

JOB CORPS PAUSE *FAQs*

1. What does “pause” mean?

A pause in Job Corps operations occurred on May 29th when the Department of Labor halted contracts at the 99 contract-operated centers. This led to the suspension of program operations. Center operators began implementing transition plans to mobilize students safely to their home of record and suspend program activities. Funds will be used to pause program operations, which includes managing facilities, maintaining student records, and ensuring students are connected with necessary employment and program resources.

2. What legal authority does the Department have to take these actions?

The Department of Labor has the delegation of authority to halt center operator contracts including program operations at Job Corps sites. Federal Acquisition Regulation and the contract clauses prescribed in the regulation provide the government with the termination for convenience, found in FAR (48 CFR) Subpart 49.1 and FAR Clauses 52.249-2, among others.

3. How many students are currently participating in the Job Corps program?

There are approximately under 25,000 students enrolled in the Job Corps program.

4. What alternative education and training programs are being offered to students?

All students will be connected with the resources they need to succeed as this transition takes place. The Department of Labor is collaborating with state and local workforce partners to assist current students in advancing their training and connecting them with education and employment opportunities.

- Students will receive copies of personal documents and accomplishments to assist with potential transfer to other job training programs.
- Students will be registered with the American Job Center closest to their home of record.
- Students will be registered with the Labor Exchange system in their home state.
- Students will be offered to sign a release of information form to allow the Department to connect them with personalized job placement opportunities, trainings, and educational and supportive services.
- Additionally, a student resource page with helpful information and links to other job opportunities will be made available at JobCorps.gov.
- Students will receive eligibility determination for WIOA programs and offered apprenticeship and Pell grant opportunities.

5. Where and when will the students be relocated?

The Department will arrange transportation and cover costs to transfer students back to their homes of record by June 30, 2025.

6. When is the graduation day for the current program year?

Since students enroll in the Job Corps program on a rotating basis and can join or exit at any date within the program year, there is no set graduation date. According to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Sec. 16, Sec. 142, the statutory definition of graduate is “an enrollee that 1) receives a High School Diploma (HSD) or High School Equivalency (HSE), and/or 2) completes the requirements of a career technical training (CTT) program.”

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7. Are Job Corps credits transferable?

Job Corps program eligibility requirements are not identical to those of other WIOA programs, but there is overlap. Job Corps centers or federal staff can ensure departing students have all eligibility documents previously used to enter the program in order to ease their transition elsewhere.

There is a distinction between earning an industry recognized credential and completing a career technical training program. Job Corps' career technical training instruction is provided in accordance with a Training Achievement Record which includes a multitude of skills and competencies to be attained prior to a student's completion of the program. The industry recognized credential is often gained via a test or other skills demonstration along the way to completing the overall training program.

8. What are the resources being provided to staff?

Job Corps contracted centers are staffed with employees who work for Job Corps operators and are not federal employees. The operators are largely private contractors who each operate multiple centers. The Department cannot speak to the contractors' plans regarding the employment status of the contractors' employees.

The Department will provide staff with targeted information and eligibility determination for employment services, access to apprenticeship programs, job fairs, unemployment compensation, armed service recruiters, and alternative education and employment training programs.

9. Why pause operations at all centers?

- The Job Corps program has been in a financial crisis for years, creating constant uncertainty for participants and administrators. The gap between funding and expenses has been publicly known, with operating costs steadily rising and the program's budget remaining flat over several fiscal years.
 - Job Corps was operating at a \$140 million deficit in PY 2024, requiring centers to be paused to save approximately \$119 million to reach the end of this program year.
 - According to projections, in PY 2025, the deficit would grow to \$213 million.
- According to the recently released Job Corps Transparency Report, the highest graduation rate among all Job Corps centers was 65.4%.
 - High schools with graduation rates below 67% are generally considered low performing under federal law.

10. Where did the Job Corps Transparency Report data come from?

The analysis of internal data from program year 2023 was provided and published by the Department's Employment and Training Administration, which oversees the Job Corps program.

11. Will the Department of Labor suspend operations at the 24 USDA centers?

No. The Department of Labor does not contract with center operators at the USDA sites. USDA owns and operates their 24 centers.