

Workforce Boulder County (WfBC) is the key resource for employment and educational opportunities within Boulder County. For more than 40 years, WfBC has provided unique, hands-on opportunities to help people find the right career path, enhancing their ability to land a job, and to better their personal finances and economic stability.

It proves to reach out to Workforce Boulder County.

While the average new hire working in Boulder County makes \$39,135, the annualized average earnings of people successfully placed in jobs through WfBC was \$61,283.

Workforce Boulder County Virtual Call Center

Our response to the COVID-19 pandemic concentrated on efforts to continue and expand accessibility and the provision of employment and training services in 2020. This required setting up public virtual venues to reach our teams and services. Our virtual call center received over 16,000 calls, mainly requesting assistance with navigating the unemployment system, and getting back to work.

WORDS FROM OUR CUSTOMERS

"For the first time, I experienced dealing with someone who genuinely cared, was able to expedite things in an efficient manner, and was reliable. The staff member kept promises. Needless to say, this was an enormous relief."

"I owe a huge debt of gratitude to Workforce Boulder County for their timely and professional help."

"It is wonderful to be able to have an actual interaction with someone and not just recordings or virtual assistants or being told to view the website. While those tools can be helpful, they do not take the place of actually talking or emailing a person."

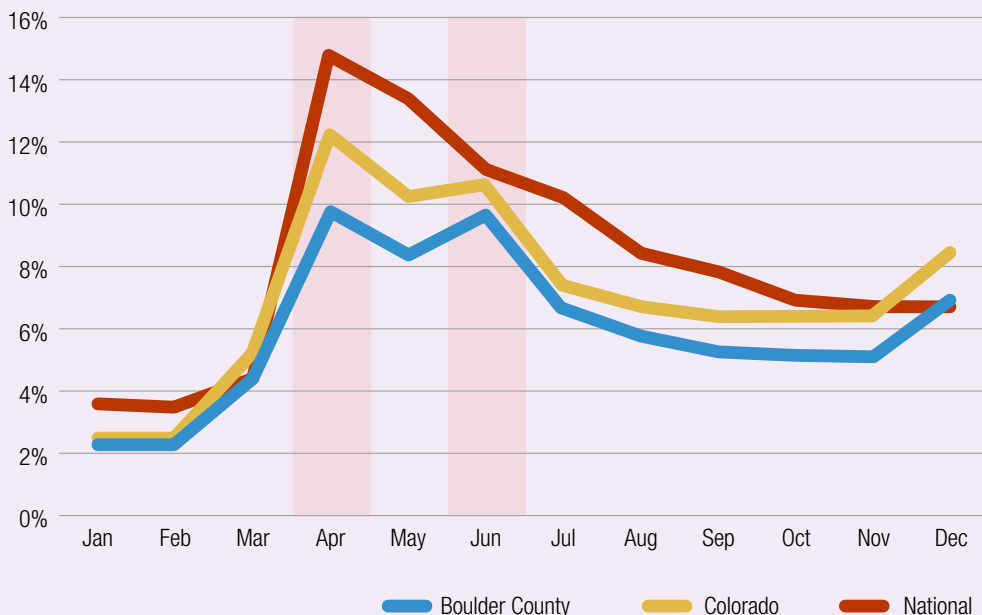
"For many people, this is brand new process for them. To be able to talk to a person is invaluable."

Career and Business Services

Our workshops, computer training center, job fairs and career coaching appointments were also available throughout the year. Workforce Boulder County served **1,300 individuals** in workshops. Overall, we served **26,233 people during 2020**, over three times more than the last few years. Over **1,100 businesses** were served.

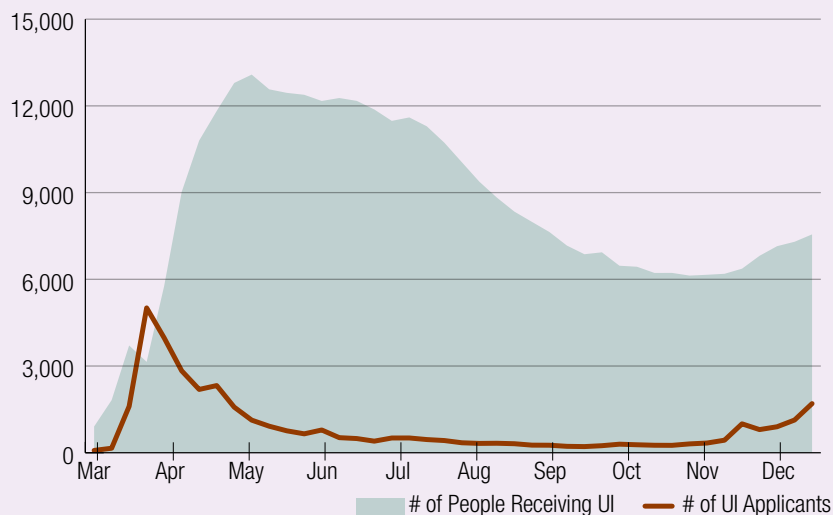


Boulder County Employment and Unemployment



COVID-19 AND EMPLOYMENT

Unemployment rates in Boulder County peaked in April and June 2020, reflecting similar changes seen in the State of Colorado. Throughout 2020, Boulder County's unemployment rate was lower than Colorado and U.S. averages.



UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Over 38,000 people applied for unemployment insurance (UI) in 2020, almost all whom applied after Colorado COVID-19 response measures began. The height of UI applications happened in April, though a second spike began to emerge in November.

The number of people receiving unemployment insurance in Boulder County peaked in May 2020. From May through the end of the year, the weekly number of recipients never dipped below 6,000. This is more than six times higher than the number of recipients receiving UI at the beginning of March (908 people) before COVID-19 closures took place mid-month.

Supporting Economic Recovery

TRAINING AND RETRAINING

Workforce Boulder County programs supported residents with training and re-training, scholarships, career coaching, and work-based learning opportunities (internships and apprenticeships). Training took place in a variety of industries including healthcare, government, information technology, human services, transportation and education.

WfBC received two employment and training emergency grants to support individuals who have been laid off with training and retraining funding and subsidized employment during 2020.

- The **RecoverCO** grant supported laid-off dislocated workers in the form of career coaching, training, retraining, and supportive services. WfBC focused on supporting training programs that indicate outcomes that support sustainable wages and employment for participants.
- The **COResponds** grant assisted laid-off dislocated workers in the form of subsidized employment that focuses on COVID recovery efforts. WfBC worked collaboratively across partner agencies to identify temporary employment opportunities for workers temporarily or permanently laid-off as a result of the pandemic.

The grant funding support the wages for each employee in the program. The period of performance of these grants continues through March 31, 2022.

ADDRESSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

The WfBC High School Equivalency Learning Lab (HSED) was awarded funds from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and from The Colorado Workforce Development Council to support a program in providing technology equipment for clients. WfBC used these funds to purchase and put together a technology package for 57 students who were experiencing hardship and did not have access to technology.

Apprenticeship Month Partnership Award

DEVELOPING NEW CAREER PROGRAMS

Workforce Boulder County partnered with Boulder Community Health, Boulder Chamber, and Front Range Community College in early 2020 to develop a new apprenticeship program. With the vision of building a “learn-as-you-earn” Medical Assistant Apprenticeship Program, the partnership launched this new initiative amidst the COVID-19 pandemic to provide career opportunities for Boulder County residents. WfBC engaged with new medical assistant apprentices by providing virtual one-on-one career coaching sessions, individualized employment plans, and supportive services. The program received the Apprenticeship Month Partnership Award by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. The Medical Assistant Apprenticeship Program is helping shape future staff and leaders of the healthcare industry in Boulder County.

