

## Questions for the Office of Workforce Strategy Nominee

By: Shaun McGann, Associate Analyst  
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### Chief Workforce Officer ([CGS § 4-124w](#), as amended by [PA 21-2](#), June Special Session, § 203)

The chief workforce officer heads the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS), which is within the governor's office for administrative purposes only. Among other things, the chief workforce officer must (1) serve as the governor's principal advisor for workforce development policy, strategy, and coordination; (2) serve as the lead official for developing employment and training strategies and initiatives; (3) coordinate workforce development activities, including the state's implementation of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014; (4) chair a workforce cabinet comprising the state agencies involved in employment and training; (5) develop and update a state workforce strategy in consultation with the cabinet and Governor's Workforce Council; and (6) market and communicate the strategy to ensure maximum engagement with students, trainees, job seekers, and businesses.

### Questions

1. What do you consider as OWS's most significant accomplishments since your appointment as chief workforce officer? What do you see as the most important short- and long-term goals for OWS moving forward?
2. How do OWS's workforce development responsibilities compare with those of the Department of Labor? What changes to this division did the 2021 implementer act make ([PA 21-2](#), June Special Session (JSS))? Do you feel that any additional changes are warranted?

3. According to the Connecticut Business and Industry Association's (CBIA) [2022 Survey of Businesses](#), while the U.S. labor force has recovered and now exceeds pre-pandemic levels, Connecticut's labor force shrank between February 2020 and August 2022. What do you think accounts for this? What unique obstacles, if any, are Connecticut employers facing to finding and retaining employees?
4. In [August 2022](#), OWS was awarded \$24 million in federal funding to expand job training programs through the Commerce Department's Good Jobs Challenge. What specifically does this initiative consist of? What progress has OWS made in implementing it in the past six months?
5. OWS administers the [CareerConneCT program](#), which was allocated \$70 million of federal American Rescue Plan Act funding. How does the program operate? What types of training programs are available to eligible applicants?
6. The 2022 implementer act ([PA 22-118](#), § 160) required OWS to develop a model student work release policy by July 1, 2023, which all boards of education must adopt starting with the 2024-2025 school year. What is the policy's current status? What steps has OWS taken since the act's passage to develop the policy?
7. By law, OWS is responsible for developing and updating the state workforce strategy in consultation with the Governor's Workforce Council and Cabinet. What are the strategy's core components? What is its current implementation status? Will OWS be proposing any legislation to implement the strategy?
8. What role does housing play in attracting and maintaining a strong workforce? Are there policies the legislature should consider to increase housing construction in the state?
9. The 2022 implementer act ([PA 22-118](#), § 368) requires OWS, by March 1, 2023, to establish an HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) system pipeline training pilot program. (The same act also created and funded a new HVAC grant program for public school districts.) Under the act, OWS must develop pre-apprenticeship workforce pipeline training programs. Please provide an update on the status of these programs. Is OWS on track to meet the March 1 deadline?
10. In 2021, the legislature required OWS to establish standards to designate certain credential as "credentials of value" ([PA 21-2](#), JSS, § 206). What is this initiative's current status? What significance does this designation carry?

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