

Rep. Rodriguez: Transitional jobs bill passes Assembly

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MADISON – A bill authored by Representative Jessie Rodriguez (R-Oak Creek) and Senator Van Wanggaard (R-Racine) passed the State Assembly today.

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) administers the [Transitional Jobs](#) and [Transform Milwaukee Jobs](#) programs to individuals looking to transition into the workforce. “This program helps thousands of Wisconsinites get to work each year,” began Rodriguez. “The program serves some of the most at-risk individuals, including those who have recently been released from prison. It also does a great deal to help non-custodial parents get back on their feet so they can have a relationship with their child.”

Under the program, eligible participants receive up to six months of full-time work experience, allowing them to build a work history and earn a meaningful employment reference. Participants are supported by caseworkers who provide job coaching, employability planning, life-skills development, vocational training, and job-search assistance. Employers are reimbursed for the cost of employing participants through federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding, making participation feasible for businesses while expanding employment opportunities for workers.

“Each year, hundreds of people in need are turned away from the Transitional Jobs/Transform Milwaukee Jobs program either because they are required to have been unemployed for at least four weeks or they are still eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. However, these are individuals who *want* to get to work,” continued Rep. Rodriguez. Assembly Bill 778 ([AB 778](#)) repeals these eligibility criteria, so if someone wants to go to work as soon as possible instead of receiving unemployment insurance, they can do so.

“AB 778 will get up to 350 more people into the workforce each year by expanding eligibility for the Transitional Jobs/Transform Milwaukee Jobs program. The program is currently turning those people away, and they continue to struggle to find meaningful employment on their own. My bill makes commonsense reforms to get people back to work and strengthen Wisconsin’s workforce both in Milwaukee and out-state,” concluded Rodriguez.

AB 778 passed the State Assembly unanimously on Tuesday afternoon, and now goes to the State Senate for consideration.