

# Hire Chicago

In August 2021, The Partnership joined Chicago Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and World Business Chicago to create Hire Chicago, a five-week hybrid (virtual and in-person) event aimed at readying residents and employers for the new post-pandemic economy.

Hire Chicago connected Chicagoans to careers in high-growth industries and/or career counseling and training programs preparing them for the jobs of tomorrow. Chicago employers were encouraged to participate to gain access to the city's diverse and skilled workforce.



Each of the five weeks focused on a different industry sector. Virtual workshops and prescreening events were held each week on Mondays and Tuesdays, while virtual interviews were held on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Employers extended conditional offers of employment during the no-cost event.

- Week 1 - August 2: Manufacturing
- Week 2 - August 9: Food Service/Hospitality and Tourism
- Week 3 - August 16: Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics
- Week 4 - August 23: Healthcare
- Week 5 - August 30: Information Technology



**Nearly 300 employers brought more than 14,000 career opportunities to nearly 3,000 job seekers who attended the virtual event.**

In promoting the event, Mayor Lightfoot said, “The pandemic has changed us individually as people and collectively as a workforce. What worked in January 2020 no longer works for us today, as our priorities have shifted and our lifestyles have changed. Good-paying, sustainable jobs and careers are foundational to the success and happiness of our residents, and I am proud to dedicate the month of August to making these employment opportunities as accessible as possible—especially for our underserved communities on the south and west sides.”

The event was born out of the City of Chicago’s COVID-19 Recovery Taskforce (RTF), created to advise city government as economic recovery efforts began in the wake of the pandemic. The RTF drafted a change study, which placed a sharp focus on inequities in Chicago and the role those inequities play in deepening the impact of the crisis for many Chicagoans. Hire Chicago addressed many of the RTF’s recommendations, such as re-imagining the region’s workforce infrastructure, creating a plan to invest in displaced and young workers, building upon the region’s historic strength in manufacturing, and re-imagining regional tourism and travel. The timing of Hire Chicago aligned in part with the early September 2021 expiration of pandemic-era extension of federal unemployment benefits and supplements in Illinois, as well as a return to in-person education in some of Chicago’s schools. This shift allowed some caregivers the opportunity to consider returning to employment.

