

Skills-Based Hiring for Growth In Oklahoma

Arbitrary college degree requirements for public sector jobs often needlessly restrict the pool of otherwise qualified applicants, limiting opportunity and denying state governments access to the most qualified talent. It's insulting to hard-working Americans and frustrating for hiring managers.

Degree Requirements Can Be an Unnecessary Barrier to Public Employment



Over 70 million Americans have **valuable work experience** but lack a college degree.



About 60% of public jobs **require a college degree**, but only about 35% of workers have a college degree.

In Oklahoma, there are...

104,000 JOBS OPEN and **ONLY 54,368 UNEMPLOYED OKLAHOMANS**.¹

To fill open jobs, the state will need to reconsider their reliance on college degrees as a measure of job readiness.

THE SOLUTION

Removing degree requirements from jobs that do not need them will reduce unemployment and spur economic growth in Oklahoma. It would require government agencies to specify necessary job skills or experience and justify any degree requirements they ask for.

1 Removes unnecessary degree requirements from public job postings.

1

Examples include supervisors, support specialists, administrative assistants, software developers, quality assurance.

2 Allows public employers to justify degree requirements in job postings when needed.

2

Examples include accounting (CPA), nursing, legal.

This change will enable Oklahoma and its government agencies to fill job vacancies quickly with skilled applicants who want to work, and help states to operate more efficiently.

WHY IT MATTERS

Oklahoma doesn't want to lose these qualified employees to nearby states like Colorado, Missouri, and others that have already taken this step.

Workers Often Gain Skills Outside The Classroom

- Military Service
- On-the-Job Experience
- Training Programs
- Apprenticeships
- Microcredentials
- Bootcamps

THE BOTTOM LINE:

Removing degree requirements for many public positions will improve employment opportunities for millions of qualified candidates and can reduce labor costs for public employers.

SOURCE:

1. <https://www.uschamber.com/workforce/the-states-suffering-most-from-the-labor-shortage?state=ok>. Accessed February 2025.