



2026 Summer Employment Guide

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According to the Casey National Alumni Study¹, foster youth with extensive employment experience are over four times more likely to graduate than youth with no experience. If you know a foster or kinship youth who is looking for a summer job, read on to learn about some special opportunities that are available for young adults in Milwaukee.

EARN & LEARN: Milwaukee's Summer Youth Employment Initiative

EARN & LEARN was created to provide meaningful work experiences and career exposure to young adults **ages 10–24** who reside in Milwaukee County. In partnership with Mayor Cavalier Johnson and numerous community partners and stakeholders, Employ Milwaukee has provided paid EARN & LEARN work experiences to more than 40,000 young adults in the community.

The program offers:

- Structured, well-organized work-based learning experiences
- Role models that encourage youth to continue in or return to school
- Career assessment, awareness, and exploration as part of the learning experience
- Opportunities that may lead to unsubsidized employment for youth making the transition from school

There are three different components to EARN & LEARN:

Camp RISE

June 22–August 7, 2026 (Closed June 26–July 3, 2026)

Camp RISE is an EARN & LEARN initiative developed in partnership with Voices of the Elders, Milwaukee Public Schools, and the City of Milwaukee. This free summer enrichment and career exploration program aims to provide Milwaukee youth **ages 10–13** with the tools to become leaders in their community. *Note: Participants must be students at Milwaukee Public Schools.*

Camp RISE uses an evidence-based youth leadership curriculum to empower participants to make positive decisions and contribute to a better society. The 6-week camp programming includes:

¹ Read the full Casey Foundation report at <https://www.casey.org/national-alumni-study/>.



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- Field trips across the city
- Career exploration
- Community projects to beautify Milwaukee
- Teambuilding activities
- Inspirational speakers
- Monetary stipend for participation
- Lasting memories and relationships!

If you are interested, submit an interest form at <https://employmke.wufoo.com/forms/mcuxe1909ch24s/>. If you have questions, call Employ Milwaukee at (414) 270-1700 or email campRISE@employmilwaukee.org.

Community Work Experience (CWE)

June 9–August 16, 2026 (enrollment ends on May 1)

The EARN & LEARN Community Work Experience has empowered more than 15,000 youth to take charge and start building their professional future. Funded through the Mayor’s Fund and run by Employ Milwaukee, this intensive 7-week work experience program provides quality summer jobs to local young people. Participants **ages 14–24** will earn \$12.21 per hour for up to 20 hours per week, and they will develop essential workplace skills including professionalism, effective interpersonal communication, punctuality, and problem-solving skills. Learn more and apply at <https://city.milwaukee.gov/EarnandLearn>; if you have questions, contact Cindy Anderson (CWE Coordinator at Employ Milwaukee) at (414) 270-1770 or earn.learn@employmilwaukee.org.

Summer Youth Internship Program (SYIP)

June 19–August 14, 2026 | Application Deadline: April 24, 2026, at 4 p.m. CT

The Summer Youth Internship Program (SYIP) component of EARN & LEARN is a specialized work opportunity where Milwaukee youth **ages 16–19** are assigned to various work assignments in departments within city government. SYIP provides youth hired by the program with an 8-week work experience. They receive a subsidized wage rate of \$16.00 per hour for 20 hours each week for a maximum of 160 hours during the summer work cycle. *Note: Priority is given to high school juniors and seniors who have not previously participated in the program.*

Learn more and apply online at <https://city.milwaukee.gov/earnandlearn/jobs/syip>, or contact Vanessa Armstrong (Human Resources Officer at Department of City Development) at (414) 286-6076.

Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) Ambassador Program

The MPD Ambassador Program is designed to encourage future leaders and build new bridges between the MPD and the community it serves. This short-term work experience for young adults **ages 18–25** is enriched with mentorship and community engagement. Ambassadors and MPD members work side-by-side at MPD districts and divisions, as well as community events in neighborhoods across the city.



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To participate, an applicant must:

- Be a U.S. citizen
- Have a high school diploma, GED, or HSED
- Be interested in public safety and/or law enforcement, as well as community service and engagement
- Be able to work 24 hours per week

For more information, contact Kamala Anderson (Recruiting – Police Academy) at (414) 935-7686 or kmande@milwaukee.gov.

Transform Milwaukee Jobs (TMJ)

The Transform Milwaukee Jobs program offers immediate, short-term job opportunities for young adults **ages 18–24** who live in Milwaukee County and are “aging out” of the foster care and/or juvenile justice system. In addition to receiving a paycheck, participants get job training, education, job search assistance, job counseling and support, transportation assistance, and supplies needed for work (uniform vouchers, boots, tools, and more).

**Transitioning or
already transitioned
out of foster care?
This one's for you!**



To be eligible for the program, participants must meet the following qualifications:

- Be unemployed for four weeks in a row
- Be unable to get Unemployment Insurance
- Have income below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level

Learn more at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/w2/tmj>. If you have any questions about the program, please contact Equus Workforce Solutions at (414) 949-1702.