



# Workforce Development Award Nomination West Virginia

## West Virginia Workforce Development Award Nomination: Jobs & Hope West Virginia

Contact Information of Individual Submitting Nomination

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Agency Name: Workforce West Virginia

### Jobs & Hope West Virginia

Jobs & Hope West Virginia was established by Governor Jim Justice and the West Virginia Legislature to provide a comprehensive response to the substance use disorder crisis in West Virginia by providing residents all inclusive services to overcome barriers that have impeded their ability to obtain and maintain employment. While the target population is individuals in recovery from substance use disorder, Jobs & Hope is open to any eligible participants who wish to eliminate barriers to employment.

Jobs & Hope West Virginia plays a critical role in the recovery process as individuals rebuild their lives which ultimately leads to building and sustaining a healthy and thriving state economy. Those who participate in the program are assessed individually to identify employment and education goals, detect barriers and receive support and assistance with reaching those goals and overcoming identified barriers. Participants have access to a wide array of services to include job placement, assistance securing transportation and child care, reinstatement of driver's license, and if needed, assistance applying for expungement.

**Provide a statement of results, accomplishments, impacts, and any other appropriate information that demonstrates why the nominee's efforts described in question #1 were an exceptional contribution. Response (400 word limit).**

West Virginia is ground zero for a convergence of many of today's socio-emotional and socio-economic challenges. With a population of 1.79 million, West Virginia has the highest overdose rate in the country at 49.5 deaths per 100,000 individuals, a labor participation rate of 54.9% and a poverty rate of 19%, which all contribute to numerous challenges.

This program is a step in the right direction for our state to lift those struggling and in need of guidance and support. Barriers are difficult to overcome and, in some cases, can be paralyzing. When people are faced with life's problems, with traumas, pain and poverty, heartbreak and adversity, it forces them to do one of two things: give up any idea of things getting better or say yes to the help being offered and take advantage of every opportunity to improve their situation.

While still in its infancy, Jobs & Hope West Virginia, has had over 600 referrals to the program with 480 individuals who are currently working toward reaching their career and/or education goals. Referrals to the program come from a variety of places, including recovery centers, Americas Jobs Center partners, community organizations, and peer recovery coaches.

**Provide a brief description of the nominee's significant contributions in any one of the other two areas listed under "criteria" that you did not focus on above. Response (400 word limit).**

Effectively addressing the issues previously outlined requires a collaborative effort from various agencies to ensure participant success. Several West Virginia agencies have stepped up to be on the front lines to aid those willing to participate in the program.

The West Virginia Department of Education has hired Transition Agents who are strategically located across West Virginia. The role of the Transition Agent is to help participants navigate the support process and give guidance to people who are transitioning back into society and the workforce.

West Virginia's Career and Technical Centers, Community and Technical Colleges and the West Virginia National Guard have received funding to provide free training and certification in high demand areas.

WorkForce West Virginia have dedicated staff to work specifically with every participant enrolled in Jobs & Hope for the purposes of job placements. Additionally, there are funds available for paid work experience to reimburse employers wages and benefits for hiring participants of Jobs & Hope West Virginia.

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources will be assisting with securing transportation and child care, vision and dental care and recovery housing along with hiring Peer Recovery Specialists to assist the Transition Agents.

**Samples of work**

[WV - Jobs Hope WV Fact Sheet 2020.pdf \(584.8KB\)](#)

[WV - Jobs Hope Overview Booklet 2020.pdf \(3.6MB\)](#)

[WV - Jobs Hope WV 2020.pdf \(2.1MB\)](#)

[WV - Gov. Justice celebrates Jobs & Hope program in southern West Virginia 2020.pdf \(700KB\)](#)

[WV - Gov. Justice honors graduates of first training course offered through Jobs West Virginia program 2020.pdf \(860.7KB\)](#)

[WV - WFWV Submission of the Pinnacle Award 2020.docx 2020.pdf \(200.9KB\)](#)