

## New funding allows Tacoma's Tool Gauge to offer local training before expansion

Debbie Cockrell | January 22, 2019



Good economic investment news for Tacoma arrived Tuesday morning.

The state's Department of Commerce, in partnership with the Economic Development Board for Tacoma-Pierce County and the nonprofit manufacturing consultant Impact Washington, announced a \$125,000 Work Start Grant from the governor's strategic reserve fund to Tacoma-based Tool Gauge.

The funding will help the company train an estimated 100 new workers and boost the skills of another 50 workers already employed at the company.

Tool Gauge, 4315 S. Adams St., manufactures metal and plastic parts for the aerospace industry and is one of a handful of Boeing-certified Class I and II plastics shops in the world capable of making specific parts.

"This is a huge boost to our expansion and training efforts, and we are very excited about the potential this Work Start grant brings to Tool Gauge," said Debbie Lee, Tool Gauge CEO, in a news release announcing the funding.

"This state support is critical to helping us meet our training goals before we move into our new factory in July. It also enables us to move more quickly toward our goal of building a world-class aerospace manufacturing facility, right here in Tacoma."

The business currently has a \$20 million facilities expansion in the works. The company plans to create up to 100 new jobs over the next five years, adding to its current workforce of more than 100 employees. Those positions would include full-time, apprenticeship, and internships in machining, molding, assembly and engineering, according to its website.

The company says its expansion objectives include an additional 80,000 square feet in its plastics division; expansion of its plastics press size range; broadening of secondary operations; installation of a new, state-of-the-art vertical paint system; an additional 2,000 square feet for metals division equipment; and adding multiple collaborative robots.

More details on the company's expansion are on its website along with a link to a live [workzone cam](https://bit.ly/2ClLu0u): <https://bit.ly/2ClLu0u>