



Ministerial Statement to the House of Assembly

by:

The Hon. Jason P. Hayward, JP, MP

Minister of Economy and Labour

Progress on the Youth Employment Strategy

30 May 2025

Mr Speaker,

I rise today to update this Honourable House on the tangible progress made under the Government's National Youth Employment Strategy—an initiative launched to empower Bermuda's young people through meaningful training, employment pathways, and long-term career support.

Mr. Speaker,

Since the introduction of the Youth Employment Strategy in 2022, we have made steady and measurable strides in reducing youth unemployment in Bermuda, demonstrating the impact of our targeted interventions and whole-of-government approach.

The Strategy was designed with clear goals: to increase training opportunities, expand apprenticeships, promote access to labour market information, and provide holistic support for vulnerable youth. I am pleased to report that we are delivering on those commitments.

Mr. Speaker,

This past quarter, several key initiatives were successfully executed.

The ‘Learning Through Experience’ Hospitality Programme provided seven young Bermudians with hands-on experience in the tourism sector. Of the four participants within the 18–26 age group, three gained full-time employment. This outcome not only speaks to the quality of the training but affirms the potential of experiential learning to open doors for our youth.

Through our partnership with the Gang Violence Reduction Team, two young men received structured, one-on-one support. One is now employed with Marine and Ports and on the path to becoming a ferry pilot; the other is preparing for entry into the Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning industry – otherwise known as the HVAC industry.

We also completed Phase 1 of our expanded Apprenticeship Programme. Twelve active apprentices now advancing in masonry, carpentry, and plumbing—fields critical to Bermuda’s infrastructure and sustainability.

Mr. Speaker,

These achievements are not without challenges. We acknowledge that maintaining youth engagement post-programme, ensuring placements in emerging industries, and addressing emotional and logistical barriers for vulnerable clients require sustained attention.

To this end, the Department is developing post-programme engagement tools, expanding industry partnerships, and scaling wraparound support services.

Looking ahead, **Mr. Speaker**, our plans are equally ambitious. In the coming quarter, we will:

- launch and promote the new Bermuda Job Connect platform to enhance visibility of local employment opportunities,
- deliver orientation sessions in our public senior schools to prepare graduating students for workforce entry, and,
- roll out the ‘Bridge to Work’ Programme to assist justice-involved and vulnerable youth with re-entry into training and employment.

Mr. Speaker,

Our young people are not statistics. They are future homeowners, innovators, and community leaders. Through this Strategy, we affirm this Government’s commitment to ensuring that every young Bermudian has a pathway to sustainable employment and economic independence.

In closing, I commend the Department of Workforce Development and our community partners for their unwavering dedication and support. Let us remain committed in our efforts to build a Bermuda where our youth are not left behind but are given every opportunity to thrive.

Thank you, **Mr Speaker**.