



Byron P. Decoteau, Jr., Director

Post Office Box 94111

Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9111

225.342.8274

scsinfo@la.gov

www.civilservice.louisiana.gov

MEDIA RELEASE

Louisiana Joins Ambitious Effort to Open Public-Sector Career Pathways for 1 Million+ Workers Skilled Through Alternative Routes (STARs)

Release Date: October 29, 2024

Contact: Lindsay Ruiz de Chavez
Public Information Director
(225) 219-9462
Lindsay.Ruiz@la.gov

Louisiana State Civil Service is proud to announce that we have joined a coalition of state governments working to make skills-first talent practices a reality as part of the "Transformers in the Public Sector" initiative, a first-of-its-kind cohort led by the nonprofit social enterprise Opportunity@Work. The unique effort aims to break down barriers to public-sector employment for workers who are Skilled Through Alternative Routes (STARs), such as community college, military service, or on-the-job training, rather than a bachelor's degree.

"With this initiative, we are excited to further our dedication to innovation within Louisiana's state government's human resources program," said Byron P. Decoteau, Jr., Director of Louisiana State Civil Service. "By creating new pathways for STARs to join our workforce, Louisiana has a unique opportunity to shape the future of state government. We look forward to fostering lasting relationships with our cohorts, which will enable us to expand opportunities for STARs and ultimately strengthen our ability to serve the citizens of our state."

Among the more than 1.8 million people who make up Louisiana's workforce, the majority (59%) are STARs, representing over 1 million workers who are too often overlooked in hiring processes that rely on degrees and credentials rather than skills and capabilities. To address that disparity, over the next 12 months, leaders from Louisiana will collaborate with peers from California, Connecticut, Arizona, and Colorado and receive targeted support focused on refining and implementing skills-first talent strategies.

Louisiana State Civil Service has already begun to remove degree requirements and has eliminated pre-employment testing for a number of in-demand positions. As part of the cohort, Louisiana will focus on accelerating this work, as well as building buy-in and changing mindsets among hiring leaders. The work will include identifying roles across key state agencies, including HR, IT, and tax administration, that are well-suited for STARs, as well as designing and refining processes to help hiring managers and HR teams assess candidates based on their skills, rather than degrees.

"No matter their location, population, or political affiliation, states across the country are navigating the twin challenge of addressing talent shortages in the public sector while also creating new paths to opportunities for STARs," said Blair Corcoran de Castillo, Vice President of STARs Policy at Opportunity@Work. "That's what this cohort aims to do: advance skills-first hiring practices that open doors for STARs across the public sector. Louisiana

is leading the way in ensuring that STARs are recognized and supported — and setting an example for states seeking to build a more inclusive and productive workforce that benefits both STARs and the communities they serve.” Transformers in the Public Sector is the inaugural cohort of the STARs Public Sector Hub, a non-profit, non-partisan digital resource hub and learning community for government leaders interested in skills-first talent strategies and powered through partnership. The Hub is part of Opportunity@Work’s ongoing mission to rewire the U.S. labor market, enabling at least 1 million more working adults in America to translate their learning into earning over the next decade – generating a \$20 billion boost in annual earnings.

About Opportunity@Work

Opportunity@Work is a 501(c)3 nonprofit social enterprise on a mission to rewire the labor market so all Americans can work, learn, and earn to their full potential. Our work advances economic opportunities for the more than 70 million U.S. workers who are Skilled Through Alternative Routes (STARs) instead of through a bachelor’s degree. Opportunity@Work engages with corporate, public sector, and philanthropic partners through landmark research and labor market data analysis, public awareness and narrative change, and STARs-centric software tools. Learn more at <http://www.opportunityatwork.org>.

State Civil Service Mission:

To provide human resource services and programs that enable state government to attract, develop and retain a productive and diverse workforce that excels in delivering quality services to the citizens of Louisiana.

To learn more about Louisiana State Civil Service, follow us on Social Media.

