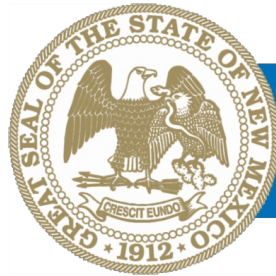




Office of the Governor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Oct. 26, 2021

Governor Signs Order To Reform, Simplify State Regulations

Action An Important Step In New Economic Strategic Plan

SANTA FE, N.M. – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, Economic Development Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes and other state leaders today unveiled the 20-year Strategic Plan that will guide economic investments in New Mexico and deliver a more robust, resilient and secure future for all families.

In response to Strategic Plan findings, Gov. Lujan Grisham on Tuesday took action to initiate a statewide effort to streamline the state’s regulatory system. Through an executive order, the governor will direct the Regulation and Licensing Department, in consultation with the Economic Development Department, to conduct a comprehensive review of the state’s rules and regulations to identify opportunities for updates, simplifications or repeals that will streamline the regulatory system -- and ultimately deliver the most business-friendly environment while maintaining the protection of public health and safety.

In particular, the state will aim to remove unnecessary burdens to professional licensing, which disproportionately affect underserved communities, to provide a simpler path to entrepreneurship. In addition, these departments will collaborate with local governments to reduce timelines for approving construction-related permits, a commonly reported impediment to expeditious development.

“We heard from the business community loud and clear that regulatory reform must be a priority in our efforts to grow the economy and create entrepreneurs and better jobs, especially in underserved communities. Today’s Executive Order begins that process,” Gov. Lujan Grisham said. [The Executive Order is here.](#)

“The Strategic Plan research also clearly shows that we are on the right track by focusing on target industry groups that provide economic security to families with professional, higher-paying career-track jobs. Now, we need to move forward together to leverage our innovative investments in early childhood education and tuition-free college into a stronger and more secure future for everyone,” Gov. Lujan Grisham added.

The Strategic Plan, “Empower and Collaborate – New Mexico’s Path Forward,” is one piece of EDD’s outreach and recovery efforts from a \$1.5 million federal grant funded by the CARES Act through the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The dollars are

helping to fund economic relief and recovery assistance across the state. The Strategic Plan research was undertaken by SRI International, a Menlo Park, Ca. -based consulting group. SRI engaged in hundreds of interviews, crunched data and financial information, and did independent analysis to derive its actions and recommendations.

The Plan was unveiled by Gov. Lujan Grisham and Cabinet officials at a Tuesday news conference. Guests included business leaders and representatives of local governments.

“The state has never before undertaken such an extensive economic planning effort,” Secretary Keyes said. “Still, it is not the final product. It is a *roadmap*, a call to action for state government, local partners, and business and education leaders to come together with more collaboration and innovative public policies. We don’t want this plan to sit on a shelf. We’re taking action now. Please join us, support us, and we’ll bring New Mexico great jobs and the economic success it has never before experienced.”

“Modernizing our regulatory system will make our state even more business-friendly while ensuring we continue to protect the health and safety of all New Mexicans. With our Economic Development Department colleagues, we’ll eliminate any duplicative and unnecessary regulations and enable our professionals to get licensed in a swift and fair manner,” said Regulation and Licensing Superintendent Linda M. Trujillo.

“We applaud the Governor’s Executive Order on regulatory reform and reduction. New Mexico’s regulatory system is the number one issue our member companies say needs to be improved for them to continue to operate and expand in New Mexico,” said New Mexico Chamber Of Commerce President and CEO, Rob Black. “We believe that by reducing the regulatory burden on individuals and small businesses, we increase access to the economy for all New Mexicans, especially for those communities who have been historically disenfranchised or excluded. We are excited to work with the Governor and her team on this important effort.”

“The Higher Education Department is dedicated to improving economic prosperity in New Mexico and looks forward to continued collaboration with Gov. Lujan Grisham, the Economic Development Department, and our fellow cabinet agencies to increase opportunities for New Mexicans to succeed here at home,” Higher Education Secretary Stephanie Rodriguez said. “We continue to partner with colleges, universities, faculty, and industry partners to better align higher education programs with workforce needs, and to invest in the development of a diversified and highly paid workforce.”

“Since day one, Governor Lujan Grisham has been clear about the need and value of cross-agency collaboration to provide New Mexico’s employers and workforce with the support, responsiveness, and resources to address the diverse needs of our economy,” said Department of Workforce Solutions Acting Secretary Ricky Serna. “This level of collaboration will surely shatter the status quo in how we develop a workforce for a stronger economy.”

In a summary of its findings, SRI International writes that the COVID-19 pandemic brings to light the need for more economic cooperation. “As workers, consumers, and businesses were forced to adapt to the new realities of the pandemic economy, structural shortcomings of regional and national economies became increasingly apparent. The pandemic has demonstrated how current economic practices and principles have subjected economies to unsustainable dependencies and exacerbated inequalities in communities across the globe.”



[The Strategic Plan documents are here.](#)

Key survey findings include:

- Population growth and wage growth have not kept pace with neighboring states.
- The skill sets being created through the higher education system are mismatched with the skill sets needed for the jobs of today and tomorrow.
- More targeted investment in underserved communities and rural areas is needed so economic recovery can be shared by all. Physical and digital connectivity remains a challenge for many rural communities.
- The state is highly entrepreneurial, but new businesses need more technical and financial investment so they can add jobs faster and sustain growth. Competing states have more venture capital funding per capita than N.M.
- Investments in target industries and a more skilled workforce will build a resilient and diversified economy that can bring families greater income and sustain them through downturns.

The plan's suggested action areas include more collaboration among economic development stakeholders; better alignment between higher education and industry; more engagement of disadvantaged communities; and stronger economic diversity with a focus on 9 target industries.

In workforce training, the Strategic Plan tasks EDD and Higher Education to map degree programs to appropriately train students for key jobs in the target industry sectors and develop a plan to market these programs.

In outreach, the Strategic Plan calls for more assistance to rural and tribal communities with grant writing and on-the-ground technical assistance.

The Strategic Plan also calls for continued investments in the Border zone, Outdoor Recreation, and more support for statewide incubators and startup businesses.

The Strategic Plan was built in consultation with non-governmental stakeholders in New Mexico—such as the New Mexico Chamber of Commerce and the New Mexico Partnership—as well as governmental organizations—including New Mexico's seven councils of governments (COGs), the Indian Affairs Department (IAD), the Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD), the Higher Education Department (HED), and the Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS), among others. Direct engagement with more than 100 organizations provided further insights that shaped the recommendations.

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The New Mexico Economic Development Department's mission is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive.

New Mexico Economic Development Department
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