

HIRING BEYOND OHIO:

**A Best Practices
Guide for Recruiting
Out-of-State Talent**



Helping employers hiring for STEM and technical
roles build their workforce with national reach.



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Getting Started:

Expanding Your Talent Search Nationally

In today's competitive market, limiting your talent pool to a single region or state means you could be missing out on the qualified candidates your business needs to grow.

This guide was created specifically for small to midsize employers looking to extend their recruitment reach across state lines. Whether you're opening a new location, struggling to fill high-demand roles, or simply ready to explore a broader hiring strategy, this resource will help you approach national recruitment with confidence.

Why Go National?

Expanding your search can significantly improve both the quality and diversity of your candidate pipeline. That's especially true for hard-to-fill roles in STEM fields, skilled trades, and leadership. When local talent is scarce, out-of-state hiring isn't just a backup plan. It's your competitive advantage.

With a strategic approach and the right tools, you can connect with skilled individuals who may be open to relocating and might not otherwise discover your opportunity.

How to Run an Out-of-State Recruitment Campaign

Hiring talent outside your company's home state is very different from hiring locally. You're not just offering a job. You're asking people to consider changing their entire lives. Hiring out-of-state talent adds new challenges, including:

- Reaching people who don't know your company exists
- Making your location appealing to people who know nothing about it
- Allowing for a longer decision-making process
- Adjusting for lower application and acceptance rates

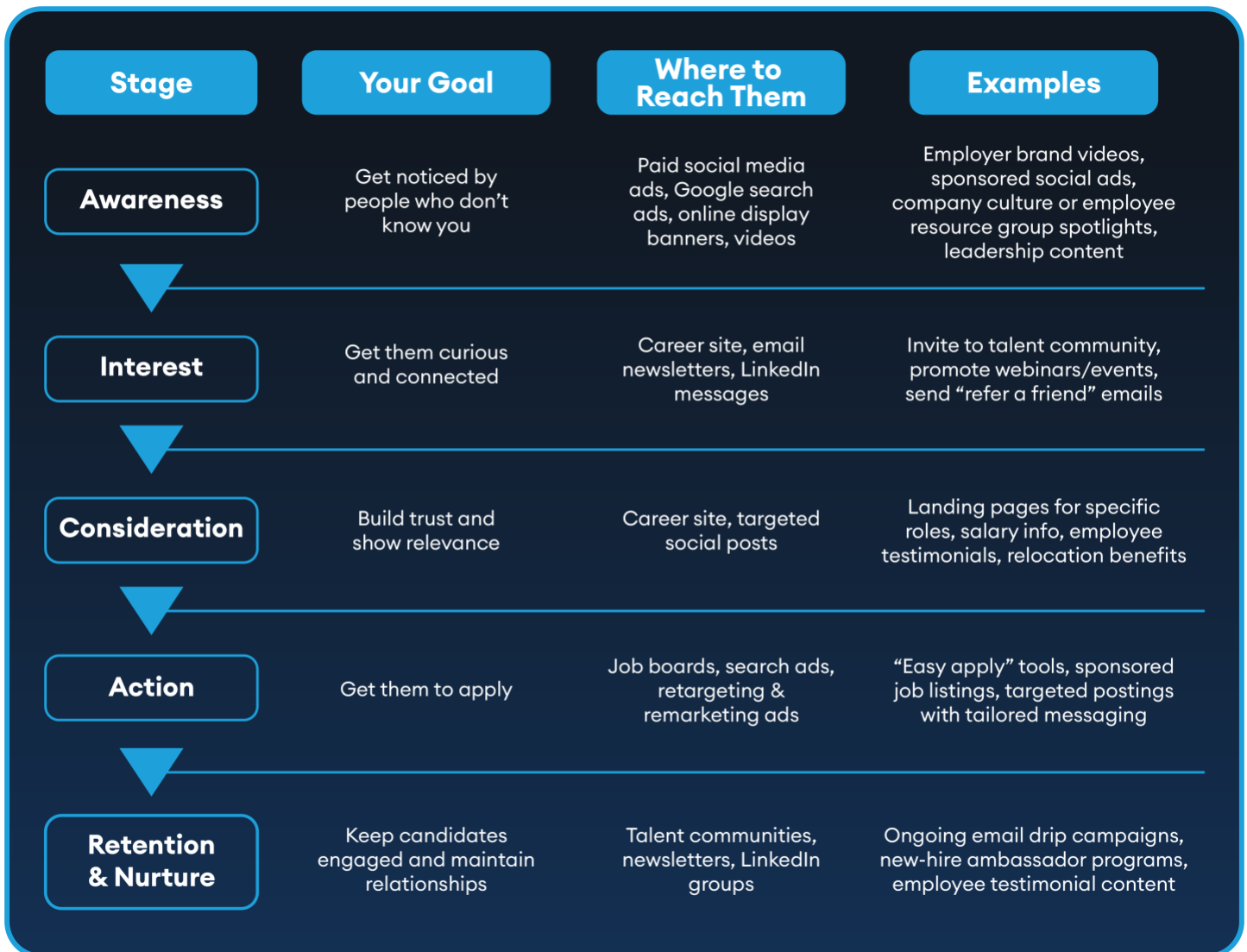
The following section will walk you through planning, launching, and improving a campaign to attract and engage out-of-state candidates.

Understanding the Recruitment Funnel

The recruitment funnel is a way to think about how people move from first learning about your company to actually applying for a job. It has four stages:

1. Awareness – people hear about your company for the first time
2. Interest – they start paying attention and want to know more
3. Consideration – they compare you to other companies and opportunities
4. Action – they apply for your job

Why it matters: Out-of-state candidates usually need more time to go through these stages because they're deciding on both a job and a move. They need to know you exist, and you must keep them engaged *before* they're ready to apply.



Campaign Planning: What to Decide Before You Start

Before you run ads or post jobs, make sure these pieces are in place:

- **Clear goals**

What are you trying to achieve? What does success look like?

Example: Hire two out-of-state employees by September.

Common pitfall: Posting too late. Waiting until the last minute to post a role means you miss top candidates who may have already accepted other offers.

- **Target audience segments**

Who are you trying to reach? What messages are most important? Segment by role, level, experience, or geography. Tailor messaging so the audience can see themselves in the role and in Ohio. The more specific and relatable the message, the stronger the connection.

Example: For entry-level roles, focus on recent graduates from top STEM universities. For more senior roles, target candidates with 5+ years of experience in similar industries and highlight the availability of relocation support.

Common pitfalls:

- Unclear relocation support. Failing to state whether the company covers moving costs or provides temporary housing can reduce candidate interest or lead to declined offers.
- Vague messaging. If the content is too generic, talent won't see themselves in the role or the location, making them more likely to lose interest and move on.

- **Realistic timelines**

Out-of-state hires typically require more time to engage, evaluate, and make a decision. On average, it takes twice as long to hire out-of-state versus in-state talent.

Example: While local hires might take 30-45 days from posting to offer acceptance, out-of-state candidates may need 60-90 days. Include extra time for relocation discussions, virtual office tours, and family considerations.

Common pitfall: Roadblocks in the process that lead to lost time. Candidates repeatedly filling out long applications or not receiving timely follow-ups may lose interest or accept another offer.

- **Media and content budget**

Plan for costs tied to job board sponsorships, paid social, video content, and design assets.

Example: You might spend \$500-\$1,000 per month to sponsor listings on Indeed or LinkedIn for high-priority roles. Budget another \$500 to create short video tours of your office or city to share with candidates considering a move.

Common pitfall: Spreading budget too thin. Paying for ads on 12 different niche job boards can dilute results. A tighter focus delivers a better return on investment.

- **Stakeholder alignment**

Ensure Human Resources and Talent Acquisition leaders, hiring managers, recruiters, and relocation teams are aligned on the timeline, budget, and messaging strategy.

Example: Schedule a kickoff meeting to confirm who approves job postings, who handles relocation questions, and who is responsible for following up with candidates at each stage of the process.

Common pitfall: Misaligned stakeholder expectations. Hiring managers may expect hired candidates to start in a month, but TA and relocation teams need 90+ days, causing delays.

Checklist:

- ✓ Define the job(s) and key selling points
- ✓ Research and choose target states or cities
- ✓ Set your budget
- ✓ Gather photos, videos, and stories about your company
- ✓ Assign roles for execution and follow-up with candidates

How to Adjust & Optimize Your Campaigns

Out-of-state campaigns will perform differently than local ones. For example, you can expect:

- **Lower conversion rates**

You may get half as many applications per view compared to local hiring. When hiring locally, candidates can envision themselves taking the job right away. Out-of-state hires face extra hurdles – leaving their support networks, finding suitable housing, or adjusting to a new community – that can lead prospects to decide against following through with an application, even for roles that interest them.

- **Longer timelines**

People often take more time to decide on relocating. Candidates need time to explore, ask questions, and weigh the benefits and risks of a move. Passive candidates require more nurturing (e.g., awareness of your company, storytelling, personal outreach), so your timeline should also account for this.

- **Lower acceptance rates**

Some will back out due to moving costs or personal reasons. Clear expectations around relocation assistance can help increase acceptance rates.

What you can do:

- Compare your campaign results to your *own* past results, not just general hiring averages. For example, if your past out-of-state campaign for engineers generated 150 clicks and 12 applications (8% conversion), compare the new campaign's performance against that benchmark instead of a generic 15–20% “local” average. Or, if your last out-of-state marketing push cost \$7,000 per hire, that's a better point of comparison to gauge your next campaign's performance than the \$4,000 average SHRM benchmark, which doesn't account for relocation.
- Find where candidates drop off in the process. Is it the job description, application process, timing, or something else? Identify roadblocks and use that insight to make your processes easier and refine your strategy. The clearer the path, the more likely a candidate is to take the next step. Leverage tools like applicant tracking systems, AI integrations, and scheduling platforms/software to streamline these steps and reduce friction for candidates.
- Adjust your budget to move ad money to the best-performing platforms. If job boards aren't converting, move more budget to paid social ads or retargeting/remarketing. *Note: Paid social involves paying platforms like Meta or LinkedIn to show your job ads to a target audience of your choosing based on factors like demographics, location, job type, and more. Retargeting/remarketing is a way to remind people who've already looked at your job or visited your website, about your opportunity, so they keep it top of mind.*
- Test new headlines, images, or employee benefits in your messaging. Small changes to things like wording, visuals, and calls to action (CTA's) can encourage more people to click on your postings and increase application rates. For example, try different headline variations (“Build the future of clean energy with \$3K relocation assistance” vs. “Join our team in Ohio”) to see which pulls more attention. Even slight changes to job titles can boost engagement.

- Gather feedback from candidates and new hires, if possible. Use touchpoints like a quick two- or three-question survey in your applicant tracking system, a short questionnaire sent during onboarding, or an informal check-in with management or HR during an employee's first 30 days. Ask what attracted them to click, apply, or accept the offer, as well as what almost stopped them. These insights can reveal which CTAs, channels, or messages resonated most, and where you may be losing people. Use this feedback loop to continually refine your targeting and your messaging.

Where to Spend Your Budget

1. Paid Ads

Priority: High

Paid media is the most effective way to reach out-of-state audiences who are unfamiliar with your company. Paid ads help you build visibility early, then shift toward active application conversion as hiring ramps up.

- Start broad (social ads, Google search, etc.) to get noticed.
- Later, focus on job boards and targeted ads for active candidates.
- **Tip:** Invest more of your budget in target metro areas where you're likely to find top talent (e.g., engineering hubs or cities with relocation potential).

2. Social Media

Priority: Medium

Social media works best when used in conjunction with paid promotions. If your channels are already active, use them to amplify the reach of those openings with targeted posts.

- Target posts by location, profession, or relocation interests.
- Post regularly with strong visuals and exciting messages to drive engagement, especially when launching a new role or entering a new market.

3. Organic Content

Priority: Low to Medium

You don't need a full organic content strategy to attract out-of-state candidates. But if you already have one, you should use it to your advantage.

- Use content you already have that tells your employer brand story and highlights your employee value propositions (e.g., team spotlights, career growth stories, community involvement).

- Share posts that speak to prospects seeking or willing to relocate. Highlight relocation support and perks, cost of living, or benefits that resonate with people considering a life change.

Top Job Boards for Out-of-State Recruiting

These platforms are your best bet when targeting talent across state lines:

LinkedIn, ZipRecruiter & Indeed

- **Strength:** Great for reaching large, national audiences
- **Tips:**
 - Use terms like “Open to Relocation” in your job title or in the introductory copy of the job posting.
 - Sponsor listings in target metros to boost visibility

Niche & Specialty Job Boards

For specific industries or candidate groups, choose boards based on role relevance, not volume.

Platform	Audience	Use For
Relocate.me	U.S. & International tech talent	Tech/engineering open to relocation
WayUp or RippleMatch	Early-career and college grads	Internships and entry-level hiring
HireHeroesUSA	U.S. military veterans	Skilled transitioning service members
State Job Boards	Job seekers in target states	Government/union roles, compliance, local hiring

Tip: Don’t try to be everywhere. Limit niche board use to one or two relevant platforms per campaign to stay cost-effective and focused.

Messaging Strategy for Non-Local Audiences

Remember, you’re selling a job *and* an out-of-state move. Your messaging should sell the opportunity and paint a picture of what life could look like if they relocate.

Step 1: Build Awareness

Out-of-state job seekers are unlikely to stumble across your openings organically. Before you can earn an application, you have to get on their radar.

- Utilize broad-reaching digital media, such as banners, social, video, and audio ads, to increase awareness of your company and career opportunities.
- Don't target too narrowly at first. The initial goal is exposure to a wide audience, not efficiency. Get your message out across platforms and geographies before narrowing in.
- Focus on storytelling over selling. Early messaging should spark curiosity and evoke emotion, rather than demanding action.

Step 2: Boost Engagement with Storytelling

Once you've caught their attention, visual content can help make the opportunity feel real and exciting.

- Show, don't just tell. Share photos and video tours of your workplace, facility, or the community you're located in.
- Make culture tangible. Use team spotlights, employee resource group highlights, and employee testimonials to humanize the experience. Testimonials are especially powerful because they give candidates authentic insights while turning your employees into brand ambassadors. The benefit of featuring authentic employee stories is twofold: it influences candidate decision-making *and* strengthens pride and engagement among your current staff.
- Frame relocation as a life upgrade. Talk about cost of living, lifestyle benefits, access to nature or schools—anything that helps candidates picture a better quality of life.

Step 3: Craft a Message that Resonates

Every message, from your digital ads to your job descriptions, should speak to both the head and the heart of a non-local candidate. Balance opportunity and logistics with personal benefits and emotional pull.

Suggested Message Flow for Campaigns and Job Postings:

1. Why this role or company matters

What's unique or meaningful about the work you do? Why should someone care?

2. What's in it for them

Highlight relocation assistance, sign-on bonuses, unique benefits, flexibility, or career growth.

3. Why your location is worth the move

Make the case for Ohio (or your region/city): lifestyle, affordability, community, and career momentum. [See the Why Ohio? section of this guide for more tips.](#)

4. What they'll need to bring

Share must-have job qualifications and role responsibilities clearly, but don't lead with them.

Bonus: Things to Have Ready Before Launch

Item	Purpose
☒ Relocation benefits summary	Sets expectations and reduces back-and-forth
☒ Local living guide	Helps candidates picture life in the area (schools, housing, recreation)
☒ Out-of-state job posting template	Saves time and keeps your messaging consistent
☒ Dedicated landing page	Puts all job and relocation info in one place
☒ Quick recruiter follow-up plan	Keeps candidates from losing momentum

Smart Targeting: Finding the Right Talent Pools

When expanding your search nationally, success is about reaching the *right* people. The labor market for STEM and technical talent is highly concentrated, with certain regions, schools, and workforce sectors producing more candidates than others. By using labor market data and talent insights, you can identify where your ideal candidates are most likely to live, work, and look for opportunities. This section will walk you through strategies for analyzing geographic hotspots, tapping into emerging markets, and focusing your efforts where they'll make the greatest impact.

Smart targeting matters because it saves time, reduces costs, and improves candidate quality. Instead of stretching your budget across broad, unfocused campaigns, you'll be investing in the markets and talent pools that are most likely to deliver results.

Know Your Audience: Targeted Attraction Strategies

To attract the right candidates, you'll need to tailor your outreach and messaging to the specific audience you're targeting. Different audiences are motivated by different values, career priorities, and life circumstances. Combining labor market data with smart messaging gives you the best chance to connect. Also, keep in mind that active candidates will find out about your company where they're already looking: job boards, your career site, and other job-related searches. To reach passive candidates, you'll have better luck targeting professional associations, alumni groups, and audiences on social media using strong employer brand content.

Veterans and Active Military

What they value:

- Mission alignment and a sense of purpose
- Career stability and advancement opportunities
- Family support (housing, healthcare, relocation, schools)

How to reach them:

- Partner with veteran-focused organizations like [HireHeroesUSA](#), [DOD SkillBridge](#), and state-level resources like the [Ohio Department of Veterans Services](#) (ODVS).
- Target bases and military communities with digital ads and job postings. Some regions with a large number of military veterans and separating service members include Virginia/D.C. Metro, San Diego, CA, Texas, North Carolina, and Florida.
- Use [military job translators](#) to help veterans map their skills to civilian roles.
- Check out the [JobsOhio Underserved, Underrepresented, and Veteran Talent Resource Guide](#) for more information on hiring veterans.

Messaging tips:

- Emphasize how your company's mission aligns with service values. Veterans and active duty military members want to work somewhere that has impact, structure, and meaningful values.
- Focus on skills that transfer from military service to civilian jobs, like leadership, logistics, security clearance, and technical skills. Military jobs don't map one-to-one to civilian jobs, so describe how you'll train them to bridge the gap.
- Call out relocation support for families, not just the individual. Healthcare, retirement, and family benefits are major decision drivers for veteran talent. See the [Supporting Your New Hire section for resources for trailing spouses](#).
- Highlight job and income stability, long-term career paths, and opportunities for growth or leadership.
- Use clear, civilian-friendly language and avoid corporate jargon in your job descriptions.

Early Career Talent

What they value:

- Affordability and quality of life
- Career growth, learning, and mentorship
- Purpose-driven work and inclusive culture

How to reach them:

- Build pipelines with colleges and universities (career fairs, alumni networks, partnerships).
- Offer internships, co-ops, and rotational programs to connect with top talent early.
- Use social media channels like TikTok, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Handshake to connect with younger talent.
- Ensure your hiring process is mobile-friendly and easy to navigate, and be transparent about next steps.
- Build or enhance your company's reputation as an employer of choice with employee reviews on Glassdoor, Indeed, and Handshake.

Messaging tips:

- Spotlight lower cost of living compared to other national talent hubs. Describe how spending less on daily necessities can help them pay off student loans or achieve financial stability more quickly.
- Showcase growth opportunities, hands-on training, skill-building, and mentorship. Early talent looks for chances to build skills that are marketable long-term.
- Highlight lifestyle perks (nightlife, outdoor activities, community), local Young Professionals groups, and employee resource group initiatives.
- Demonstrate your company's commitment to sustainability and social impact. Young talent wants to feel that their work connects to a bigger purpose.

Underrepresented & Underserved Populations

What they value:

- Inclusive, welcoming, stable workplaces
- Representation in leadership and career mobility
- Safe, supportive communities for themselves and their families

How to reach them:

- Use targeted media placement in outlets and networks designed to reach untapped talent.
- Partner with workforce development boards, nonprofits, and affinity groups.
- Reference the [JobsOhio Underserved, Underrepresented, and Veteran Talent Resource Guide](#) for best practices.

Messaging tips:

- Show commitment to hiring untapped talent through authentic employee stories and representation.
- Highlight programs that encourage belonging (employee resource groups, mentorship, advancement, wellness programs, etc.).
- Emphasize training, mentorship, and career paths, not just job duties.
- Use inclusive, bias-free, clear language in job postings. Replace jargon or culture-coded words like *ninja*, *rockstar*, *guru*, and *aggressive* with neutral terms like *specialist*, *team member*, or *high performer*. Replace gendered language like *dominant* and *competitive* with *collaborative* and *driven*.
- Only list must-have skills, and avoid unnecessary degree requirements if commensurate experience is sufficient. Women and underrepresented groups apply less often if they don't meet 100% of the criteria in a job posting.
- Ensure postings are mobile-friendly with short, scannable paragraphs. Avoid acronyms or insider terms that may be unfamiliar to this audience.

Benchmark Against Your Competition

When trying to attract talent nationally, it's helpful to understand where other companies are finding candidates. Look at where competitors post jobs, sponsor events, or recruit from to see which cities, schools, or talent pools are working for them. This insight can help you focus your efforts, avoid unsuccessful trial and error, and reach candidates before your competitors do.

- Check competitor job postings and sponsored listings on LinkedIn, Indeed, or niche job boards.
- Determine which regions, industries, or schools your competitors are targeting and consider whether similar or untapped areas could work for your roles.

Use Labor Market & Talent Supply Data to Your Advantage

Beyond knowing who your audience is, knowing *where* STEM and technical talent lives or is likely to relocate from helps you refine recruitment targeting. You can use labor data to map concentrations of your ideal candidates.

Note: Many data analysis services (LinkedIn Talent Insights, CBRE Tech Talent Scorecard, CompTIA's Cyberstates, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Lightcast, etc.) have an

associated cost. You can access these tools directly, or you may choose to partner with a recruitment marketing agency to help interpret the data and stretch your budget further.

Out-of-state recruiting works best when you tailor your message to your audience's priorities and use data to zero in on the most promising talent pools.

Occupation Category	Example Cities	Talent Characteristics	Messaging Priorities	Ohio Selling Points
Computer & Technology	San Francisco Bay Area, Seattle, Austin, Raleigh-Durham	Strong software, IT, and cybersecurity talent; often located in expensive urban centers	Stress Ohio's lower cost of living, stable career paths, and ability to work on impactful projects without big-city costs	Electrical engineers and computer systems analysts see ~10-20% higher real income in Ohio vs. California; housing costs are up to 70% lower
Life Science	Boston, San Diego, Research Triangle (NC), Minneapolis	Talent in biotech, pharma, and medical device sectors; often clustered around research universities	Highlight Ohio's growing health science corridor, affordability, and opportunities to lead in research with strong institutional support	Life scientists earn comparable salaries with ~30-40% lower housing costs vs. Boston or San Diego; Ohio has 4 major research hospitals and expanding biotech hubs
Business, Research & Data Analysis	New York City, Washington D.C., Chicago	Experienced data analysts, economists, and business intelligence talent; dense competition	Emphasize work-life balance, shorter commutes, and the chance to shape strategy in fast-growing organizations	Cost of living in Ohio is ~45% lower than NYC and ~25% lower than Chicago; Ohio consistently ranks highly for low commute times
Engineering	Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Denver	Mechanical, aerospace, and electrical engineers; strong aerospace clusters in CA, TX, CO	Promote Ohio's aerospace legacy, advanced manufacturing, and family-friendly lifestyle	Ohio engineers earn more real value (\$102K adjusted vs. \$93K in California); Ohio has aerospace roles supported by the military and private sector
Installation & Maintenance	Houston, Detroit, Chicago, Dallas	Maintenance techs, energy, and skilled mechanical trades; heavy demand across industries	Stress job security, training opportunities, and affordable communities for families	Ohio offers 20-30% lower housing costs vs. Chicago/Detroit; shorter commutes boost work-life balance
Production	Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, Nashville, Phoenix	Manufacturing production talent in automotive, metals, and advanced materials	Emphasize Ohio's strong industrial base, job stability, and community roots	Production roles benefit from Ohio's advanced manufacturing corridor; wages stretch further with ~40% lower cost of living

How to Research Talent Hubs

Want to dig deeper into where talent pools are concentrated? The sources below make it easy to validate talent availability and see how Ohio stacks up against other regions.

- **Google or LinkedIn searches**

Quick searches for “top [occupation] hubs” or “where do [job title] professionals work” will yield current articles and reports.

- **[National Science Foundation – STEM Workforce Data](#)**

Here, you can explore detailed maps of the geographic distribution of STEM workers across the U.S.

- **[Layoffs.fyi](#)**

Track where tech and related talent may be newly available due to company downsizing.

Tip: If people in your industry have recently been laid off in another city/region, that’s a good time to share your open jobs there. You don’t need expensive ads. Simple online postings and local outreach within the affected market can work well. Be sure to point out the advantages of moving, like lower housing costs or the support you offer for relocation.

Why Ohio? How to Sell the State

When you’re asking someone to move for a job, you’re not just selling the role—you’re selling a new life and a longer runway for their career. Helping candidates picture what their day-to-day life could look like in Ohio makes your opportunity more appealing and reduces hesitation. Use these highlights, facts, and resources to position Ohio as a wonderful and exciting place to work and thrive. Share links to JobsOhio talent attraction advertising campaigns ([FindYourOhio.com](#) and [CallOhioHome.com](#)) in your messaging to candidates so they can discover the benefits of living in Ohio for themselves.

It’s important to remember that selling Ohio as a great place to live and work shouldn’t fall solely on recruiters or HR. Hiring managers play a big role in shaping a candidate’s perception during interviews, onsite visits, or job fairs. Make sure they’re equipped with simple talking points about the lifestyle, cost of living, and career momentum Ohio offers. You should also ensure that this messaging is consistent across all candidate touchpoints, from your career site and social media channels to employee referral conversations. When

everyone in your organization can confidently share why Ohio is a smart move, it creates a consistent, authentic message that resonates more strongly with candidates.

Career Momentum

Ohio matches business ambition with talent ambition. Its growing, connected economy means candidates who relocate to Ohio are choosing a launchpad with options today and headroom for tomorrow.

- **Bursting with Career Opportunities**

Ohio is leading the way in technology, engineering and medical research, and supports a thriving ecosystem of job opportunities across various sectors, businesses, and industries.

- **Clear Pathways to Advance**

Upskilling and credential programs, 200+ higher education and technical institutions, and employer-backed training make it easier to stack skills and step into the next role.

Quality of Life Highlights

Candidates considering relocation for a job want to know that their lives will be enjoyable in their new home state. Ohio makes a strong case: it's affordable, easy to get around, and filled with safe and welcoming communities with something for everyone. In fact, Ohio has a notably [high rate of boomerang migration](#), meaning many people who once left the state eventually return—particularly in the larger cities and metro areas.

- **Affordable Living**

Ohio consistently ranks among the most affordable states in the U.S. Housing costs are especially attractive compared to major tech hubs like San Francisco, New York, or Austin.

- **Short Commutes**

Out-of-state hires can say goodbye to long traffic jams—most major cities in Ohio have average commutes under 25 minutes.

- **Safe, Family-Friendly Communities**

With strong school systems, healthcare access, and welcoming neighborhoods, Ohio is a great place to raise a family.

- **Lots of Things to Do**

From hiking and boating to festivals and cultural events, Ohio truly has something for everyone. Check out the [Ohio Travel Guide](#) for ideas you can share with candidates.

Cost of Living Comparisons

One of the most compelling advantages Ohio has over coastal and other job markets is the cost of living. Salaries go much further here, especially when it comes to housing. Showing candidates how much they can save can make relocation a much easier decision. Share the [OhioMeansJobs.com](https://ohiojobs.com/lifestyle-calculator) lifestyle calculator or [CallOhioHome.com](https://callohiohome.com) cost of living comparison tool with candidates to help them see the difference.

- The overall cost of living in Ohio is about 30% lower than the national average.
- Housing in Dayton or Toledo can be half the cost of homes in coastal cities.
- Everyday expenses like groceries, utilities, and healthcare are all lower than national benchmarks.

Consider highlighting how choosing Ohio means candidates have more money to save, buy a home, or have more left over to enjoy life and pursue their passions.

Lifestyle, Culture & Community

Ohio is full of ways to enjoy life outside of work. From outdoor adventures to thriving arts and sports scenes, out-of-state candidates will find plenty of options that match their interests. And thanks to Ohio's welcoming, community-driven culture, most newcomers quickly feel right at home in the heart of it all.

- **Outdoor Adventures**
From Lake Erie to Hocking Hills, Ohio offers lake beaches, hiking trails, waterfalls, and state parks that are perfect for family vacations or weekend getaways.
- **Cultural Hubs**
World-class art museums, music venues, and theaters in cities like Cleveland and Columbus rival bigger markets.
- **Sports & Entertainment**
From college rivalries to pro football, baseball, basketball, soccer, hockey, and volleyball, Ohioans take their sports teams seriously.
- **Community Vibe**
Midwestern hospitality makes it easier for newcomers to feel at home quickly.

Ohio's Variety: Matching the Message to Your Location

When recruiting nationally, it's important to match your pitch to the place you're located in. For example, a candidate weighing a move to Columbus may be motivated by different factors than one considering a more rural community in Northwest Ohio.

Location Type	What Candidates Value	Lifestyle Highlights	Messaging Tips
Rural and Small Towns	Affordability, community, safety, family-friendly pace	Spacious, affordable housing; close-knit neighborhoods; outdoor recreation (parks, lakes, trails); less traffic	Emphasize peace of mind, financial freedom, and belonging: “a great life without the chaos of a big city.”
Mid-Sized Cities	Balance of affordability with urban essentials	Lower housing costs, easy commutes, mix of culture and community	Position your city as a hidden gem: “smaller scale, but with all the essentials.”
Major Metros	Career opportunities, variety, cultural amenities, connectivity	Arts, dining, sports, nightlife, strong job markets, travel hubs	Focus on career growth, cultural attractions, and balance: “big-city opportunities with Midwest affordability.”

Key Talking Points for Recruiters & Hiring Managers

When speaking with candidates or drafting your recruitment messaging strategy, use the following examples as a starting point:

Career and Lifestyle Balance

“You’ll have a rewarding career without giving up affordable housing and free time.”

“One of the best things about living in Ohio is balance—you can enjoy city amenities or quiet, affordable living depending on what fits your lifestyle.”

“Commutes are manageable here compared to larger metro areas, which means more time for family, hobbies, or relaxation.”

Financial Advantages

“Your paycheck goes further here, which means more savings or a higher standard of living.”

“Housing is significantly more affordable than in many coastal cities, so your salary goes further.”

“Everyday costs—groceries, utilities, childcare—are lower than the national average, which makes it easier to build savings or own a home.”

Opportunity and Growth

“Ohio’s economy is diverse and growing, with many opportunities in tech, advanced manufacturing, and more.”

Community and Culture

“People here are welcoming and community-oriented, so it’s easy to get connected, whether through schools, sports, or local organizations.”

“Ohio offers a mix of cultural experiences, from major concert venues and sports teams to thriving food scenes and outdoor recreation.”

Relocation Support

“We don’t just bring you here for the job. We’ll help make the transition smooth for you and your family.”

“We’re committed to supporting employees who relocate with resources like onboarding buddies and relocation assistance.”

Choosing a Partner: You Don’t Have to Do It Alone

Hiring out-of-state talent is complex. From arranging moves to helping new hires feel at home in their new communities, there are a lot of important steps and factors to consider. Fortunately, you don’t have to manage it all internally. Partnering with recruitment sourcing and marketing agencies, relocation service providers, destination marketing organizations, and other local community organizations can give you expertise, additional resources, and bandwidth to support your hiring teams and your candidates. The key is selecting partners that align with your industry, company culture, and long-term hiring goals.

Recruitment Agency Partners

Recruitment agencies help expand your reach and connect you with qualified talent beyond your immediate market, but not all agencies serve the same purpose. There are two broad categories to consider:

Recruitment Sourcing Agencies

These partners focus on identifying and delivering qualified candidates. They use tools like databases, referrals, job boards, and direct outreach to grow your sourcing footprint and fill open positions. A strong sourcing partner acts as an extension of your talent acquisition team, offering insights into candidate motivations, regional hiring trends, and competitive pay benchmarks. This expertise is especially valuable when recruiting across state lines, where local networks and market knowledge can make or break your success.

Recruitment Marketing Agencies

These partners strengthen your employer brand and candidate attraction strategy. They specialize in building awareness of your organization, creating compelling messaging, and developing career sites, campaigns, and content that make candidates want to apply in the first place. A recruitment marketing agency helps you stand out in competitive markets and ensures that once sourcing agencies reach out to talent, those candidates already see your organization in a positive light.

When to Use Each Type

Both types of agencies can add value, but they serve different purposes. Knowing which you need, and how they can work together, will help you invest your time and budget wisely.

If you need to fill critical roles quickly and want access to a broader candidate pool, a sourcing agency can deliver qualified talent fast.

If you're struggling to attract applicants or aren't standing out against competitors, a recruitment marketing agency can build brand awareness and position your organization as an employer of choice.

For long-term success, many employers benefit from using both: marketing agencies get your company's name in front of new audiences and create a strong pipeline of interested candidates, and sourcing agencies help close the gap by reaching talent who might not actively apply.

Checklist for Agency Partnership Fit

Research & Shortlist Agencies

- Look for specialization in your industry/role type.
- Review company reputation through online reviews, case studies, and LinkedIn presence.
- Seek referrals from your HR/TA network.
- Evaluate scale: boutique agencies (personalized, niche focus) vs. large/global firms (high volume, infrastructure).

Evaluate Their Process

- How do they source candidates? (databases, headhunting, referrals, job boards, untapped talent networks)

- What's their screening and vetting process? (skills tests, background checks, cultural fit assessments)
- How do they maintain candidate engagement and prevent drop-offs during the hiring process?
- Do they provide market insights like salary benchmarking or competitor analysis?

Assess Technology & Data

- Can they integrate with your HR systems?
- Do they track metrics like time to fill, quality of hire, retention, and candidate satisfaction?
- Do they provide real-time dashboards or reports for transparency?

Validate With References & Results

- Ask for client references in your industry.
- Request success rates and candidate retention data.
- Review case studies of similar hiring challenges.
- Check client longevity since long-standing partnerships are a strong trust signal.

Green Flags to Look for in Recruitment Agency Partners

- Specializes in your talent type/industry
- Has experience attracting and sourcing direct hires versus contract
- Provides transparent fees and measurable data (time to fill, retention, satisfaction, etc.)
- Prioritizes candidate experience, including outreach to untapped talent pools
- Functions as a consultative partner, offering insights and guidance

Relocation Services

Relocation service providers help new hires and their families transition smoothly to a new location. Basic services often include moving company coordination, housing searches, and travel arrangements. The strongest partners also provide “soft landing” support, such as school searches, community orientation, utility setup, or even spouse/partner job assistance. These are the kinds of services that make a family feel at home faster.

Questions to Ask

- *How long have you been in the relocation/recruitment business?*
Experience often translates to smoother, quicker problem-solving.
- *What industries and company sizes do you typically work with?*
Helps you see if they understand your talent profile and hiring goals.
- *Can you share case studies or client references relevant to our industry or relocation volume?*
Provides proof of success in situations like yours.
- *Do you provide end-to-end services in-house, or do you subcontract certain aspects?*
Impacts service quality and accountability.
- *Do you offer tiered or customizable packages?*
Ensures flexibility across different candidate levels.
- *Can your platform or system integrate with our HR information system (HRIS), applicant tracking system (ATS), and/or payroll platforms?*
Integration helps your team avoid manual work and reduces errors.
- *How do you structure pricing (flat fee, per relocation, bundled services)?*
Transparency prevents surprise or hidden costs.
- *How do you handle exceptions or out-of-policy requests?*
Relocations are rarely one-size-fits-all.
- *What does the onboarding/consultation process look like?*
Clarity here signals professionalism and readiness.
- *What data security measures are in place to protect employee information?*
Critical when sharing personal data, like addresses, IDs, or financial information.
- *What service-level agreements (SLAs) do you guarantee (response times, issue resolution, etc.)?*
A safeguard for responsiveness.
- *Can you scale services up or down depending on our hiring volume?*
Ensures there won't be a bottleneck during company growth.

Green Flags to Look for in Relocation Services

- Clear, itemized pricing with no hidden fees
- Strong communication and regular progress updates
- Family/spouse support programs beyond just the basics
- Client references who vouch for responsiveness and reliability
- Flexibility to adapt services as needs change

What to Avoid When Choosing a Partner

It's just as important to know what *not* to look for in a partner as it is to know what you do want. Even if a provider appears promising on paper, certain warning signs can reveal potential problems that could derail your hiring strategy, frustrate your candidates, or drain your budget. As you evaluate your options, keep an eye out for the following red flags.

Vague or bundled pricing with no clear breakdown of services, or an unwillingness to share pricing at all. If a provider isn't willing to show you exactly what you're paying for, you may find yourself facing hidden fees or services that don't align with your needs. Transparency in pricing is non-negotiable. A trustworthy partner will explain how their costs are calculated and walk you through different options.

"Too good to be true" low bids. Saving money is important, but unrealistically low pricing often means low-quality work or hidden costs that pop up later. What looks like a bargain upfront can end up costing your company a lot more in the long run.

No verifiable client references or case studies. Strong service providers are proud of their work and should be able to connect you with past clients, especially those in your industry or with similar hiring challenges. If they can't or won't offer this, it's worth questioning their track record.

Slow response times or poor communication during the evaluation stage. A lack of communication at the start is unlikely to improve once you become a client. A good partner should be responsive, collaborative, and aligned with your needs from the beginning.

Consistently negative reviews from employers or candidates. Don't ignore what others are saying about a partner you're evaluating. Check Glassdoor, LinkedIn, and industry forums to see how others rate their service. Patterns of dissatisfaction often point to deeper issues with quality, reliability, or candidate experience.

Not every provider will be the right fit. Recognizing these warning signs will help you avoid costly missteps and prioritize partners that strengthen your out-of-state hiring strategy and support candidates throughout their journeys.

Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs)

Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), often city or regional tourism and economic development agencies, can be valuable partners when hiring out-of-state talent. DMOs promote your local community as a great place to live and work, highlighting amenities, schools, housing options, and lifestyle benefits. Partnering with a DMO can help your

candidates feel more confident and excited about relocating, providing a soft landing and a sense of belonging even before their first day.

How DMOs Support Your Hiring Efforts

Candidates choose a role based on the community they'll join when they're hired. By leveraging DMO resources, employers can reduce relocation anxiety, increase acceptance rates, and improve long-term retention for out-of-state hires. You can enlist DMOs to:

- Offer community guides, videos, and other marketing materials to showcase the region's lifestyle, schools, recreation, and culture.
- Provide information on housing availability, neighborhoods, and commuting options.
- Connect new hires with local networking opportunities, events, and social groups to foster a sense of belonging and community.
- Assist in spouse/partner relocation and job search resources where available.
- Collaborate with your recruitment or relocation partners to enhance your employer brand in a new market.

Local Community Partners

Beyond formal relocation services, agency partners, and DMOs, local community organizations can be powerful allies in supporting your out-of-state hires. Connecting with these groups helps candidates feel welcomed, while also giving your company a stronger presence in the community. New hires who feel connected to their community are more likely to settle in quickly, engage fully at work, and become advocates for your organization.

Types of Local Partners to Consider

Chambers of Commerce

Many chambers offer welcome kits, networking events, and community resources that can help new hires get acclimated.

Convention & Visitors Bureaus (CVBs)

Often tied to chambers, CVBs provide insights on quality of life, housing, schools, and lifestyle amenities, with a tourism-oriented perspective that can help sell the location.

Real Estate Agents

Experienced local agents often maintain welcome or relocation kits and can guide candidates on neighborhoods, schools, and housing options.

Other Community Groups

Local social, professional, or volunteer organizations can help new hires build connections and become part of their community.

Timing is Everything: Your 6-Month Hiring Timeline

Hiring across state lines requires more planning and lead time than hiring locally. Each stage of the process, including sourcing candidates, coordinating relocation, securing housing, and onboarding, takes time and resources. Although relocation can be accomplished faster in certain circumstances, the 6-month timeline below provides an example of what you can expect, so you can see where to plan ahead. We've included:

- **Recruitment milestones** (employer action steps)
- **Candidate touchpoints** (interactions that keep candidates engaged and informed)
- **Relocation/resource planning** (budgeting and partnerships needed for a smooth move)

By mapping out your timeline in advance, you can avoid delays, control costs, and give candidates a positive experience that makes them more likely to say yes and stay long-term.

Month 1-2: Job Launch & Sourcing

Recruitment Milestones: Finalize the job description, post the position, and engage any recruitment or relocation partners who can expand your reach.

Candidate Touchpoints: Share your employer brand (the story you tell about your workplace culture, values, and benefits). Provide information about relocation benefits and introduce the community where the job is based through photos, videos, or a local guide.

Relocation/Resource Planning: Budget for advertising costs, travel expenses, or relocation services. Align internal stakeholders (HR, finance, hiring manager) so expectations and budgets are clear.

Month 3: Candidate Screening & Interviews

Recruitment Milestones: Screen applicants, conduct initial virtual interviews, and begin narrowing the candidate pool.

Candidate Touchpoints: Send relocation guides, community videos, or FAQs to help out-of-state candidates visualize life in your area. This is also when you can begin answering family-related questions (schools, housing, lifestyle).

Relocation/Resource Planning: Explore relocation firm options, request pricing, and budget for onsite interview travel if needed.

Month 4: Final Interviews & Offer Stage

Recruitment Milestones: Invite top candidates for finalist interviews and extend the job offer.

Candidate Touchpoints: This is often when candidates are comparing multiple offers. Stand out by highlighting relocation support, introducing them to future teammates, and providing resources for spouses/partners and children.

Relocation/Resource Planning: Support candidates as they begin their housing search. Connect them with real estate agents or relocation partners. Establish a relocation allowance or stipend and communicate how it works.

Month 5: Relocation Coordination

Recruitment Milestones: Candidate accepts the offer, and the relocation plan is finalized.

Candidate Touchpoints: Schedule regular check-ins to keep the candidate engaged and reassured while logistics are underway. Share updates on timelines and offer personal touches like welcome notes from team members.

Relocation/Resource Planning: Coordinate with relocation firms and moving services, provide support for school enrollment (if applicable), and offer spousal/partner job search resources. Budget for moving expenses, temporary housing, and travel reimbursements.

Month 6: Preboarding & Community Connection

Recruitment Milestones: Finalize new-hire paperwork and prepare for the employee's start date.

Candidate Touchpoints: Share welcome messages from leadership and the team. Provide local resource guides, like those included in the [Supporting Your New Hire section of this guide](#). Host a virtual meet-and-greet so the candidate feels connected before arriving.

Relocation/Resource Planning: Help the employee finalize their move, set up utilities, and prepare for Day 1. Budget for wrap-up costs like temporary housing overlap or final travel.

Start Date & Onboarding

Recruitment Milestones: Employee begins their new role and enters the onboarding program.

Candidate Touchpoints: Make introductions to the team, assign a mentor or buddy, and check in regularly to ensure they're settling in.

Relocation/Resource Planning: Continue providing support for any remaining relocation needs. Track relocation expenses for reporting, evaluate the performance of any partners used, and collect feedback from the new employee about their relocation experience.

Supporting Your New Hire: Resources to Use & Share

Helping an employee relocate to work for your company is about more than role and salary. It's about making sure they feel confident starting a new chapter. Once an out-of-state candidate accepts your offer, you can support them further by making their transition to Ohio easier. The following resources are designed to help you do just that.

What Candidates Are Thinking About

Relocating is a big leap. Candidates often wonder about:

- Cost of living and housing affordability compared to their current city
- Good schools for their children and/or career opportunities for a spouse/partner
- How to build strong community connections
- Practical logistics (licenses, vehicle registration, healthcare, utilities)
- Maintaining or building a support system in a new place
- Nightlife, cultural amenities, access to activities, and other opportunities to expand their social circle

Think of the resources and tools included here as conversation starters and confidence builders. By anticipating questions and sharing resources up front, you reduce uncertainty and show that your organization cares about the whole person, not just the hire.

Resources for a Smooth Transition

Ohio Community Spotlights

Beyond jobs, Ohio markets itself as a place to thrive. These guides showcase housing affordability, lifestyle perks, and regional advantages to help your new employee and their family see the bigger picture.

[Get to Know Ohio Relocation Guides](#)

Find Your Ohio

This JobsOhio program connects individuals to Ohio-based job opportunities, showcasing why people from across the nation are choosing to relocate to the Buckeye State.

Find Your Ohio – [for employers](#), [for candidates](#)

Call Ohio Home

This site is a comprehensive relocation hub that offers tools to compare cost of living, explore neighborhoods, and discover life in Ohio across regions.

[Call Ohio Home](#)

Military Spouses and Trailing Partner Support

A military-friendly state and designated Military Spouse Economic Empowerment Zone (MSEEZ), Ohio is home to many former and current service members and their families.

[Find Your Ohio Military and Veteran Resources](#)

[Ohio Military-Friendly Guide](#)

[Hiring Our Heroes Military Spouse Resources](#)

Education and School Scorecards

For families with kids, finding good schools is a big factor in deciding where to live. Ohio's report card system provides parents with a clear, data-driven view of school performance to help them make informed decisions.

[Ohio School Report Cards](#)

School District Rankings

Beyond test scores, families want to know what daily life looks like in a school. Rankings from Niche combine data with parent/student reviews so candidates get both the numbers and real-world experiences.

[Ohio School District Rankings](#)

Statewide Relocation Guide

Moving states comes with lots of logistics, from setting up utilities and voter registration to finding healthcare and the local library. Ohio's official hub pulls all those "need-to-know" tasks into one place. [Ohio New Residents Welcome Guide](#)

Driver License and Vehicle Transfer/Registration

Getting a new license and registering a vehicle are two more important items to be checked off the list. This resource walks step by step through Ohio's residency requirements, helping your new hire get settled without surprises.

[Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles New Residents Guide](#)

Local Relocation Guides by City

Each Ohio city has its own character. These guides highlight hyper-local factors, like neighborhoods, amenities, and culture, so candidates can imagine their daily life before they make the move.

[City-Specific Relocation Guides](#)

Local Chambers of Commerce

Chambers connect newcomers with small businesses, networking events, community resources, and local advocacy. They're a great way for your new hires and their families to get plugged into the local economy and meet people.

[Local Chambers of Commerce in Ohio](#)

Economic Development Offices

These offices provide insights into local business environments, job markets, and economic trends. Sharing this information can help candidates understand career growth opportunities and long-term prospects in the area.

[JobsOhio Economic Development Corporation](#)

[JobsOhio Regional Network Partners](#)

Destination Marketing Organizations

DMOs provide an overview of what life is like in a city or region, including neighborhoods, cultural attractions, recreation, and events. Share these links with candidates to help them explore lifestyle options and visualize living in Ohio.

[Ohio, The Heart of it All Travel Guide](#)

[Cleveland Talent Alliance](#)

[Experience Columbus](#)

[Destination Dayton](#)

[Destination Toledo](#)

[Visit Cincy](#)

[Shores & Islands Ohio](#)

[Akron Summit Convention & Visitors](#)

[Bureau](#)

[Visit Canton](#)

[Cincinnati Experience](#)

How to Use These Resources

Incorporating these tools at the right moments can turn a stressful move into a supported transition. Consider weaving them into:

- **Offer letters**
Share links to relevant guides for the city or region so candidates can immediately explore what life will look like in their new home.
- **Onboarding messaging**
Provide quick links in welcome emails or onboarding packets to help new hires and their families get settled faster.
- **Interviews or onsite visits**
Position resources as research tools for neighborhoods, schools, and community life.
- **Internal employee referrals**
Encourage referring employees to share these links, showing that support at your company extends beyond HR and Talent Acquisition.

Retaining Out-of-State Talent: Best Practices for Employers

Attracting talent from outside Ohio is only half the challenge. Helping them thrive once they join your team is what keeps them here. Employers who take an intentional approach to onboarding and integration see higher retention rates, stronger engagement, and faster productivity. A few strategies to consider:

- **Create intentional onboarding plans**
Design onboarding that covers job training and introduces employees to your workplace culture, community, and team dynamics.
- **Offer mentorship or “buddy” programs**
Pair new hires with an internal staff member who can serve as a resource for both professional and personal questions, especially in the first 90 days.
- **Facilitate networking opportunities**
Host social events, lunch-and-learns, or new-hire mixers to help relocated employees expand their connections inside and outside of work.
- **Encourage community integration**
Help employees feel at home in their new city by connecting them with local volunteering, charitable giving, and civic engagement opportunities that foster a sense of belonging outside of work.
- **Provide family and partner support**
Share resources for spouses, children, or dependents so the whole household feels supported during the move.
- **Maintain ongoing, open communication**
Regular manager check-ins and feedback loops help employees feel seen, valued, and confident about their decision to relocate.

Get in Touch

The JobsOhio Talent team is available to review the guide and discuss the best practices outlined in this guide. To schedule a meeting or in-person workshop, please email the JobsOhio Talent team at JORI@jobsOhio.com.