

# **PRESS RELEASE**

## **COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT**

1515 Arapahoe Street, Tower 2, Suite 400, Denver, Colorado 80202

**Contact:** Bill Thoennes, Office of Public and Government Relations, 303.318.8004

### **ONLINE APPLICATION CONNECTS JOB SEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS**

*Website provides options for job seekers and employers alike*

(DENVER, June 8, 2004) -- The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment has introduced a new online feature that enables job seekers and employers to connect with each other. When job seekers go to [www.connectingcolorado.com](http://www.connectingcolorado.com), they can now complete a job application with a Workforce Center without having to make a trip to a local office. They can even do a self-directed job search without ever leaving their browser. Employers can visit the same site to post job openings or search for qualified applicants.

“People clearly want to interact with government electronically,” says Jeff Wells, Executive Director of the Department of Labor and Employment. “They want to renew their drivers’ licenses online, they want to search vital records and pay taxes online. The online job search is one of the most in-demand services offered by government. It’s a service that is both cost-effective and convenient to our customers so this is an important next step for us.”

This “next step” isn’t meant to *replace* Colorado’s statewide network of employment offices. “Not everyone needs the face-to-face assistance that is available at a Workforce Center,” Wells says. “Providing options in how people interact with us is a key element of good customer service.”

#### ***The Job Seeker Side***

Job seekers begin by providing some basic information about themselves – their interests, skills and education -- just as they would outline them to an Employment Specialist in a Workforce Center. The skill screens let job seekers communicate their *specific* talents and skills instead of relying on vague job titles such as “office manager” or “contractor” to match a worker with a job.

Once the application is complete, job seekers can determine for themselves how they would like to be contacted when possible job matches are found. Some prefer to have employers contact them directly, either by phone or email. Others prefer anonymity and request that the Workforce Center act as the go-between with prospective employers. It’s all about offering options.

Job seekers who don't want to wait to be contacted about a job match may choose to find a job themselves by browsing through the listings, utilizing a powerful search engine that makes the process faster and much more accurate than circling ads in the help wanted classifieds. Job seekers start by selecting an industry and then narrow it down to specific job titles that pique their interest. The system compares the job seeker's experience and skills with current job openings, sorts the results and finds the closest matches.

### *The Employer Side*

For the employer, searching through thousands of applications is easier than one might think. "The system can sort them by the criteria that is most important to the employer," explains Kathie Stenzel of the Division of Employment and Training. She begins a mock search for applicants with backgrounds in construction work by keying in some of the critical job requirements.

"As we begin our search, we see that there are currently 50,000 applicants with some construction experience who are willing to work in the Denver area," she says. The search is refined with a few more keystrokes. "Of those, 27,000 are willing to work for what I'm willing to pay. From that group, we can locate a few hundred with some of the very specific skills we're looking for. I would like a candidate with backhoe experience and about 130 of them have that. There are just a few who have all of the above plus the bricklaying experience we need."

The search is rapidly narrowed down as the employer's specific requirements are applied to the applicants' specific details. "We can continue to broaden or narrow the search based on what we're finding," Stenzel says. In a matter of minutes, she has found three top candidates. "This person has over eight years of experience, these other two were first-line supervisors. If the employer wants to look closer at these candidates, we can bring up a full list of skills."

This online service is free to both job seekers and employers and is already proving itself a worthwhile investment. "The system has already seen success," Stenzel says. "Employers have found workers and hired them through this online system. It's making the connection." Connecting job seekers with employment opportunities is a perfect fit for digital government and is helping the Department of Labor and Employment and Colorado Workforce Centers deliver on digital government's promise to do more with less.

*To do an online job search or post a job opening, go to [www.connectingcolorado.com](http://www.connectingcolorado.com) or visit the Department of Labor and Employment's website ([www.coworkforce.com](http://www.coworkforce.com)) and click on either "Register for Employment" or "Post a job opening."*