



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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***Return to Earn Program Now Available to Businesses  
Located in the Roanoke Valley and Alleghany Highlands***

**Roanoke, VA** – On June 11, 2021, Governor Ralph Northam announced the Return to Earn grant program which is designed to assist small businesses with providing new hires up to \$1,000 to support their transition back into the workforce. This initiative has provided \$105,624 for small businesses located within the Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, or Roanoke or the Cities of Covington, Roanoke, or Salem. The Western Virginia Workforce Development Board will be administering the funding for the region.

Eligible small businesses will be those with less than 100 employees in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Small businesses may be eligible to receive up to \$500 per new hire with the requirement to match with \$500 toward the \$1,000 hiring support per employee. Small businesses that are considered childcare facilities may qualify for up to \$500 per new hire without the requirement to match. New hires must be a W-2 employee, must be offered a position that pays at least \$15.00 per hour, and can either be part-time or full-time. In order to qualify, new hires must self-attest that they were unemployed prior to being offered employment.

Small businesses that are interested in applying for funding may visit <https://www.vcwblueridge.com/returntoearn> to learn more about the program and to find the official application.

**About the Western Virginia Workforce Development Board (WVWDB)**

The Western Virginia Workforce Development Board (WVWDB) ([www.vcwblueridge.com](http://www.vcwblueridge.com)) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that serves to oversee and convene the regional workforce development system in the Roanoke Valley and the Alleghany Highlands. Serving eight localities, the WVWDB administers federal, state, and local funding for workforce development activities including job training, employment placement, and support services to businesses and job seekers in the region.

The Western Virginia Workforce Development Board is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aides and services and interpreters are available upon request. TDD-VA Relay: 711. Morgan Romeo | EO Officer | [mromeo@vcwblueridge.com](mailto:mromeo@vcwblueridge.com) | 540-562-8442

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