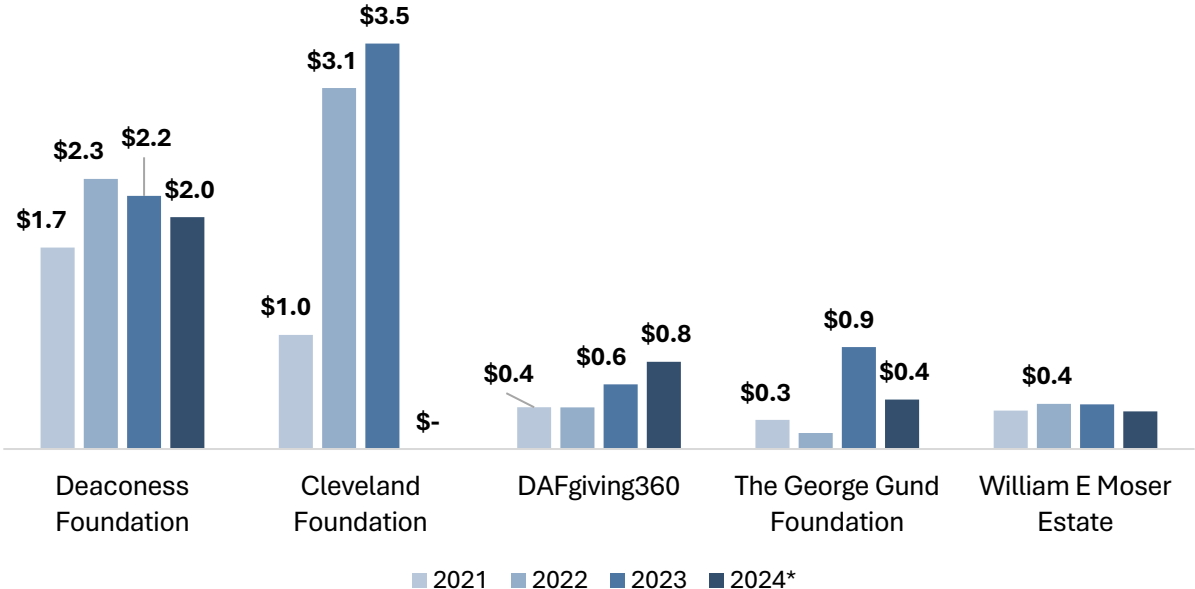
For the purposes of this section, we are going to highlight the top five philanthropic funders providing grants to organizations in Cuyahoga County that annually award funding in the most traditional workforce development activities. A more inclusive list of funders that provided over \$1.0 million during the four-year period can be found on the next page.

From 2021-2024*, Deaconess Foundation was the largest contributor of philanthropic funds for employment and training programs to organizations located in Cuyahoga County, contributing over \$8.2 million. During 2023 alone, Deaconess Foundation made grants totaling \$2.2 million dollars that support a wide variety of workforce development activities



such as adult learning programs, healthcare workforce development programming, and career advising. The next largest funder during the period is The Cleveland Foundation with \$7.6 million in grantmaking. It is imperative to note that The Cleveland Foundation has not entered their 2024 data into Candid yet and would likely be the largest grantmaker in Cuyahoga County once this information is available. The Cleveland Foundation provides grants that support a range of activities but frequent awards include general operating support for institutions that provide workforce development activities, such as The Cleveland Center for Arts and Technology.

Top Five Funders to Organizations in Cuyahoga County, 2021-2024*, in millions



The next largest funder is DAFgiving360, a donor-advised funding organization, providing \$2.0 million over the period. These funds are distributed to organizations based on the donors’ recommendations. Organizations like DAFgiving360, while providing a significant amount of funding to workforce organizations, do not solicit grants like foundations and other funding sources. This is imperative when considering the flexibility and role of this funder in the philanthropic funder space.

The final two funders that will be highlighted are The George Gund Foundation and the William E Moser Estate. The George Gund Foundation provided \$1.7 million, and the William E Moser Estate provided \$1.4 million during the period. The George Gund Foundation provides awards to a plethora of workforce development activities while the William E Moser Estate primarily provides funding to the Cleveland Sight Center.



Philanthropic Funders Providing Over \$1.0 million in Grants, 2021-2024*, in millions					
Funder	2021	2022	2023	2024*	Total
Deaconess Foundation	\$ 1.73	\$ 2.32	\$ 2.18	\$ 1.99	\$ 8.23
Cleveland Foundation	\$ 0.98	\$ 3.11	\$ 3.49	\$ -	\$ 7.58
Jewish Federation of Cleveland	\$ 0.11	\$ 5.84	\$ 0.01	\$ 0.03	\$ 5.99
Fund for Our Economic Future of Northeast Ohio	\$ -	\$ 2.10	\$ 0.60	\$ -	\$ 2.71
The Chicago Community Trust	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 0.01	\$ 2.50	\$ 2.51
DAFgiving360	\$ 0.36	\$ 0.36	\$ 0.56	\$ 0.75	\$ 2.02
Mackenzie Scott	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2.00	\$ 2.00
The George Gund Foundation	\$ 0.25	\$ 0.14	\$ 0.88	\$ 0.43	\$ 1.69
William E Moser Estate	\$ 0.33	\$ 0.39	\$ 0.38	\$ 0.32	\$ 1.43
Third Federal Foundation	\$ 0.31	\$ 0.34	\$ 0.27	\$ 0.38	\$ 1.29
David & Inez Myers Foundation	\$ 0.03	\$ 1.12	\$ 0.03	\$ -	\$ 1.18
Jack Joseph & Morton Mandel Foundation	\$ 0.30	\$ 0.29	\$ 0.59	\$ -	\$ 1.18
JPMorgan Chase Foundation	\$ 0.45	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.50	\$ 0.01	\$ 1.07
United Way of Greater Cleveland	\$ 0.22	\$ 0.37	\$ 0.37	\$ 0.10	\$ 1.06
Edwins Foundation	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.23	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.53	\$ 1.06

Philanthropic Recipients 2021-2024

Youth Opportunities Unlimited, a workforce development organization that works to equip teens and young adults with the skills and experiences needed to succeed in an evolving workforce, was the largest recipient of philanthropic grant funding from 2021-2024* in Cuyahoga County receiving over \$8.6 million. The City Mission, an organization working to not only help residents meet the basic needs of food, shelter, and clothing but also to equip them with employment that provides a sustainable, livable income, received the second most funding at \$5.7 million. While The City Mission does not solely engage in workforce development it would be a part of the organization's mission and activities. NewBridge Cleveland Center for Arts and Technology, a workforce development program focused on healthcare training, received the third most funding during the period being awarded \$4.6 million. Cleveland Sight Center, a nonprofit focused on helping individuals of all ages and ranges of visual ability navigate the visual world, received \$3.96 million for their workforce development activities. These activities focus on employment preparation, job coaching, and job placement. Edwins Leadership & Restaurant Institute rounds out the top five recipients of philanthropic grant funds in Cuyahoga County at \$3.3 million. Edwins



Leadership & Restaurant Institute works to provide formerly incarcerated adults with a foundation in the hospitality and culinary industries to set them up for long-term success.

Recipients of Philanthropic Funding in Cuyahoga County, 2021-2024*, in millions					
Recipient	2021	2022	2023	2024*	Total
Youth Opportunities Unlimited	\$ 1.09	\$ 3.23	\$ 3.77	\$ 0.53	\$ 8.62
The City Mission	\$ 2.07	\$ 1.64	\$ 0.96	\$ 1.07	\$ 5.74
NewBridge Cleveland Center for Arts and Technology	\$ 0.11	\$ 0.63	\$ 1.14	\$ 2.75	\$ 4.62
Cleveland Sight Center	\$ 0.94	\$ 1.25	\$ 1.04	\$ 0.73	\$ 3.96
Edwins Leadership & Restaurant Institute	\$ 0.46	\$ 0.97	\$ 0.71	\$ 1.17	\$ 3.31
Towards Employment Inc	\$ 0.40	\$ 0.09	\$ 0.10	\$ 2.21	\$ 2.80
Economic Growth Foundation	\$ 0.25	\$ 1.11	\$ 0.88	\$ -	\$ 2.24
Two Foundation	\$ 0.17	\$ 0.30	\$ 1.02	\$ 0.50	\$ 1.98
OhioGuidestone	\$ 0.28	\$ 0.81	\$ 0.45	\$ 0.36	\$ 1.90
Vocational Guidance Services	\$ 0.58	\$ 0.57	\$ 0.42	\$ 0.20	\$ 1.76
The Literacy Cooperative of Greater Cleveland	\$ 0.46	\$ 0.65	\$ 0.27	\$ 0.19	\$ 1.57
Case Western Reserve University	\$ 0.36	\$ 0.58	\$ 0.34	\$ 0.14	\$ 1.42
Thea Bowman Center	\$ 0.21	\$ 0.45	\$ 0.38	\$ 0.05	\$ 1.08

Some funders were also recipients of grants. For example, during the four years examined here, Fund for Our Economic Future of Northeast Ohio was a grantor of \$2.8 million and the recipient of \$1.1 million in grants. The Jewish Education Center of Cleveland was a grantor of \$589,782 to Case Western Reserve University for adult education programs and received \$5.7 million from the Jewish Federation of Cleveland.



Looking Forward

The workforce development system in Cuyahoga County is expansive and complex. This report only examines a subset of the dozens of programs which relate to employment and training in some way. Compared to Ohio as a whole, Cuyahoga County experiences higher rates of poverty and unemployment and lower levels of educational attainment, signaling a greater demand for robust workforce development efforts and funding. At the same time, the community is making effective use of most major funding sources within the workforce development ecosystem.

While our analysis did not find large pots of untapped dollars there are competitive grants at the federal and state level that Cuyahoga does not receive. Additionally, there are opportunities for earmarks, but success in obtaining this type of funding is often reliant on identifying legislative champions who have sufficient influence to get their pet projects funded, something which has been difficult for Cuyahoga County's state and federal delegation in recent years.

In addition to more money, as described below, communities outside Ohio have sought additional flexibility in federal funding and devoted more state resources to employment and training programs. There are several opportunities for advocacy, streamlining, innovation or additional investments.

Waivers in WIOA

Federal funding is the largest source of dollars which support workforce programs in Cuyahoga County. However, federal funding often comes with significant restrictions and reporting obligations. In WIOA, states can request that the U.S. Department of Labor waive certain requirements so they may use the funds to better respond to local needs.

Across all states and U.S. territories, there are 89 WIOA waivers currently in place. Ohio has been approved for four waivers, all of which were needed to implement the CCMEP program:²³

- Waiver of the requirement that states and local areas expend 75 percent of all the Governor's reserve and local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth (29 other states and territories also have this waiver).
- Waiver to allow local areas to provide in-school youth with Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) (18 other states and territories have this waiver).
- Waiver to allow calculation of the out-of-school youth 75 percent expenditure target at the state-level rather than for each local area (Only Ohio and Illinois).

²³ Approved WIOA Waivers by Waiver Type. *United States Department of Labor*. <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/wioa/pdfs/Approved%20Waivers%20by%20State%20as%20of%20January%201%202026.pdf>



- Waiver to allow local workforce development areas to count both WIOA local youth formula funds and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds toward the minimum 20 percent expenditure requirement for paid or unpaid work experience (Only Ohio and Colorado).

Below is a list of waivers which other states have in place that might be useful for future planning of Ohio's workforce system.

- Waiver to increase on-the-job (OJT) employer reimbursement up to 90 percent for businesses with 50 or fewer employees (9 states and territories).
- Waiver to adjust the six-month employment requirement for incumbent worker training (Colorado, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin).
- Waiver to allow more than 10 percent of WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker local formula funds to be used for the provision of transitional jobs (California only).

WIOA's funding restrictions can be challenging. Waivers provide an avenue for states to plan and implement a workforce development system more tailored to local needs. As with CCMEP, if there are restrictions hampering the effective use of WIOA funds, local advocates should request that the state work with the U.S. Department of Labor to seek waivers.

Expand the State Combined Workforce Plan

The development of the State Combined Workforce Plan also presents an opportunity to adjust the focus of workforce development activities. Because the current state plan covers 2024- 2027, the next planning process will likely begin before the end of 2026. Ohio has opted to include certain federal programs in its State Workforce Plan, but federal guidance presents avenues for Ohio and local entities to better integrate services within a comprehensive workforce development system. SNAP and TANF funding are being used to directly fund workforce activities and employment and training services but is not currently part of the State Workforce Plan.

The State Combined Workforce Plan is the document which outlines priorities for Ohio's use of WIOA and other resources. Cuyahoga County government and local advocates should fully engage in the State Combined Workforce Planning process to ensure that state priorities and activities are aligned with local needs.

Advocating for Increased State Funding

Governor DeWine's administration has been a vocal proponent of economic development and workforce development, but his time in office is coming to an end as he is term limited. There may be a unique policy window with a new incoming governor to successfully argue for even more state funding for workforce development. In particular, increased funding for the TechCred Program. While it did receive a large increase in the most recent state budget,



this is the most flexible government funding source and an increased investment would allow for more location control.

Leveraging Flexible Resources

Philanthropic grants are generally much more flexible than government funding, can be deployed quickly to meet emerging needs and carries far fewer reporting requirements. Philanthropic dollars make up a greater share of the Cuyahoga County funding picture in workforce development than it did since our previous analysis in 2021. Local organizations need to consider both local and national sources of philanthropic funding to support local flexible programming. For example, Mackenzie Scott is the 7th largest funder of philanthropic funding for workforce development in Cuyahoga County and she is not local. An important consideration when it comes to large national funders is buy-in. Local organizations are in the community and care deeply about the local community thriving. While external entities might have opportunities available, consistency of funding is not guaranteed.

Identifying Targets for Advocacy

More than a quarter of the funding for workforce development programs originates at the federal level, but State and County policymakers have some ability to define how dollars are spent to align those dollars with local priorities. Some possible advocacy targets are outlined below:

- Advocacy could be targeted at either increasing the overall federal appropriation for WIOA, or at changing the formula in ways that Ohio would get a bigger share.
- WIOA hits the state budget, then is allocated to the various Workforce Regions based on a formula. Therefore, there could also be advocacy around the method used by the State to distribute funds to local areas.
- GCW prioritizes programs following their regional strategic plan. Local advocates could play a larger role in developing the next plan.
- Finally, as these federal dollars flow, state and county governments could add their own resources to increase total investments.

In addition to the advocacy targets listed above, one policymaker must be specifically mentioned due to his interest in workforce development and that is Senator Jon Husted. Senator Husted not only oversaw the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation when he was Lieutenant Governor but has shown interest in this area during his time in the United State's Senate. Senator Husted sponsored S. 3583 – Upward Mobility Act of 2026, which would establish a five-year pilot program in five states that would allow states to combine funding from multiple federal anti-poverty programs into a single funding stream to eliminate benefits cliffs. This would include programs such as WIOA Dislocated Workers Funding, Community Development Block Grants, SNAP, TANF, and a handful of other programs. The bill aims to provide additional flexibility by allowing for reduced bureaucracy while also giving states additional discretion in how spending is utilized.



Upcoming Changes

While briefly mentioned earlier in the paper, it is worth noting the expansion of work requirements for federal benefit programs. The House Resolution 1 of 2025, a federal reconciliation bill, included numerous changes to SNAP and Medicaid. Included in the changes were the expansion of work requirements for SNAP recipients and a work requirement for those receiving Medicaid coverage as part of the expansion population. Having additional individuals needing to meet work requirements will cause individuals to turn to the workforce development system for help and without an increase in funding for workforce development the system could become overwhelmed.



Workforce Development Funding in Cuyahoga County



communitysolutions.com

Research by:

Dylan Armstrong
Public Policy Fellow

March 2026