

DWD: To Launch Virtual Career Center Built on Google Cloud

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MADISON, SUNNYVALE – The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) today announced it is launching a Virtual Career Center (VCC), built on Google Cloud. The VCC will connect Wisconsinites to career services, relevant job opportunities and dramatically expand access to key resources across the state, via an innovative, data-driven, and easy-to-navigate online platform.

This \$2.9-million project brings together Wisconsin government and industry-leading technology providers to harness the power of cloud platforms to support candidates' job searches, helping connect the state's workforce with pathways to available career opportunities. Wisconsin will become one of the first states in the country to leverage Google Cloud technology to help people get back to work and support economic recovery statewide. DWD plans to use federal funding to pay for the new project.

“Since last March, hundreds of thousands of Wisconsinites have filed for unemployment and, yet, many employers are still struggling to fill the positions necessary to grow and expand their operations,” Secretary-designee Amy Pechacek, Wisconsin DWD, said. “Many of the workers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic were already some of the state's most vulnerable. For our economy to bounce back, we need to rapidly and successfully connect workers with the in-demand jobs of our state that build on their existing skills and experience and that offer the wages and benefits necessary to support their families and invest in their futures. This new online platform will build on our current online services and

complement our staff's existing work at our local job centers, in public libraries, and around local communities in our mobile job center. Now, more than ever, we are committed to meeting people where they are and providing the services they need to succeed in Wisconsin."

The VCC will give Wisconsinites remote access to an array of resources to support their job searches, including training resources, job market data, and career counseling. As part of the VCC, DWD is developing a "career bot" to help Wisconsin workers explore successful career paths and new interest areas, paired with proven, effective opportunities to build new skills and find the help and support they need. The VCC is designed to support economic recovery by reskilling residents for jobs that match current economic landscape and employer requirements.

"Many states have struggled during the pandemic to provide unemployment benefits, career resources, and more — due to outdated or hard-to-use technology," said Mike Daniels, vice president of Global Public Sector, Google Cloud. "Wisconsin has taken an innovative approach to these problems, and through integrated experiences provided by our technology, we hope job seekers across the state can land back on their feet quickly."

Wisconsin's VCC will be powered by a range of Google Cloud technologies — such as Google Workspace, including Google Meet, that will allow job seekers to schedule video meetings with career coaches, job recruiters, and potential employers. Additionally, the Google Job Search API is an AI-powered job discovery tool, powered by Google Cloud, that will allow jobseekers to explore career opportunities best suited to their skills and interests. The VCC application interface will be built in partnership with Maven Wave.

Certain VCC features will launch throughout the spring and summer, with the full project completed by late 2021.