

Spokane Region

Reskilling and Upskilling in the Post-COVID-19 Economy

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a deep recession in Washington with a sharp rise in unemployment. A significant percentage of jobs lost may never return. African American and Latinx workers, young adults, and those without postsecondary education are being hit hardest by the Covid-19 recession. Many Spokane workers will need to **reskill** for jobs in new industries and focus on those with growth potential and opportunities to **upskill** for career advancement. The availability of seamless, well-coordinated credential pathways is critical to helping them successfully navigate this transition.




RESKILLING:

Learning a new set of skills or obtaining a credential in a separate field, with the goal of transitioning to a new job or different industry.

UPSKILLING:

Acquiring additional skills or new credentials for advancing to a more responsible position and higher wages in the same general line of work.

EXAMPLES OF CREDENTIAL PATHWAYS IN THE SPOKANE AREA FOR LIVING-WAGE, IN-DEMAND JOBS¹

Occupational Fields	RESKILLING			UPSKILLING	
	Short-Term Programs	Entry-Level Position		Additional credentials for Career Advancement	Next-Step Occupations
Transportation Technology 	Short-Term Certificate Auto Maintenance & Light Repair - 2 Quarters (Spokane Community College)	Automotive Service Technician (Median Hourly wage- \$18.75)	→	2-Year Associate Degree in Automotive Technology 2-Year Associate Degree in Diesel & Heavy Equipment Mechanics (Spokane Community College)	Automotive Master Mechanic (Median Hourly wage- \$19.71) Diesel / Heavy Equipment Mechanic (Median Hourly Wage- \$21.63)
Information Systems & Technology 	2-Year Associate Degree (Spokane Falls Community College)	Computer Network Support Specialist (Median Hourly wage- \$23.08)	→	Bachelor's Degree (BAS) (Spokane Falls Community College)	Computer Network Administrator / Systems Analyst (Median Hourly Wage- \$29.80)
Accounting 	Short-Term Certificate – Accounting Clerk (Spokane Community College)	Bookkeeper/ (Median Hourly wage- \$15.94)	→	2-Year Associate Degree (Spokane Community College) Bachelor's Degree – Professional Accounting (Eastern Washington University)	Accounting Assistant (Median Hourly wage- \$20.67) Accountant (Median Hourly Wage- \$23.08)

Strategies to Support Reskilling and Upskilling for a Sustained and Equitable Recovery

Short-Term:

- Increase awareness of short-term, non-degree programs that provide qualifications for living-wage jobs.
- Ensure broad access to online courses that offer flexibility and alternatives to in-person classes.
- Provide support services to students who face barriers to attending and persisting in postsecondary programs.
- Expand the use of Academic Credit for Prior Learning for certificate and degree programs.

Long-Term:

- Continue to develop short-term certificate programs and credential pathways that are stackable toward degrees.

¹ The living Wage for a family of 2 adults (1 working) and 1 child is \$21.49 (Source: MIT Living Wage Calculator, accessed Oct. 2020, <https://livingwage.mit.edu/>). In-demand jobs and wage data were determined using labor market analytics from Economic Modeling Specialists International (Emsi) and Burning Glass Technologies.