



A GUIDE TO STARTING OR
**JOINING A REGISTERED
APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**



An Intelligent Partnerships Publication



Registered Apprenticeship Programs

A Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) is a government-sanctioned Apprenticeship. It is a formal training program with a federally approved structure and curriculum that combines traditional education with on-the-job training to help establish a highly trained workforce. Upon completion of the RAP, Apprentices receive a certificate recognized both nationally and industry wide.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law by President Obama on July 22, 2014. The primary goal of WIOA is to create programs to help job seekers with their job search and provide them with education and training to improve their employment prospects. The aim of WIOA is to serve “low-income adults, dislocated workers, and youth who are most in need and face barriers to employment.”

Source: [Workforce.org](https://www.workforce.org)

As a workforce development system, WIOA is demand-driven, meaning that training opportunities cater to the needs of local employers. This is determined by Workforce Development Boards, which is populated by local business representatives who identify the immediate and emerging needs of the local industry sectors and occupations.

Each U.S. State and Territory has its own WIOA plan, which can be found at wioaplans.ed.gov.





WIOA and Apprenticeship

One aspect of WIOA is On-the-Job Training (OJT). Since OJT is a crucial aspect of Apprenticeship, there may be an opportunity for a business and an employee to leverage this provision of WIOA to help secure funds for a percentage of an Apprentice's wages.

According to the Department of Labor:

“OJT contracts can cover one or multiple apprentices with the reimbursement for OJT typically at 50% of the apprentices’ wage rate.”

Source: Workforce.org

All Registered Apprenticeship Programs are eligible to receive WIOA funds. The amount that a RAP is eligible for is determined by the local Workforce Development Board or American Job Center, which can be found at <http://careeronestop.org>.

Source: Department of Labor





What are the Benefits of Having a Registered Apprenticeship Program in your Organization?

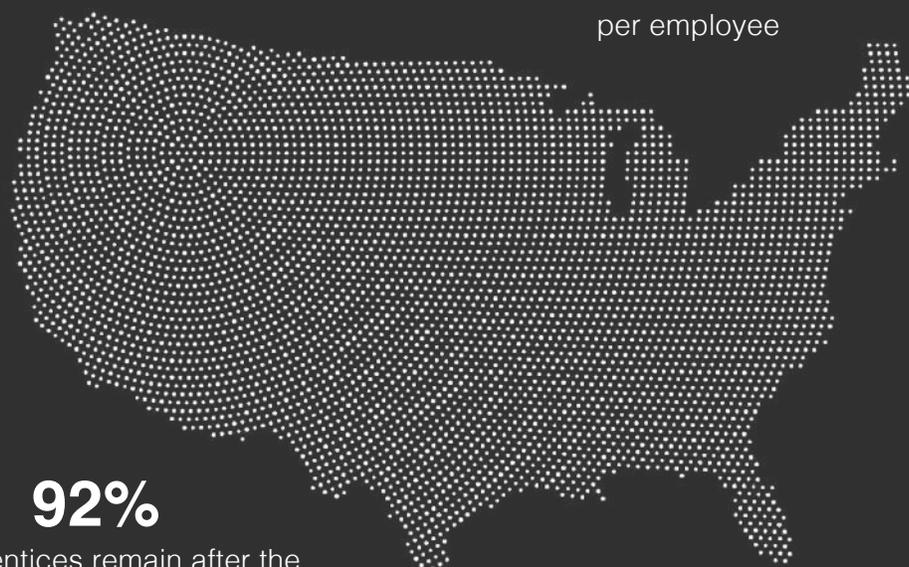
The American workforce is undergoing drastic shifts that have been both correlative to and caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, 47 million people quit their jobs in the United States, a phenomenon that has come to be known as the Great Resignation. With so many workers available and looking for the right fit, Registered Apprenticeship Programs provide an opportunity for employers to capitalize on this opportunity to train an eager workforce.

According to Biz Library, the traditional cost of training employees can be anywhere from \$581 to \$1,678 per employee, depending on the company size. While this investment in training often results in a Return on Investment, it can also be a bottom-line loss for the company if the worker does not remain employed for a substantial amount of time.

Source: [Biz Library](#)

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Cost of training employees
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With such a high risk, employers understandably want to minimize all associated costs associated with hiring new employees. Registered Apprenticeship Programs address all of these issues and more:

● **Increased Retention**

- 92% of apprentices remain after the apprenticeship ends, compared to just 66.4% of eligible internships who become full-time employees

Source: [National Association of Colleges and Employers](#)

- Lowers recruiting costs

Source: [Department of Labor](#)

- Creates a better-trained workforce for the employer's needs

● **Reduced Training Costs**

- Apprentices receive on the job training while producing client-focused work and being paid a reduced salary
- Upon completion of the program, apprentices are well-trained and fully prepared to work

● **Reduced Turnover**

- With higher retention and a highly trained, skilled workforce, costs related to turnover and liability are reduced

● **Increased Productivity**

- Apprentices receive customizable training from the very beginning of their program, meaning that they are equipped with the necessary skills to make an immediate and positive impact upon productivity and efficiency

Source: [Department of Labor](#)

● **Tax Benefits**

- While there is no current federal tax benefit, many states do offer tax benefits. A state-by-state breakdown can be found [here](#).



Expanded DEIA

Registered Apprenticeship Programs are an optimal way for organizations to expand their Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility policies and programs.

- RAPs create a pathway for traditionally underrepresented populations to enter the workforce and earn family sustaining wages in multiple sectors.
- The requirements to enter into a Registered Apprenticeship Program ensure that the applications and screening processes are uniform, creating objectivity and neutrality throughout.
- Once an apprentice is part of a RAP, the promotion structure further guarantees equity by creating milestones and requirements that involve a combination of progressive learning, merit, and experience.

These methods are designed to create an objective and unbiased evaluation process, eliminating the biasing factors that traditionally create barriers to entry and promotion for underrepresented workers. The transparency and fairness that is woven into Registered Apprenticeship Programs help to quickly expand the talent pool, empower a diverse workforce, and create a pipeline of highly trained and skilled workers. Employers who embrace DEIA policies and practices report to enjoy increased innovation, return on investment, productivity, market share, and enhanced reputation.





Where have Registered Apprenticeship Programs been Successful?

Advanced Manufacturing

The Advanced Manufacturing sector is facing an aging workforce of highly skilled and experienced workers. RAPs help capture that institutional knowledge through mentorship, which is an integral element of RAPs.

More Info: [Advanced Manufacturing](#)

Construction

Construction has long utilized Registered Apprenticeships through the Building Trade Unions. RAPs help expand the workforce by embracing the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) policies that help to attract women and people of color.

More Info: [Construction](#)

Energy

The Energy sector is growing at a rapid pace. As the country works to repair and maintain aging infrastructure, the Energy sector is facing a looming worker shortage; Registered Apprenticeships are instrumental in developing a skilled workforce through the proven “earn and learn” model that RAPs offer.

More Info: [Energy](#)

Financial Services

The Financial Services sector is suffering from talent shortages due to skills gaps. Registered Apprenticeship Programs help to develop and up-skill apprentices to fulfill the sector’s needs.

More Info: [Financial Services](#)

Healthcare

The technological advances in the Healthcare sector are necessitating rapid training to ensure that the sector and talent can meet the needs of their patients and clients. Registered Apprenticeship Programs already provide this training model in a way that the apprentices can immediately deliver accordingly.

More Info: [Healthcare](#)



Hospitality

Registered Apprenticeship Programs can help the Hospitality sector to tailor the training of their apprentices to the specific needs of their organizations. RAPs have already been instrumental in training apprentices for hospitality occupations such as restaurant manager, cook, hotel associate, and nutrition care specialist.

More Info: [Hospitality](#)

Information Technology

The Information Technology sector traditionally experiences a lack of workforce diversity. By helping to provide an equitable onramp into the IT sector, Registered Apprenticeship Programs help the industry to implement and embrace DEIA policies to increase workforce diversity.

More Info: [Information Technology](#)

Telecommunications

In the coming years, the Telecommunications sector will have to rapidly onboard new workers to expand and build 5G networks across the United States. Experts estimate that 4.6 million new jobs will be created to quickly provide this necessary infrastructure around the nation, and Registered Apprenticeship Programs are helping to meet this need.

More Info: [Telecommunications](#)

Transportation

The Transportation sector includes transportation, distribution, and logistics (TDL). The transportation sector touches nearly every other sector, which demonstrates its importance. As the aging and skilled workforce begins to retire, Registered Apprenticeship Programs can not only create a pipeline of skilled workers to fill these positions, but they help to capture the institutional knowledge offered by the retiring workforce through mentorship.

More Info: [Transportation](#)

Could this Model be Expanded to Other Sectors?

Registered Apprenticeship Programs can easily be utilized in more sectors. Tennessee recently became the first state that established a Registered Apprenticeship Program for teachers. While the pathway to becoming a teacher varies by state, it often includes an educational aspect and an unpaid classroom internship. The cost of becoming a teacher is a barrier for many. The apprenticeship model established by Tennessee eliminates that cost barrier by embracing the earn-while-you-learn model and making the educational aspect free.

Source: [TN Department of Education](#)

Typical Apprenticeship Journeys vs. Traditional Career Pathways

	Apprenticeship	Traditional
Profile 	<p>Apprenticeship is a pathway for workers to attain a family sustaining career; RAPs employ an “earn while you learn” training program wherein apprentices immediately earn a paycheck while businesses benefit from their immediate impact upon the workplace.</p>	<p>College has long been considered the traditional pathway to a career for Americans. Forty-two percent of Americans (ages 25 and over) have a college degree of some sort.</p>
Learning 	<p>RAPs provide a classroom education component meant to accompany and supplement the on-the-job training that apprentices receive. Apprentices learn practical knowledge throughout their apprenticeships and instantly apply their learning in their workplace.</p>	<p>College educations usually deliver theoretical knowledge to build a broad foundation to apply to a variety of potential careers.</p>
Knowledge 	<p>The knowledge base built in a RAP is tailored to a specific occupation, equipping apprentices with the required skills to perform their jobs effectively and efficiently. Apprenticeships are able to quickly adapt training to current technology utilized in the workplace.</p>	<p>The foundational knowledge delivered through a college education is meant to help students understand whatever future developments may arise in their field, however the curriculum is often outdated and does not expose students to cutting-edge technology.</p>
Cost 	<p>Apprentices earn a paycheck from the beginning of the RAP; often any education costs are reduced or waived through government programs.</p>	<p>The average college student must take out loans to pay for college, resulting in debt upon completion of the degree.</p>
Lifestyle 	<p>Registered Apprenticeship Programs immediately give Apprentices an income, allowing them to begin earning and investing in their life and future.</p>	<p>Students are often able to enjoy a large amount of free time, relatively free of responsibilities outside of studies and perhaps a part-time job.</p>
Time 	<p>RAPs can be as short as one year in some cases, meaning that before their peers are even out of college, some apprentices are earning full-time wages. Apprentices also benefit from not having student debt upon completion of the program.</p>	<p>Typically, a degree takes 3-4 years to attain, but it is not unusual for it take longer than that. For the duration of their educational careers, students often put their earning career on hold. This delay in their career may reduce their lifetime earning potential.</p>

Source: [Best Colleges](#)

Source: [University vs Apprenticeship](#)



Starting a Registered Apprenticeship Program

Organizations can join an existing Registered Apprenticeship Program. Under this structure, the Registered Apprenticeship Program is managed by another organization or an intermediary, but the apprentice will work directly for the employer. The benefit of joining an existing RAP is that an organization can begin with apprentices almost immediately.

Under this model, the organization that conducts the RAP is called an intermediary. Aside from the quick timeline, partnering with an intermediary means that the intermediary provides expertise, helps employers coordinate their responsibilities, and assists with instruction and support services. This is particularly beneficial for small- and medium-sized employers, as smaller companies may not have the capacity to manage their own RAP.

There are different types of intermediaries. They include:

- Industry associations and business organizations
- Community and technical colleges
- Non-profit and community-based organizations
- Labor management partnerships
- Workforce development boards





How Can Organizations Begin Their Own Registered Apprenticeship Programs?

There are a few steps and some things to consider for those organizations that would rather start their own RAP. The US DOL Office of Apprenticeship or an SAA can help organizations navigate the process.

STEP
1

Identify an occupation for your program.

The U.S. DOL has established over 1000 Registered Apprenticeship Programs in 20 industries. If your desired apprenticeship occupation does not currently exist, you can submit the occupation to an apprenticeship consultant to determine if the occupation is eligible for a Registered Apprenticeship Program.

STEP
2

Establish the components of your program.

There are five key components to every Registered Apprenticeship Program.

- **Paid Job** – Apprentices are paid employees. Apprentices are paid on a progressive wage plan, meaning as they hit certain markers (time- or skill-based), the apprentice's wage increases.
- **On-the-Job Learning** – For a RAP to be successful, apprentices must receive high quality training. There should be a structured plan for delivering the training to ensure that an apprentice is provided all the necessary tools to become a successful, highly trained employee. All approved occupations have established training plans. Employers can use these, tailor an existing plan to their specific needs, or create their own outline.
- **Classroom Learning** – Apprentices must receive supplemental classroom education. For this requirement, organizations can partner with an educational institution (community college, vocational school, online providers, etc.) or deliver the education through their organization. It can be in person or virtual.
- **Mentorship** – Organizations that employ RAPs must have an internal mentorship program. Each apprentice is designated a mentor to help them throughout the apprenticeship. The mentor helps pass along institutional knowledge as well as answers questions about the skills necessary for the apprentice to be successful in the RAP.
- **Credentials** – Upon successful completion of the RAP, the apprentice receives a nationally recognized credential that is accepted across the industry.

STEP 3

Establish partnerships.

There are a variety of partners that can help create a successful Registered Apprenticeship Program.

- Apprenticeship Offices help by providing technical assistance and support to a program.
- Sponsors (any person, association, committee, or organization that operates a RAP) assume “full responsibility for administration and operation of the apprenticeship program.”
- Educators are necessary for the classroom learning element of an apprenticeship. RAPs can deliver classroom education via a 4-year college, community college, occupational school, and career and technical school.
- Intermediaries are organizations that help businesses through the entire process of creating, launching, and expanding apprenticeship programs.
- Workforce Development Boards, American Job Centers, and Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (VETS) are all resources that help connect employers with job seekers.

STEP 4

Register.

Once the occupation, training plan, and partnerships have been established, an organization can register a program.

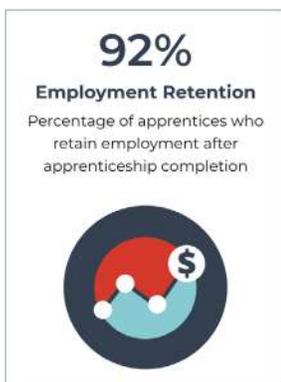
STEP 5

Launch.

For more information, visit partnerships.net or apprenticeship.gov.

Source: Department of Labor

Did You Know?





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