

**EXECUTIVE ORDER
2021-8**

Expanding Return to Work and Returnship Opportunities in Utah

WHEREAS, diversity and life experience are valuable to the state of Utah and should be relevant to pay and opportunity in the workplace;

WHEREAS, Utah has the strongest economy in the country, and state leaders are interested in helping all Utahns have economic opportunity in professions;

WHEREAS, the state of Utah is working to optimize resources to assist and connect Utah citizens to meaningful skills, training, employment, and work-based learning opportunities (returnships);

WHEREAS, the state of Utah believes it is in the public benefit to assist those individuals who have left the labor force and now desire to return to work;

WHEREAS, a high number of individuals seeking to return to work throughout the state are seeking training and educational opportunities;

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to the loss of more than 122,000 jobs and continues to disproportionately impact specific demographics of workers;

WHEREAS, all employers in Utah, both private and public, can provide opportunities, including returnships, to help those looking to return to work;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Spencer J. Cox, Governor of the State of Utah, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Utah, do hereby order that:

1. As used in this order, "agency":
 - a. means a department, division, office, bureau, or other organization within the state executive branch, including the State Tax Commission, the National Guard, and the Board of Pardons and Parole; and
 - b. does not include:
 - i. an institution of higher education;
 - ii. the Utah Board of Higher Education;
 - iii. the State Board of Education;
 - iv. an independent entity as defined in Utah Code § 63E-1-102;
 - v. the Attorney General's Office;
 - vi. the State Auditor's Office; or
 - vii. the State Treasurer's Office.
2. No later than June 30, 2021, each agency shall review all procedures, policies, and rules to:
 - a. identify new ways to provide meaningful returnship opportunities to those individuals returning to the labor force;
 - b. remove any impediments that would currently exist to providing these opportunities; and
 - c. start providing return to work and returnship opportunities whenever appropriate.
3. Beginning October 1, 2021, each agency shall report to the Governor's Office and the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget on a semi-annual basis how many returnships have been filled.
4. The Utah Board of Higher Education shall direct all public institutions of higher education in Utah to consider what accommodations and assistance can be provided and marketed to those individuals looking to return to work.

IN WITNESS, WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed to the Great Seal of the state of Utah. Done in Roy, Utah, on this, the 1st day of April, 2021.

(State Seal)

**Spencer J. Cox
Governor**

ATTEST:

**Deidre M. Henderson
Lieutenant Governor**

2021/08/EO