Apprenticeship FAQ’s

What is an Apprenticeship?

Apprenticeship is a proven approach for preparing workers for jobs while meeting the needs of business for a highly skilled workforce. It is an employer-driven, “learn-while-you-earn” model that combines on-the-job training, provided by the employer that hires the apprentice, with job-related instruction in curricula tied to the attainment of national skills standards. The model also involves progressive increases in an apprentice’s skills and wages.

Apprenticeship is a flexible training strategy that can be customized to meet the needs of any business. Apprentices can be new hires, or businesses can select current employees who need skill upgrades to join the apprenticeship program.

The apprenticeship model is leading the way in preparing American workers to compete in today’s economy. Apprenticeship programs keep pace with advancing technologies and innovations in training and human resource development through the complete involvement of employers in the educational process. While it is used in traditional industries such as construction and manufacturing, apprenticeship is also instrumental for training and development in growing industries, such as health care, information technology, transportation and logistics, and energy.

Who operates Apprenticeship programs?

Every apprenticeship program has a sponsor and the sponsor is responsible for the overall operation of the program. Sponsors can be a single business or a consortium of businesses and they can also be a range of workforce intermediaries, including an industry association or a joint labor-management organization. FloridaMakes serves as the sponsor for FloridaMakes Advanced Manufacturing Apprenticeship Program. Regardless of who serves as the sponsor, apprenticeships are always employer-driven and employers are involved throughout the process.

Who oversees the approval of registered apprenticeship programs in Florida?

The Florida Department of Education, Division of Career and Adult Education, Apprenticeship Section is authorized to implement and oversee apprenticeship programs for state and local purposes. ATRs serve approximately 200 active programs throughout the state. They assist sponsors with program service delivery statewide. Florida’s State Apprenticeship Advisory Council represents the apprenticeship community, advising the
What are the basic program components of an apprenticeship?

There are five components to typical apprenticeship programs, which include:

1. **Business Involvement**
   Employers are the foundation of every apprenticeship program. They play an active role in building the program and remain involved every step of the way. Employers frequently work together through apprenticeship councils, industry associations, or other partnerships to share the administrative tasks involved in maintaining apprenticeship programs.

2. **Structured On-the-Job Training**
   Apprenticeships always include an on-the-job training component. Apprentices receive hands-on training from an experienced mentor at the job site. On-the-job training focuses on the skills and knowledge an apprentice must learn during the program to be fully proficient on the job. This training is based on national industry standards, customized to the needs of the employer.

3. **Related Instruction**
   One of the unique aspects of apprenticeships is that they combine on-the-job learning with related instruction on the technical and academic competencies that apply to the job. Education partners collaborate with business to develop the curriculum, which often incorporates established national-level skill standards. The related instruction may be provided by community colleges, technical schools, or apprenticeship training schools – or by the business itself. It can be delivered at a school, online, or at the job site.

4. **Rewards for Skill Gains**
   Apprentices receive wages when they begin work and receive pay increases as they meet benchmarks for skill attainment. This helps reward and motivate apprentices as they advance through their training.
5. **Nationally Recognized Credential**  
Upon completion of the program, an apprentice is issued a nationally recognized Completion of Apprenticeship certificate by the State of Florida. Industry can recognize a program completer as a journeyworker and issue appropriate credentials. This is a portable credential that signifies to employers that apprentices are fully qualified for the job.

**What are the basic qualifications for workers to begin an Apprenticeship program?**

Each Apprenticeship program sponsor identifies the minimum qualifications to apply for a program. The eligible starting age can be no less than 16 years of age; however, most programs require individuals to be at least 18 years of age.

Program sponsors also identify additional minimum qualifications, such as education level and the ability to physically perform the essential functions of the job. All applicants are required to meet the minimum qualifications. Based on the selection method used by the sponsor, additional qualification standards – such as aptitude tests, interviews, school grades, or previous work experience – may be included for qualification.

**Is an apprenticeship a job?**

Yes. Apprentices are employed workers or start working when they enter an apprenticeship, with steady wage increases as they become more proficient.

**How does apprenticeship fit into career pathways?**

Apprenticeship programs are a key asset for state and local workforce systems’ career pathway strategies. Serve as the start of a career pathway, which leads to Apprenticeship opportunities for youth or low-skilled adult workers.

Apprenticeship programs pave the way for career-building, and lifelong learning through the attainment of stackable credentials. The foundation of the apprenticeship model is the continual building of skills and the ability for workers to obtain higher levels of employment in an occupation or industry. As a result, the use of the apprenticeship model can provide communities with a competitive advantage by establishing a continual pipeline of qualified workers for local employers.
How is apprenticeship different from other types of work-based training?

Apprentices are employed workers and receive a paycheck from the first day of work. Wages increase over time as apprentices advance in their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Apprenticeships last from one to six years – depending on the occupation and model – and connect education and work simultaneously. Apprentices take related training classes (online or classroom) while they are working, combining theoretical and hands-on learning. At the end of the apprenticeship, apprentices earn industry-recognized credentials and in many cases, they can receive college credits that may lead to an associate or bachelor's degree.

How does an apprenticeship program benefit employers?

Apprenticeships help businesses develop highly skilled employees and they also reduce turnover rates, increase productivity and lower the cost of recruitment.

Additional benefits include:

- **Customized training** that meets industry standards, tailored to the specific needs of businesses, resulting in highly skilled employees.
- **Increased knowledge** transfer through on-the-job learning from an experienced mentor, combined with education courses to support work-based learning.
- **Enhanced employee retention**: 91% of apprentices that complete an apprenticeship are still employed nine months later.
- **A safer workplace** that may reduce worker compensation costs, due to the program’s emphasis on safety training.
- **A stable and reliable pipeline** of qualified workers.
- **A systematic approach to training** that ensures employees are trained and certified to produce at the highest skill levels required for the occupation.

Businesses may also qualify for state tax credits available for apprenticeship program sponsors. Workforce systems and other community partners may also choose to contribute funding for training, supplies or other aspects of apprenticeship programs. These benefits reduce an employer’s investment in apprenticeship training costs.
How does an apprenticeship program benefit workers?

From their first day of work, apprentices receive a paycheck that is guaranteed to increase as their training progresses. Apprentices also complete a combination of job-related instruction and hands-on training at the job site leading to a nationally recognized, portable credential.

Other specific benefits include:

- **Hands-on career training:** Apprentices receive practical on-the-job training in a wide variety of occupations and industries, such as health care, construction, information technology, transportation, energy, and advanced manufacturing.
- **An education:** Apprentices receive hands-on training resulting in improved skills and competencies as well as the potential to earn college credit toward an associate’s or bachelor’s degree.
- **A career:** Once the apprenticeship is complete, workers are on their way to a successful long-term career with a competitive salary and little or no educational debt.
- **National credential:** When an apprentice graduates from a career training program, he or she earns a certified portable credential accepted by industries and employers across the U.S.

How do apprenticeships benefit the workforce system?

Connecting apprenticeships with your state and local workforce systems is a win-win partnership. The strategy helps businesses thrive by building a highly-skilled, highly productive workforce, and it helps job seekers access and maintain stable careers with good wages.

By using apprenticeships as a work-based learning strategy, the workforce system can increase worker skills, meet employer needs, and enhance performance outcomes. Additionally, apprenticeships are successful job-driven training strategy that can be an effective tool under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Apprenticeships contribute to positive outcomes in each of the workforce system’s performance measures:

- **Employment:** An apprenticeship is a job. All apprentices are employed workers or enter employment when they begin an apprenticeship program.
• **Retention:** Apprenticeship programs have high retention rates; 91% of apprentices retain employment after the program ends.

• **Earnings:** The average starting wage for apprentices depends on the skills related occupation. Apprentices receive wage increases as they advance in skills and knowledge.

• **Credential Attainment:** All apprenticeship completers earn a national, industry-recognized credential.

**How much money can an apprentice earn?**

Apprentices earn competitive wages, a paycheck from the first day of employment and incremental raises as skill levels increase. The average wage for a fully proficient worker who completes an apprenticeship depends on the skill level of the program and geographic location. In general, the Department of Labor reports that Apprentices who complete their program earn approximately $300,000 more during their career than non-apprenticeship workers.

**Who directly supervises apprentice working on the job?**

Apprentices are directly supervised by an experienced mentor/journeyworker. The ratio of apprentices assigned to a mentor/journeyworker is dependent on the trade or craft involved.

**What is related training?**

Related instruction is the “classroom” portion of apprenticeship and is an integral part of an apprenticeship program. It provides each apprentice with the theoretical and technical knowledge base necessary to become a successful journeyworker. It also provides additional practice and useful examples of job-related skills and knowledge at work. All registered programs include related subjects’ instruction. The National Apprenticeship and Training Standards require that a minimum of 144 per year of apprenticeship training be provided to each trainee in related and supplementary subjects. This period can be increased by trade and craft standards or by program sponsors if content warrants the increase.
Where do individuals interested in becoming apprentices go to find out about such opportunities?

Apprentices must be employed workers. Individuals should get in touch with their HR departments to learn about the application process and programs available with your employer.

Can apprentices earn college credit for the apprenticeship experience?

Yes. Most technical colleges offer college credit for many apprenticeships.

Who pays for the apprentice program?

The employer sponsor pays for the program. Financial assistance can be applied from local workforce agencies or other training driven organizations such as regional CareerSource Centers and Veterans organizations.

Additional apprenticeship FAQ’s

https://www.dol.gov/apprenticeship/toolkit/toolkitfaq.htm#1a

For additional information, please contact:

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