

TOOLKIT

**Your Guide
to Getting
Back in
the Workforce**



.....

Publication of the Tennessee
Department of Labor and
Workforce Development



CONTENTS

The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development Employment Toolkit aims to provide assistance and guidance on the employment process to Tennesseans. The Toolkit has valuable resources on unemployment insurance, supportive services, jobs, labor market and career path information, education, and how to prepare to gain employment or change careers in today's workforce.

Unemployment _____	2
Apply for Benefits, Certify Every Week, Stop Your Benefits, Restart Your Benefits	
Supportive Services _____	6
Financial Services, Childcare, Education Resources, Healthcare, Public Transportation, Veterans	
Jobs4TN _____	8
Career Centers _____	9
Training Grant Opportunities, Career Center Services	
Hot Jobs _____	10
Education Pays _____	12
In-Demand Occupations, Adult Education	
Cover Letter _____	14
Cover Letter Format, What Not to Do	
Preparing a Résumé _____	16
Résumé Format, Action Verbs, Things to Avoid, References	
Making the Most of a Job Fair _____	18
What to Do to Prepare, At the Job Fair, Afterwards/Follow up	
The Interview _____	19
Have Required Paperwork, Dress to Impress, Researching the Job, Sample Interview Questions, Ways to Ace the Interview, Questions to Ask the Interviewer, Follow Up	
Start Your Own Business _____	20

2

Navigating **Unemployment Benefits**

#2

Certify Every Week

Begin weekly certification with your PIN the week after filing for unemployment.

Certify online

- <https://ui.tn.gov/> Click on “Weekly Certification”

Certify by phone

- (615) 532-1800, (800) 689-9799 or (800) 262-8094

#1

Apply for Benefits

Have the following ready:

- Social Security Number
- Address, e-mail account (required), and telephone number
- Name, address, telephone number, and dates of employment for all employers in the last 18 months

File online or by phone

- <https://ui.tn.gov/>
- (615) 253-0800 or (877) 813-0950.

IMPORTANT: Establish your personal identification number (PIN) when you file. This PIN is necessary to begin step **#2**.

#3

Look for Work

www.jobs4tn.gov and Tennessee Career Centers are great ways to find a job, or search by other traditional methods. Write down your three weekly work searches on the work search log that was mailed to you; find it online at www.tn.gov/labor-wfd.

#4

Go Back to Work

When you certify, report your gross earnings the week they are earned - not the week you are paid. Reporting earnings more than your weekly benefit amount will stop your weekly benefit and will require you to contact the claims center to reopen your claim if you become unemployed. It is possible to earn wages less than your weekly benefit amount and still receive a reduced benefit.

#5

Restart Your Benefits

Repeat step **#1** when restarting your benefits. If you are returning to work with the same employer within a year of your first application, you will be able to refile on the Internet. If you worked for a different employer you will need to apply by phone.

4

Apply for Benefits

File online or by telephone

Now you're ready to file your claim.

You may file for benefits one of two ways. We recommend that you file online, as that is the fastest method. Go to <https://ui.tn.gov/>, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Central Time; and Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Central Time. To file claims by phone call (615) 253-0800 (Nashville area) or (877) 813-0950 (toll-free).

Whichever method you choose, you will be asked to create a PIN at the time you file. Be sure to remember your PIN, as it is required to find out information about your claim as well as to certify each week; we will explain certification further along in this section.

Remember: Memorize your PIN.

Eligibility

To be eligible for unemployment you must

- Have worked in employment that is covered by unemployment insurance;
- Have earned sufficient wages in this employment to qualify during the 18 months preceding the filing of your claim;
- Be partially or totally unemployed through no fault of your own;
- Be able, available, and actively looking for work at the time you file your claim or restart your benefits;
- Be approved to draw unemployment benefits.

Remember: Memorize your PIN.

Have the following information ready when you file:

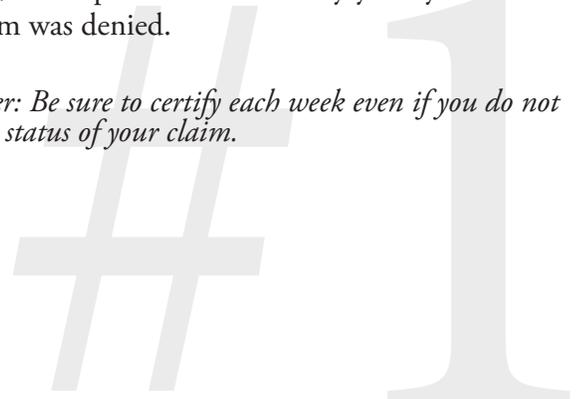
- Your Social Security Number, driver's license number, address, e-mail account (required), and telephone number
- Name, address, telephone number, fax number, reason for separation, and dates of employment for all employers in the last 18 months

TDLWD will contact you by mail and/or by phone to verify the information submitted. You may be requested to submit additional documentation so a determination may be made on your claim. Please make sure that ALL information is accurate and timely to expedite a decision on your claim.

What should I expect after I complete my application?

The Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development uses U.S. Mail to contact you regarding your claim. You must keep your mailing address up to date with the department. You will receive a monetary determination letter, stating the amount of your benefits. **This is not an approval letter; it only states the amount of benefits you could be eligible for, and a decision letter will follow.** You will receive a debit card when you file your claim unless you elect to sign up for direct deposit at <https://ui.tn.gov/>. If your claim is approved you will receive payments via your chosen method. Within 21 days – longer during times of high-claim volume – you will receive your first payment; the department will notify you by mail if your claim was denied.

Remember: Be sure to certify each week even if you do not know the status of your claim.



Certify Every Week

What do you mean by weekly certification?

As long as you are unemployed, you must answer a series of questions each week regarding your eligibility for unemployment. These questions relate to your being available for work and to any earnings you may have had during the previous week. If your claim is under appeal, you must continue to certify for weekly benefits in order for payments to be made should the decision ultimately be in your favor.

In order to certify for weekly benefits you will need the PIN you created when you established your claim. If you forget your PIN, lock your PIN, or if you believe that someone else knows your PIN, call the UI Claims Center at (615) 253-0800 (Nashville area) or (877) 813-0950 (toll-free).

Remember: After filing your claim, you must begin certifying weekly for benefits.

Look for Work

What else am I required to do to continue to be eligible for benefits?

You must complete three work searches each week as a condition for receiving unemployment and document them on a work search log, available at <http://tdlwd.tn.gov/TUCWorkSearchLog.pdf>.

Remember: Do not mail work search logs to us unless requested. Retain copies for your records for three years after your benefit year ends.

Stop Your Benefits

Can I earn any money while on unemployment?

You are allowed to earn up to 25% of your weekly benefit amount without its affecting your claim. After you earn more than 25% it starts to subtract from your weekly amount, and if you start earning more than your weekly benefit amount your claim will end. Any and all gross wages earned must be reported when certifying for weekly benefits.

Remember: Wages are reportable the week in which they are earned, regardless of when they are paid.

When do I stop my benefits?

As soon as you begin earning wages in excess of your weekly benefit amount, you need to stop certifying because you will not be eligible for benefits for any week you earn excess wages. If you earn excess wages and continue to certify without properly reporting wages this will result in an overpayment charge against you.

Restart Your Benefits

Repeat step #1 when restarting your benefits. If you are returning to work with the same employer within a year of your first application, you will be able to reapply on the Internet. If you are separated through no fault of your own, benefits may resume. If you worked for a different employer you will need to apply by phone.

SERVICES

Healthcare

TennCare is a government-operated health insurance program designed for people who are eligible for Medicaid, low-income children, pregnant women, and the disabled. www.tn.gov/tenncare; (800) 342-3145.

Pre-existing Condition Insurance Plan
www.pcip.gov; (866) 717-5826.

County Health Departments offer basic health services including children's special services, family planning, immunizations, well child visits, WIC and nutrition services, HIV sexually transmitted disease testing and treatment, and communicable disease control. <https://health.state.tn.us/localdepartments.htm>; (615) 741-3111.

Health Assist Tennessee helps Tennesseans overcome barriers to receive necessary health care services. www.healthassisttn.org/; (800) 269-4038.

Tennessee Primary Care Association links Tennesseans to federally qualified health centers across the state that serve the uninsured, underinsured, and those with private insurance. www.tnpca.org/index.cfm; (800) 343-3136.

Department of Human Services provides Adult Protective Services and Vocational Rehabilitation Services statewide. http://state.tn.us/humanserv/st_map.html; (615) 313-4700.

Families First provides temporary cash benefits to families who have children and are experiencing financial difficulties. http://state.tn.us/humanserv/adfam/afs_tanf.html; (866) 311-4287.

Food and Nutrition

WIC Program for low-income women, infants, and children, provides food, nutrition counseling, and access to health services. <http://health.state.tn.us/wic/index.htm>; (800) 342-5942.

Food Stamp Program provides nutritional assistance benefits to children and families, the elderly, the disabled, the unemployed, and working families. www.tn.gov/foodstamps; (615) 313-4700.

Cover Kids is Tennessee's free or low-cost health insurance for uninsured children www.coverkids.com; (866) 620-8864.

TENNderCare is a full program of checkups and health care services for babies, children, teens, and young adults who have TennCare. www.tn.gov/tenncare/tenndercare/index.shtml; (800) 342-3145.

Tennessee's School Nutrition Program provides free and reduced priced school lunches and breakfasts to thousands of children. Families who may not have previously applied or met the income eligibility requirements are encouraged to apply: <http://state.tn.us/education/support/nutrition.shtml>; (800) 354-3663. Federal Application - www.fns.usda.gov/slp.

Paying for College and Education Assistance

Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation provides student financial aid www.tn.gov/CollegePays/; (615) 741-1346.

Save Today for Tomorrow's College Costs The State of Tennessee has developed the TNStars College Savings 529 Program, a program of the Tennessee Treasury Department that allows parents and other relatives to invest money to be used for a child's education. The money is withdrawn free from federal taxes if used for qualified higher educational expenses. For more information visit <http://tnstars.com>, call toll-free (855) 386-7827, or e-mail TN.Stars@tn.gov.

Other Resources

Refugee Services For information on refugee services visit www.cctenn.org; (615) 352-3087.

Assistance for Homelessness For a complete list of Tennessee Shelters go to www.hud.gov/local/index.cfm?state=tn&topic=Homeless.

Veterans Assistance U.S. Military Veterans will be provided priority of service in all TN Career Centers from the partners and programs funded by the U.S Department of Labor www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/veterans.shtml. To find the nearest TN Career Center, visit www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/cc/cccounty.shtml.

Mortgage and Foreclosure Consulting For a list of free certified foreclosure prevention counselors or more information about housing assistance programs, visit www.KEEPMYTNHOME.org; (855) 876-7283.

Tennessee Low Income Energy Assistance Agencies <http://tn.gov/humanserv/adfam/liheap/liheap-agencies.pdf>

Public Transportation is available in all of Tennessee's 95 counties. There are also special programs for those over age 65, who are disabled, or who have a household income of less than \$16,000. www.tdot.state.tn.us; (615) 741-2848.

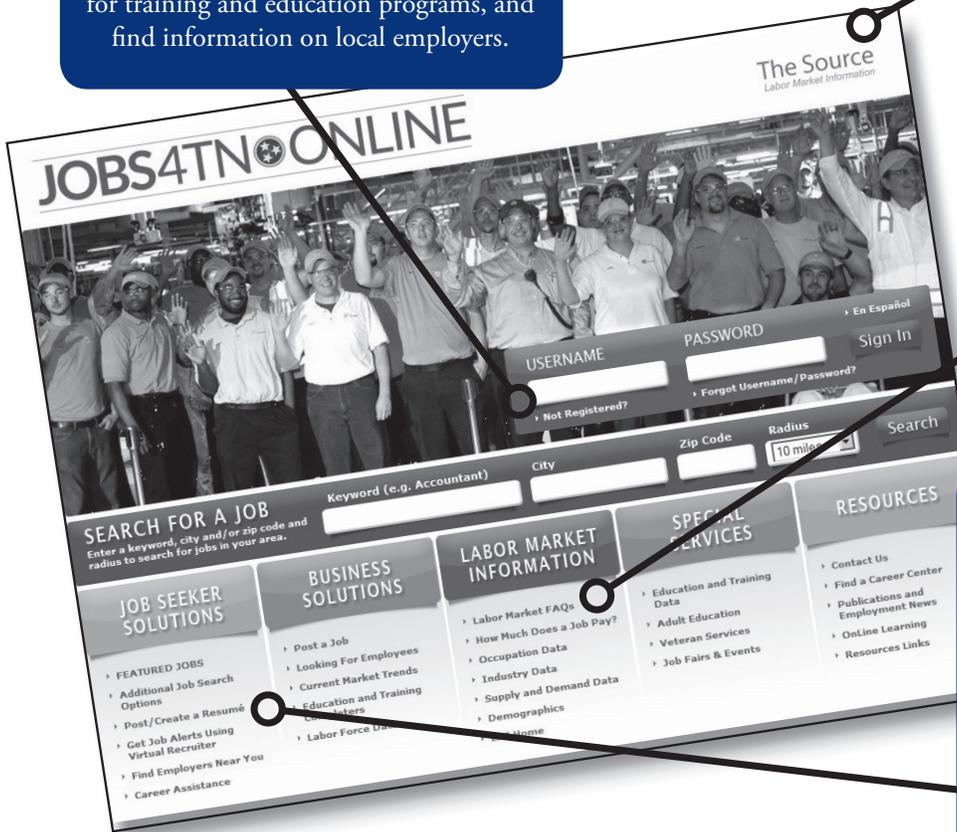
Jobs4TN.gov

Register to receive daily job updates fitting your interests and skills. To register simply select 'not registered' under the username box. As a job seeker register under individual. Under this account type you can search the latest job openings across the state, post your résumé, find career guidance, search for training and education programs, and find information on local employers.

Search more than **80,000** local Tennessee jobs! **JOBS4TN** is a new kind of search engine that generates thousands of jobs listed by major Tennessee employers. It's the premier site for finding work and locating useful labor market information.

Find information on salaries, in-demand occupations, and training opportunities. Employers use JOBS4TN to **virtually recruit** and screen résumés and applicants for job openings.

Create a **résumé**, post it online, and use it to apply for available jobs. Select 'Create a new Résumé.' You will then be taken to a screen that will give you step-by-step instructions on how to create a résumé. Job seekers are encouraged to post their résumé and choose the option that makes a résumé available to employers.



Fast Access to Tennessee Jobs!

- Search for jobs by keyword, employer, education, skills, salary, location, and most recently posted
- Apply for jobs online
- Create a résumé
- Explore more than 80,000 local jobs
- Search for information on training, in-demand occupations, and salaries
- Receive daily notifications of jobs matching your qualifications



TENNESSEE CAREER CENTERS

americanjobcenter

All 95 counties in Tennessee are served by Department of Labor & Workforce Development Career Centers. Qualified staff is available to assist you in your job search or refer you to other services. Click on the logo above or go to www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/cc/cccounty.shtml to find a Career Center in your area.

Computer Workstations

All Tennessee Career Centers offer computers with Internet access. Use the Jobs4TN Online Web site at www.jobs4tn.gov/ to create and post a résumé online for exposure to major Tennessee employers screening for employees. Search for jobs by different criteria, e.g., most recently posted, location, salary. Find data on in-demand occupations and training opportunities.

Access to Employers

Career Center staff can refer you to employers who have open positions for which you qualify. Often Career Centers host hiring events and job fairs for specific employers. Staff can help you prepare for interviews and arrange for you to apply.

Skills Training

Several types of training are available through the Career Center:

- On-site workshops are conducted on honing résumé writing, how to search for work, and interviewing.
- Staff can refer job seekers to Adult Education classes to refresh math, writing, and reading comprehension skills in order to earn a high school credential.
- Training opportunities and funding for training may be available through your local Workforce Investment Act. For more detailed information contact your local career center regarding Workforce Investment Act resources in your community.

Veterans' Programs

Career Centers have veteran counselors who can assist returning service members as they transition from military to civilian life. These veterans' representatives can provide help to all veterans in finding employment and serve as central contacts for referrals to other agencies for special services. They also make sure veterans receive priority of service in employment and training opportunities. In some cases, the spouse or widow of a veteran can receive this individualized assistance. Please check with your local Career Center for specific details.

Get on the Coach!

You may have seen one of the Department of Labor & Workforce Development's mobile units. The Career Coaches take job placement activities and technology on the road to provide employment services anywhere they're needed in Tennessee, offering the same services that are available in the Tennessee Career Centers found across the state. www.getonthecoach.tn.gov



Tennessee's TOP 100 HOT JOBS

SORTED BY RECOMMENDED EDUCATION LEVELS

Master's Degree	Annual Openings	Annual Wage
Environmental Scientists and Specialists	65	\$41,993
Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	85	\$57,426
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	250	\$46,122
Mental Health/Substance Abuse Social Workers	130	\$34,637
Bachelor's Degree		
Accountants and Auditors	840	\$56,403
Business Operations Specialists	540	\$72,844
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	220	\$35,423
Computer Programmers	200	\$62,365
Computer Systems Analysts	285	\$62,306
Construction Managers	260	\$62,360
Credit Analysts	55	\$51,464
Database Administrators	75	\$66,496
Environmental Engineers	50	\$60,462
Financial Analysts	130	\$68,637
Healthcare Social Workers	180	\$52,803
Industrial Engineer	120	\$70,821
Insurance Sales Agents	300	\$52,801
Kindergarten Teachers, Except Special Ed.	225	\$51,967
Loan Officers	260	\$45,591
Medical Technologists	135	\$57,768
Meeting, Convention, and Event Planners	65	\$46,593
Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	500	\$48,592
Network/Computer Systems Administrators	265	\$60,123
Occupational Therapists	120	\$72,665
Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists	100	\$28,128
Public Relations Specialists	140	\$47,668
Recreation Workers	185	\$25,192
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	640	\$50,355
Software Developers, Applications	130	\$74,182
Software Developers, Systems Software	120	\$74,661
Training and Development Specialists	210	\$46,930

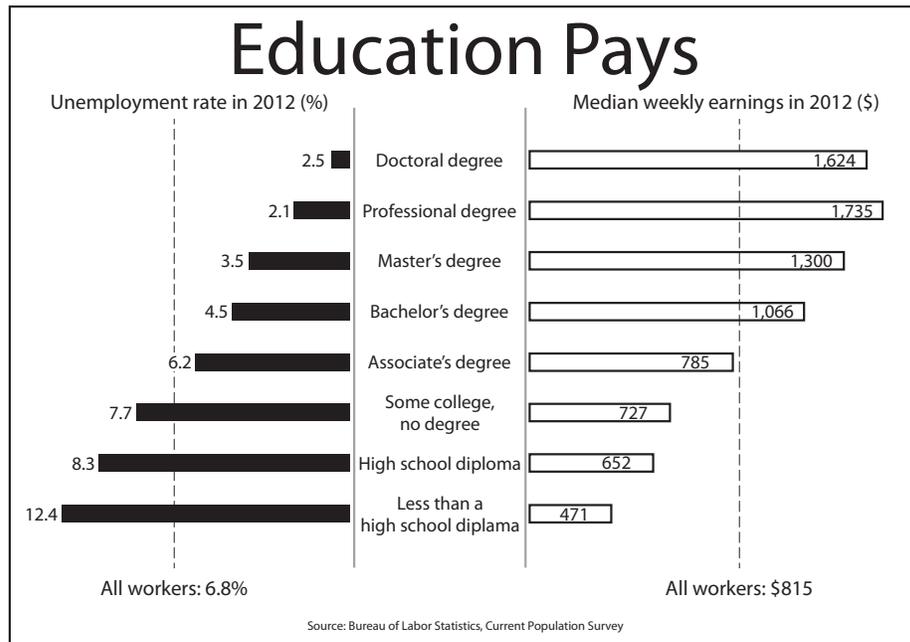
Associate Degree	Annual Openings	Annual Wage
Medical and Clinical Laboratory Techs	225	\$31,431
Medical Equipment Repairers	50	\$31,947
Respiratory Therapists	155	\$46,439
Veterinary Technologists and Techs	105	\$23,671
Post-Secondary Vocational Training		
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	180	\$39,474
Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors	165	\$36,587
Real Estate Sales Agents	100	\$27,102
Security and Fire Alarm Systems Installers	90	\$32,688
Work Experience in a Related Occupation		
Construction and Building Inspectors	70	\$39,567
Cost Estimators	150	\$54,620
Detectives and Criminal Investigators	55	\$60,493
Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	460	\$49,925
Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	510	\$27,765
Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	315	\$60,277
Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	195	\$46,697
Supervisors of Transportation and Material-Moving Machine and Vehicle Operators	145	\$49,631
Lodging Managers	50	\$46,429
Purchasing Agents, Except Wholesale, Retail, and Farm Products	140	\$47,178
Self-Enrichment Education Teachers	135	\$31,574
Vocational Education Teachers, Postsecondary	80	\$49,152
Wholesale and Retail Buyers, Except Farm Products	65	\$47,689

Tennessee's TOP 100 HOT JOBS

SORTED BY RECOMMENDED EDUCATION LEVELS

Long-Term On-The-Job Training	Annual Openings	Annual Wage
Brickmasons and Blockmasons	65	\$41,930
Carpenters	525	\$31,875
Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	140	\$59,637
Coaches and Scouts	175	\$28,169
Compliance Officers	125	\$40,320
Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	190	\$56,411
Electricians	620	\$42,257
Firefighters	255	\$49,617
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	220	\$43,807
Interpreters and Translators	60	\$35,507
Machinists	185	\$40,582
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	415	\$39,673
Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	610	\$49,608
Structural Iron and Steel Workers	705	\$23,343
Moderate-Term On-The-Job Training		
Advertising Sales Agents	85	\$34,972
Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other	565	\$23,463
Billing and Posting Clerks	410	\$31,262
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	845	\$33,942
Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	105	\$26,947
Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic	95	\$41,236
Construction Laborers	700	\$25,069
Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	420	\$21,751
Correctional Officers and Jailers	340	\$42,180
Customer Service Representatives	2,220	\$29,048
Drywall and Ceiling Tile Installers	60	\$36,276

Moderate-Term On-The-Job Training	Annual Openings	Annual Wage
Eligibility Interviewers, Government Programs	140	\$30,778
Excavating and Loading Machine and Dragline Operators	60	\$52,043
Extruding and Drawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	80	\$27,737
Hazardous Materials Removal Workers	50	\$26,942
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2,310	\$40,886
Highway Maintenance Workers	160	\$22,635
Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	115	\$35,472
Gen. Maintenance and Repair Workers	845	\$32,517
Multiple Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	60	\$26,912
Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	265	\$34,628
Painters, Construction and Maintenance	220	\$33,141
Parts Salespersons	230	\$25,540
Payroll and Timekeeping Clerks	160	\$36,766
Pest Control Workers	160	\$34,133
Pharmacy Technicians	515	\$28,211
Pipelayers	115	\$32,672
Police, Fire, and Ambulance Dispatchers	110	\$38,426
Roofers	85	\$30,043
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Non-Technical	830	\$49,425
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products	300	\$68,435
Sheet Metal Workers	145	\$35,370
Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters	70	\$33,438



Key Resources: Technology Centers, Community Colleges, and Adult Education

Perhaps you're interested in obtaining training beyond high school in a specific skill or academic area. Tennessee has a strong network of technology centers and community colleges across the state that more than likely offer the specific career programs that interest you.

What's the difference between technology centers and community colleges?

The differences are defined by the spectrum of programs offered, the time required to complete the course of study, and the certificate or degree earned upon graduation.

Tennessee Technology Centers: A Working Model for Student Success

Tennessee Technology Centers are nationally recognized for their completion rates. Approximately 80

percent of TTC students graduate and approximately 90 percent of those graduates are placed in jobs in related fields of employment.

The quality of instructors is exemplified in the fact that the institutions have a licensure pass rate of more than 95 percent on state and national licensure exams. Students can earn marketable skills and can enter the workforce within 18 months. The Tennessee Technology Centers have more than 50 fields of study that range in length from seven weeks to 18 months. Students can also earn up to 30 hours of college credit toward an associate's degree from one of Tennessee's 13 community colleges.

Most students who attend the Technology Centers are eligible to receive the Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant of \$2,000 that covers 70% of the institution's tuition and fees. The lottery scholarship can be combined with other forms of financial aid making a TTC education rewarding and affordable. No student graduates from a TTC with student loan debt. Check with the Technology Center

The following are among the most popular programs offered by the Technology Centers. Programs vary among TTC's.

- Automotive Technology
- Business Systems Technology
- Computer Information Technology
- Cosmetology
- Drafting and CAD Technology
- Dental Assisting
- Electronics Technology
- Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning
- Industrial Maintenance
- Machine Tool Technology
- Nursing Assistant
- Phlebotomy
- Practical Nursing
- Surgical Technology
- Truck Driving
- Welding Technology

nearest you to find specific programs available. The list of Centers can be found here www.tbr.edu/schools/default.aspx?id=2654.

Tennessee's Community Colleges: a High-Quality Education at an Unbeatable Value

Tennessee's Community Colleges include 13 community colleges with more than 65 campuses across the state, offering more than 480 academic programs. Students may pursue a course of study granting an associate's degree or technical certificate within two years, or they may enroll in the "Finish Faster" option that can allow graduates to enter the job market even sooner.

Community college graduates have an excellent success rate – around 90 percent – for entering employment in their chosen career.

Tennessee's Community Colleges, through the Tennessee Transfer Pathways program, also provide a seamless transition to a public four-year university – and many private universities – in Tennessee once you've earned an associate's degree. The Tennessee Transfer Pathways guarantee the transfer of credits to four-year colleges in more than 49 programs of study, including general studies. Go to www.tntransferpathway.org/ for a complete listing of guaranteed transfer programs. Completing core courses first at a community college can save thousands of dollars before transferring to the university of your choice as a junior.

Community colleges are ideal if you have work or family responsibilities and need flexible options close

to home. Programs allow you to continue working while upgrading skills and perhaps enter employment in a technical field that doesn't require a four-year degree. Go to www.TNcommunitycollege.org to find the community college near you and the programs available.

Do You Have a High School Diploma?

The quality of the labor force is one of the most important factors that employers look at when they think about locating in a state, specifically, the education of the people who make up the labor force and their ability to deliver on the job.

Not only does a person's earning potential go up exponentially when he or she has a high school diploma, but he or she is also more likely to keep a job. A huge gap exists in the unemployment rates for those having and not having their high school diploma. Workers lacking a high school diploma are also less likely to benefit from employer-provided health insurance and savings plans, and they generally need public assistance more often.

Local Adult Education programs serve all 95 counties in Tennessee. If you want to find out more on how you can earn a high school credential or how Adult Education can help you expand your employment opportunities, see the AE programs statewide: www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/AE/aepgstw.shtml. Most of the career programs available through Tennessee's Technology Centers and Community Colleges require a high school diploma. Go to <http://hiset.ets.org> to learn more about the new alternative high school equivalency test HiSET® that's now offered in Tennessee.

The following are just a few of the many and varied courses of study offered at Tennessee's Community Colleges in Tennessee:

- Allied Health, E.G., Sonography, Cardiology, Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic
- Registered Nurse
- Health Care or Health Information Management
- Business Administration Management or Accounting
- Computer Networking Technology
- Computer Forensics, Analysis, or Programming
- Website Development or Digital Media Design
- Criminal Justice
- Culinary Arts
- Exercise Science
- Industrial Maintenance/ Mechatronics
- Paralegal Studies
- Nuclear Technician
- Videography
- Civil, Mechanical, Electrical, Electronic, or Process Engineering Technology

Cover Letter

A cover letter is a crucial element to finding a job because it tells employers why they should read your résumé.

The letter begins with a **Statement** about why you are writing, whether as a response to an advertisement by an employer or as a tool to find out information about job openings. The second sentence should act as an **Attention** grabber.

The **Main Body** should briefly tell the reader why you should get the job. It is best to state your qualifications in relation to how they will improve productivity or otherwise fit into the company. Mentioning the company name, product, and/or services will demonstrate a higher level of interest to your prospective employers. Make sure to relate your skills to the job requirements.

In **Closing**, express why the company should hire you. Indicate your desire to follow-up and provide any follow up information.

Things to Avoid:

- Not putting your contact information in the letter
- Spelling and/or grammatical errors
- Not having an attention-grabbing statement
- Résumé is replicated in cover letter
- Not mentioning the specific position sought

Tips:

- Keep it clear, simple, and to the point.
- A cover letter should be no more than three paragraphs, and try to keep it to 150 words or less.
- Include all of your contact information (name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address).
- Try to find a specific person to address the letter to, someone like a personnel director or executive.

Cover Letter Format

15

John A. Doe
22 Applewhite Drive
Smalltown, TN 54632
(931) 444-9999 johndoe@hireme.com

January 28, 2013

Mr. Isaac Hodge
Human Resources Director
ABC Machines
556 Peach Ave.
Smalltown, TN 54631

Statement

Explain why you are writing the employer.

Mr. Hodge:

Attention

The second sentence should grab the employers attention.

I am interested in your machinist position advertised on XY.com. My experience and special skills would help contribute to the long history of success at ABC Machines.

Main Body

Briefly tell the reader why you should get the job.

As a machinist, I have five years experience in the setup and operation of lathes and milling machines. During my employment with Jet Parts, Inc., I took several advanced classes dealing with machining and blueprint reading.

Closing

Express why the company should hire you.

I feel your company, as a major manufacturer for aircraft engines, could benefit from my skills. I look forward to hearing from you.

John A. Doe

Preparing Your Résumé

When seeking job opportunities, you will find a résumé of your qualifications most helpful in selling your job talents. A résumé is a concise summary of your education, employment experience, skills, and if appropriate, your employment objective. It is a basic tool that is often supplemented by and sometimes substituted for testing.

Different Types of Résumés

Don Inmans
203 Jermain Drive, Spring Hill, TN 37205
(615) 333-3333 Don@hire.com

Objective:
Seeking a full-time Executive Assistant position.

Experience:
2001 - Present: Assistant, Halotone Incorporated, Nashville, TN

- Created effective filing system
- Maintained and updated Supervisor's calendar
- Prepared written reports, letters and made travel arrangements

1998 - 2001: Administrative Assistant, ABC Realtors, Columbia, TN

- Maintained accurate accounting of revenue
- Developed and maintained company inventory
- Trained staff on database encoding

1996 - 1998: Receptionist, Jones Law Firm, Nashville, TN

- Answered and forwarded phone calls
- Greeted clients
- Scheduled meetings

Education:
 1996: Bachelor of Science, Business Administration, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN
 1992: High School Diploma, Maplewood High School, Nashville TN

Skills:
 Microsoft Word; Excel; PowerPoint

◀ **Chronological Résumé**
organizes qualifications by time and assumes the last job held was the most important.

Susan Bowen
74 Ivory Street, Cookeville, TN 38503
(931) 999-9999 Susan.Bowen@smail.com

Objective:
Seeking a position as a Housekeeper in hotel, motel, or private club.

Experience as Executive Housekeeper
Supervising Housekeeper, Cookeville Inn, Cookeville, TN
 Directed staff of 25 in maintaining 300-room motel. Directed kitchen staff of three serving daily breakfast.

Supervising Housekeeper, Old Court Hotel, Crossville, TN
 Supervised 50 room-service and maintenance personnel. Was considered third in command on executive staff of 400-room hotel. Responsible for hiring housekeeping personnel and maintenance of records. Purchased all supplies and equipment. Left when hotel was torn down in urban renewal project.

Experience in Food Service Management
Food Service Manager, Volunteer College, Sparta, TN
 Supervised kitchen and dining room, with full charge of all food services for special events at 300-student college. Directed work of two cooks and eight housekeepers. Prepared all menus.

Food Service Assistant, Cookeville Technical College, Cookeville, TN
 Prepared all menus and assisted the Director of Food Services in the management kitchen, dining rooms, and food deliveries.

Education:
 Certificate of completion of food management seminar, Food Inc., Holy, TN
 Putnam County High School, Cookeville, TN

Mike Smith
6516 West 54th Street, Memphis, TN 38117
(901) 450-6668 Smith@seemikeswor.com
www.seemikeswor.com

Seeking to apply my experience to a corporate position.

Artist
Corporate
Modern
Classical

Designer
Internet
Print
Trade Show

Illustrator
Logos
Banners

Drawing
Composition
Balance
Textures
Expression

Design
Print
Video
Display

SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES
 Versed in print and web design. Directed corporate trade show displays and weekly magazine for natural distribution.

EDUCATION
 Germantown College of the Arts, Germantown, TN
 Associate's degree in commercial art
 Honors received: Dean's List

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
 Layout Artist, Greater Memphis Art, Memphis, TN
 Provided assistance and services for individual clients, including typesetting, layout, and color design.

Art Director, Sperry Marketing, Brownsville, TN
 Designed and prepared various visual aids and display material for trade shows and local exhibits.

Imaginative ▶
Résumé is a creative format for applicants seeking jobs that require originality of expression.

▲ **Functional Résumé**
emphasizes your skills and experience rather than your chronological work history.

Action Verbs

- Achieved
- Administered
- Advised
- Analyzed
- Arranged
- Assembled
- Assisted
- Budgeted
- Calculated
- Clarified
- Compiled
- Completed
- Coordinated
- Created
- Delivered
- Designed
- Developed
- Directed
- Evaluated
- Experienced
- Facilitated
- Forecast
- Formulated
- Generated
- Handled
- Identified
- Illustrated
- Improved
- Initiated
- Inspected
- Led
- Maintained
- Managed
- Marketed
- Organized
- Planned
- Produced
- Repaired
- Summarized
- Supervised
- Wrote

Résumé Sections

Contact Information

Include your full name, current address, telephone number, and an email address.

Objective.

Summarizes the type of work desired and key qualifications. Modify your statement for the specific position.

Experience

Explain your work history. List the company, employment date, the position held, and a list of responsibilities and achievements.

Education

List the schools you attended, the degrees attained, and any special awards and honors. earned.

Skills

List abilities that are associated to the job you are applying for.

Taylor W. Gains
515 Love Highway, Pineywood, TN 67854
(901) 543-4444 Taylor@ABC.com

Objective:
Seeking a full-time School Social Worker position.

Experience:
2009 - Present: School Social Worker, Joy Academy, Heart, TN

- Assisted students with behavioral problems
- Advised parents and teachers regarding aggravate problems
- Created courses regarding social behavioral issues

2007 - 2009: School Social Worker, Heart High School, Heart, TN

- Assessed dangerous situations and assured child safety
- Participated in case conferences involving school staff
- Monitored student social work interns

Education:
2007: Master's Degree in Social Work, Heart University, Heart, TN
2005: Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, Joy College, Joyville, TN

Skills:
Knowledge of the IEP process; social work case reporting and writing skills; ability to prepare social and family histories; ability to aid in program development; and skills in supervising school social work interns.

Things to Avoid on Your Résumé

Typos and Grammatical Errors:

Most employers will assume mistakes on a résumé indicate a sloppy employee.

Personal Attributes:

Height, weight, sex, health, marital status or religion are all unimportant to the employer and are not needed on the résumé.

Incorrect Contact Information:

Double check your contact information so employers will not have trouble getting in touch with you.

Emphasizing Duties Instead of Accomplishments:

Employers want to know what you've accomplished in your various duties, not what you've done.

References

A reference sheet is a list of people who can verify and comment on your professional experience. Past employers, professors, and advisors are the best professional references to have. The reference sheet sections include

- Your name and current address
- Your reference's contact information, which includes that person's
Name
Title/Position
Department/Company

For example:

Mrs. Jane Doe
Customer Service Supervisor
ABC Customer Solutions
Rivervalley, TN 56789
(521) 896-2222

18

Making the Most of a Job Fair

Job fairs can be a great way to network and meet employers. It is important to keep a few things in mind when preparing, attending, and also following up after a job fair.

Before the Job Fair

- Find out what employers will be there. Research the companies so you know what types of questions to ask.
- Make sure to proofread your résumé.
- Know what items you are required to bring (ID, résumé, etc.).
- Practice interviewing skills.

At the Job Fair

- Dress appropriately; going to a job fair is very similar to going on an interview, and you want to be dressed accordingly. How you present yourself sends an immediate message to an employer. You don't necessarily have to show up in a suit and tie; a business casual look will usually work. Leave the jeans and t-shirts at home!
- Take time to speak with employers and be personable. Leave them with an impression of who you are, not just a résumé on a piece of paper. You want them to remember you. This is also where your research beforehand comes into play. Ask questions and let them know you are knowledgeable of their company.
- Always remember a good firm handshake and eye contact can do wonders.
- Be prepared to interview on-site
- Try to find childcare to avoid bringing children to the job fair.
- Take notes and listen.
- Make sure you allow yourself plenty of time to engage with employers.

Follow up after the Job Fair

Follow up with a thank-you note or e-mail thanking the employer for his or her time. This will help an employer know you paid attention and are serious about the job.

What Is a Job Fair?

- **Job Fair/Hiring Event:** An event at which all employers are either hiring that day or hiring in the immediate future. View statewide job fairs at <http://tn.gov/labor-wfd/JobFairs/index.shtml>.
- **Resource Fair:** A fair where resources are provided to the job seeker (e.g., food stamps, clothing, housing, day care, etc.).
- **Career Fair:** Provides services to people to help put them on a career path; it is not always a hiring event.

The Interview

Confidence, research, and impression are three things you need to have down pat before going on an interview. It is crucial for you to know background on the company and what skills you can offer to the company to fill their position.

Preparing for the Interview

- Assemble all the papers/documents you need to take with you
- Learn all about the company
- Know what you have to offer
- Make sure you have references available upon request if they are not included in your résumé
- Never take anyone, including children, to an interview
- Make sure you allow enough time in your schedule for the interview
- Dress appropriately
- Keep in mind employers may require drug testing and/or a background check

10 Interview Questions You Could Be Asked

1. What is your understanding of the job's responsibilities, and what do you expect out of this job?
2. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
3. What do you expect from a supervisor?
4. Describe a difficult work situation and how you overcame it.
5. How would your boss describe you?
6. What motivates you?
7. How do you handle stress and pressure?
8. How do you handle criticism?
9. What is your proudest achievement from your last job?
10. What kind of goals do you have in mind if you got this job?

10 Questions to Ask on an Interview

1. How would you describe the responsibilities of this position?
2. Do I need any type of specific training for this position?
3. What is the acceptable dress code?
4. What are normal working hours, and what are the overtime expectations?
5. How will I be evaluated in this position?
6. What are some of the challenges I will face in this position?
7. What types of people tend to thrive here, and what types don't do as well?
8. Ask an engaging question about something you learned while researching the company.
9. Can you describe an ideal employee?
10. Has there traditionally been a high rate of turnover in this position?

After the Interview

Make sure to follow up with the employer by sending a thank-you note and reiterate your enthusiasm about the position.

Things Not to Discuss in an Interview

1. When can I take a vacation?
2. Do you do background checks or drug testing?
3. What does your company do?
4. Wages should not be brought up in the first interview (unless the employer mentions it).
5. Do you check references?

Start Your Own Business

Sometimes when you lose your job, it can present the opportunity to look into starting your own business, particularly if you have a marketable skill, adequate savings, and capital to invest. The following are some good resources to help you make the right decisions, avoid pitfalls, and comply with state regulations if you are thinking of becoming an entrepreneur.

The Tennessee Smart Start Startup Guide is a comprehensive guide on what is involved with selecting, starting up, and operating a new business in Tennessee. The guide is available at www.tn.gov/ecd/bero/pdf/TNSmartStartGuide.pdf through the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. The Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) is a network of professional business consultants with 20 locations. The TSBDC prides itself on providing expert business advice to all types of businesses whether a manufacturer, retailer, service provider, or professional. Go to www.tsbdc.org or call toll-free (877) 898-3900 for locations and how the TSBDC can help you.

The U.S. Small Business Administration is a good resource for access to capital. SBA provides small businesses with an array of financing. Contact that organization at www.sba.gov, particularly the “local assistance” link, or call the Tennessee Main Office; (615) 736-5881.

The Office of Small Business Advocate serves as a point of contact to Tennessee state government for owners of businesses with 50 or fewer employees. The Advocate provides information and answers questions for Tennesseans who are starting a small business or who already own a small business. Additionally, the Advocate’s job is to act as an informal mediator to resolve issues between small business owners and state government. For more information go to www.comptroller.tn.gov/OSBA/about.asp; toll-free (866) 831-3750.

The Tennessee Secretary of State requires registration of any business entity that has not previously been registered with the Secretary of State’s Office. Contact the Secretary of State Division of Business Services at http://tn.gov/sos/bus_svc/index.htm; (615) 741-2286.

The Tennessee Department of Labor is the department of state government for setting up an employer account for unemployment insurance and for filing evidence of compliance with Workers’ Compensation insurance coverage requirements.

- Most employers in Tennessee are liable to pay Tennessee unemployment insurance premiums. For details on establishing an account go to www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/Employers/employers.shtml; (615) 741-2486.
- Generally, every employer in Tennessee with five or more employees is subject to the Workers’ Compensation Law and required to display the Tennessee Workers’ Compensation Insurance notice. For information on the Workers’ Compensation program go to www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/wcomp.shtml; (615) 741-2395.



The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development is committed to principles of equal opportunity, equal access, and affirmative action. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.



Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development;
Authorization #337530; 10,000 copies; April 2014; This
public document was promulgated at a cost of \$0.40 per copy.