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Rural Opportunity Zones employer sponsorship applications online
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Employers can now apply to sponsor ROZ applicants through Commerce website

The Kansas Department of Commerce has announced that applications for the Rural Opportunity Zones employer sponsorship program can now be filed online. The Rural Opportunity Zones (ROZ) program allows qualified new residents of designated counties to receive state income tax waivers for up to five years and/or student loan repayments up to \$15,000.

The student loan repayment program is a shared cost between participating counties and the state. Employers can opt to sponsor a ROZ candidate to cover the county's share of the cost of the student loan repayment program. Through employer sponsorship, businesses in rural counties can recruit additional workers.

"A growing number of ROZ applications continue to pour in, and as a result some counties have waiting lists," said ROZ Program Manager Chris Harris. "Employer sponsorships have helped counties overcome funding challenges and bring new participants into the program. That helps the employers who are using sponsorships to recruit skilled workers, as well as their communities, which benefit from new residents."

So far, six businesses have sponsored employees who are participating in the ROZ program. The application and sponsorship regulations can be found at **KansasCommerce.com/ROZSponsorships**.