

STATE OF NEW YORK

1909

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 14, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. SMULLEN, McDONOUGH, TAGUE, PALMESANO, MANKTELOW, LEMONDES, DeSTEFANO, ANGELINO, E. BROWN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Economic Development

AN ACT to amend the economic development law, in relation to establishing a rural remote recruitment program

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The economic development law is amended by adding a new article 28 to read as follows:

ARTICLE 28

RURAL REMOTE RECRUITMENT PROGRAM

Section 500. Definitions.

501. Rural remote recruitment program.

502. Eligibility criteria.

503. Application and approval process.

504. Powers and duties of the commissioner.

505. Funding.

506. Reporting.

§ 500. Definitions. For the purposes of this article:

1. "Rural areas" shall mean any city, town, or village with a population density less than two hundred fifty people per square mile located within a county with a population of less than three hundred thousand people and a population density of less than two hundred fifty people per square mile.

2. "Remote worker" shall mean any full time employed person, who works an average of at least thirty-five hours per week and participates in the practice of working from one's home or another designated space, instead of the traditional office environment.

3. "Acceptance date" shall mean the date upon which an applicant to the rural remote recruitment program accepts and commits to the terms and agreements of the program.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 4. "Rural remote recruitment program" or "program" shall mean the
2 program established by section five hundred one of this article.

3 § 501. Rural remote recruitment program. 1. There is hereby estab-
4 lished within the department a "rural remote recruitment" program to
5 provide monetary incentives for remote workers to relocate into rural
6 areas of New York that opt into the program.

7 2. The department shall coordinate with the department of labor to
8 develop an application, competitive evaluation process and reporting to
9 support the rural remote recruitment program.

10 § 502. Eligibility criteria. In order to participate in the rural
11 remote recruitment program, a remote worker applicant to the program
12 must satisfy the following criteria:

13 1. the applicant must reside in New York outside of a designated rural
14 area, reside outside of New York state, or currently reside in a desig-
15 nated rural area and be working remotely;

16 2. the applicant must be eighteen years of age or older;

17 3. the applicant must be employed in a full-time remote position;

18 4. the applicant must be eligible to work inside the U.S.; and

19 5. the applicant must be able to relocate into a rural area within six
20 months of the program and must agree to live in the rural area for at
21 least twenty-four months.

22 § 503. Application and approval process. 1. A remote worker applicant
23 to the program must submit a completed application in such form and with
24 such information as prescribed by the commissioner.

25 2. As part of such application, each applicant must:

26 (a) submit documented proof of income to New York state annually
27 during the term of the program;

28 (b) submit proof of residency annually during the term of the program;

29 (c) agree to allow the department of taxation and finance to share
30 their tax information with the department; provided that any information
31 shared as a result of this agreement shall not be available for disclo-
32 sure or inspection under the state freedom of information law; and

33 (d) certify, under penalty of perjury, that the applicant is in
34 substantial compliance with all local, state, and federal tax laws.

35 3. The commissioner may approve an application from a remote worker
36 applicant upon determining that such applicant meets the eligibility
37 criteria established in this article. Following approval by the commis-
38 sioner of an application to participate in the program, the commissioner
39 shall issue the applicant a monetary award of up to twenty-six thousand
40 dollars. The monetary incentive shall be composed of the following:

41 (a) a relocation incentive of up to fifteen thousand dollars;

42 (b) a homebuyer incentive of up to ten thousand dollars;

43 (c) up to one thousand dollars for travel reimbursement for visiting a
44 rural region of interest prior to joining; and

45 (d) up to ten thousand dollars for current remote worker applicants
46 residing in a designated rural area.

47 4. Upon acceptance into the program, the incentives are to be paid as
48 outlined below:

49 (a) within fourteen days of the department receiving receipts of all
50 out-of-pocket expenses incurred when visiting the rural region of inter-
51 est, the recipient will be reimbursed up to one thousand dollars for
52 out-of-pocket expenses.

53 (b) within fourteen days of the remote worker applicant's acceptance
54 date, the remote worker will be paid a one-time payment of seven thou-
55 sand dollars.

1 (c) within fourteen days following the one-year anniversary of the
2 remote worker's acceptance date, the remote worker will be paid a one-
3 time payment of four thousand dollars.

4 (d) within fourteen days following the expiration of the remote work-
5 er's contract term, the remote worker will be paid a final one-time
6 payment of four thousand dollars.

7 (e) all payments herein are contingent upon the remote worker abiding
8 by all the terms and conditions of the program.

9 5. Upon approval by the commissioner, an interested homebuyer partic-
10 ipating in the program should receive a one-time reimbursement of up to
11 ten thousand dollars after submitting necessary proof of contract as
12 determined by the commissioner.

13 § 504. Powers and duties of the commissioner. 1. The commissioner
14 shall, in consultation with the commissioner of labor, promulgate regu-
15 lations consistent with the purposes of this article that, notwithstand-
16 ing any provisions to the contrary in the state administrative procedure
17 act, may be adopted on an emergency basis. Such regulations shall
18 include, but not be limited to, eligibility criteria for remote workers
19 desiring to participate in the program, procedures for the receipt and
20 evaluation of applications from remote workers to participate in the
21 program, and such other provisions as the commissioner deems to be
22 appropriate in order to implement the provisions of this article.

23 2. The commissioner shall solely determine the eligibility of any
24 applicant applying for entry into the program and shall remove any
25 participant from the program for failing to meet any of the requirements
26 set forth in this article or for making a material misrepresentation
27 with respect to their participation in the program.

28 § 505. Funding. The commissioner of the department of labor shall
29 transfer any necessary funding from the Federal Workforce Investment Act
30 Account as funded by grants under the Workforce Investment Act, Public
31 Law 105-220, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Public
32 Law 113-128 to the department to support this article.

33 § 506. Reporting. The commissioner shall prepare on an annual basis a
34 program report for posting on the department's website. The first report
35 will be posted by June thirtieth, two thousand twenty-seven, and by June
36 thirtieth every year thereafter. Such report shall include, but not be
37 limited to, the following: number of applicants; number of participants
38 approved; names of participants; total amount of benefits certified;
39 benefits received per participant; total increase in rural population;
40 and such other information as the commissioner determines.

41 § 2. This act shall take effect on the first of January next succeed-
42 ing the date upon which it shall have become a law.