
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, September 26, 2012

CONTACT: DWD Communications, 608-266-2722

On the Web: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwd/news.htm>

On Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/WIWorkforce>

On Twitter: @WIWorkforce

Secretary Newson: Workforce System Reform Key to Sustained Growth in Manufacturing, Building on Governor Walker's Successful Strategies

At manufacturing expo, Secretary cites progress, strong partnerships, skills gap focus

GREEN BAY – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Reggie Newson said today Governor Walker's successful strategies have set the stage for workforce system changes to meet the manufacturing sector's need for skilled workers and sustain long-term economic growth.

"Governor Walker has made workforce reform a top priority," Secretary Newson said. "Under his leadership, Wisconsin has gone from a state that lost a substantial number of jobs to one that is gaining jobs, over 12,000 in manufacturing alone. The current challenge is helping manufacturers find the skill workers they need to sustain growth now and in the future."

Speaking at the Wisconsin Manufacturing First Expo, Secretary Newson cited efforts on a number of fronts to improve on training programs and address the skills gap. They include the College and Workforce Readiness Council, the Council on Workforce Investment and the Minority Unemployment Task Force.

"We look forward to reviewing recommendations of all stakeholders and advancing those that are in line with the Governor's budget priorities," Secretary Newson said.

Governor Walker made workforce system reform a priority when he established the workforce readiness council as part of his Wisconsin Working plan. The plan directed other steps to meet the workforce needs of manufacturers and other employers, such as doubling the 2011 number of job fairs this year to 100 or more.

"We are not only doubling the number of events, we are significantly improving recruiting opportunities to better match job seekers with employers," Secretary Newson said. He cited the Bay Area Career Expo set for Oct. 17 at Shopko Hall, an event open to employers in the region who have jobs to fill and job seekers who have been pre-screened and designated as ready to work.

Secretary Newson cited improvements to the DWD employment site, <https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/>, on course to exceed the 2011 record postings of more than 151,500 jobs. Recent enhancements include the addition of social media. Job seekers can get job posting alerts and useful tips on Twitter and Facebook. Statewide job postings by employers topped 44,000 this week on the free, user-friendly site is accessible around the clock.

Following the Governor's Wisconsin Working plan, DWD has also increased re-employment services and implemented ***Wisconsin Workers Win/W3***, a pilot to help individuals receiving Unemployment Insurance gain job skills and return to work.