



# Ensuring Equal Access:

## EEO in the Apprentice Application & Selection Process

*Ensuring Equal Access: A Guide to EEO Compliance in the Apprentice Application & Selection Process was co-developed by Intelligent Partnerships and Jobs for the Future to support apprenticeship sponsors in understanding and applying Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) principles in their application and selection procedures. This guide is intended as a resource to help programs implement inclusive, equitable, and legally compliant practices in alignment with Title 29 CFR Part 30. While it references key federal regulations and requirements, it is not an official directive of the U.S. Department of Labor or the Office of Apprenticeship.*

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## What Equal Employment Opportunity Means in Apprenticeship

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) in Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) ensures that individuals are given fair and equal access to apprenticeship opportunities, free from discrimination based on personal characteristics unrelated to their ability to perform the work. Specifically, EEO protections apply regardless of a person's race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity), age (40 or older), genetic information, or disability.

For sponsors, EEO obligations extend beyond policy statements — they are operationalized through concrete actions, especially in how the program manages the application and selection process. Title 29 CFR Part 30 sets clear requirements for how sponsors must maintain detailed records at each stage — from outreach and recruitment through selection, placement, training, promotion, and termination. These records help demonstrate nondiscrimination, promote transparency, and ensure EEO protections are applied consistently.

This is to create an inclusive system where every qualified individual can participate fully, advance based on merit, and be evaluated solely on their capabilities and performance. Fostering EEO is not only about compliance; it strengthens apprenticeship programs by drawing from the broadest possible pool of talent, creating a more diverse, skilled workforce that reflects the communities the programs serve.

## The Critical Importance of Accurate Record-Keeping

Keeping accurate and complete records is more than just good practice — it's a key part of ensuring apprenticeship programs stay fair, transparent, and compliant with Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) requirements. Good record-keeping serves several vital purposes. It helps sponsors show they are meeting their responsibilities under Title 29 CFR Part 30 during audits or quality assurance reviews by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) or State Apprenticeship Agencies (SAAs). It also protects sponsors by providing necessary documentation if an applicant or apprentice files a discrimination complaint, making it easier to respond effectively and minimize risk.

Beyond compliance, strong record-keeping helps apprenticeship programs spot any potential barriers that might be preventing certain groups from fully participating. Tracking demographic information allows sponsors to see trends, address any issues early, and make improvements that keep programs open and accessible to everyone. Plus, these records can offer valuable insights to improve outreach efforts, make fairer selection decisions, and strengthen the program's overall success.

# Apprenticeship Application Process Checklist

To comply with Title 29 CFR Part 30, program sponsors must uphold nondiscrimination and affirmative action principles and maintain complete records of applications, selections, outreach, and EEO activities. These records must be available for program reviews by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) or a State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA). Sponsors are also required to designate a staff member to manage records and oversee EEO requirements.

Clear documentation and a designated point person help keep programs audit-ready and aligned with federal requirements. Programs are required to maintain the following records related to the apprentice application and selection process:

## Application and Applicant Records

- ✓ Maintain all apprenticeship applications (both accepted and rejected applicants).
- ✓ Retain copies of completed application forms for each applicant.
- ✓ Offer and document voluntary self-identification of race, ethnicity, sex, and disability status.

## Selection Process Documentation

- ✓ Keep copies of selection criteria (e.g., scoring rubrics, rating systems).
- ✓ Retain interview questions and interview evaluation sheets.
- ✓ Maintain records of any tests or assessments used during selection.
- ✓ Document the rationale for selection or rejection of each applicant.

## Reasonable Accommodation

- ✓ Record any requests for reasonable accommodations during the application process.
- ✓ Maintain documentation of the response to and resolution of accommodation requests.

## Outreach and Recruitment

- ✓ Document outreach efforts to recruit underrepresented populations.
- ✓ Maintain evidence of advertisements, job postings, and community partnerships used for recruitment.
- ✓ Retain records of specific outreach sources contacted (e.g., workforce agencies, community groups).

## EEO Complaint Records

- ✓ Maintain copies of any complaints alleging discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.
- ✓ Document investigations and actions taken in response to complaints.

## Document Retention

- ✓ Retain all records for at least 5 years from the date they were created or action was taken.
- ✓ Ensure confidentiality and security of all applicant and complaint-related records.

# Structuring A Fair Apprenticeship Application Process

Creating a fair application process is one of the most critical steps sponsors can take to uphold Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) in Registered Apprenticeship Programs. A well-structured process gives every applicant a genuine and equal chance to succeed and ensures that all candidates are evaluated based on their qualifications, not personal characteristics. All processes must stay fully compliant with federal regulations, including Title 29 CFR Part 30, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures.

Here's how you can design a fair and consistent application process:

## 01

### Define Clear Job-Related Requirements

Start by clearly outlining the skills, qualifications, or experience needed for success in the apprenticeship. Focus only on what's truly necessary for the role and avoid adding requirements that might unintentionally exclude qualified individuals.

## 02

### Use Consistent Evaluation Methods

Every applicant should be reviewed using the same standards and scoring system. Develop structured rating guides, interview questions, or evaluation forms to keep decisions objective and tied directly to the program's selection criteria.

## 03

### Make the Process Accessible

Offer applications in ways that are accessible to as many people as possible — whether that's online, on paper, or in-person drop-offs. Be sure to provide reasonable accommodations if someone requests assistance to complete the application or participate in interviews.

## 04

### Keep Good Records

Document each step of the process — from applications received, to interview notes, to final selection decisions. These records show that your process was fair and based on merit, and they protect your program during quality assurance reviews or complaints.

By setting clear expectations, applying criteria consistently, and keeping your process accessible, you lay the groundwork for a strong and inclusive apprenticeship program.

Now that your structure is in place, the next step is designing an application that invites every qualified individual to participate, without barriers or bias.

# Designing An Inclusive Application Process

In addition to structuring the process fairly, it's essential to design your application materials to be inclusive, accessible, and aligned with EEO principles. Sponsors are responsible for creating a welcoming environment where every qualified individual feels encouraged to apply.

Here's how you can do that:

01

## Use Clear and Inclusive Language

Ensure your application materials are easy to understand, free of biased language, and welcoming to all backgrounds. Avoid jargon, overly technical terms, or assumptions that might unintentionally discourage applicants.

02

## Define the Apprenticeship Position

It's essential to briefly explain the position, including key responsibilities and the work environment, and list the minimum qualifications needed. Providing this information helps applicants understand whether the program is a good fit for them.

03

## Invite Voluntary Self-Identification

Sponsors are required to offer applicants the opportunity to voluntarily self-identify their: Race, Ethnicity, Sex, and Disability status. It's also important to explain to applicants and list in the application documents that:

- Self-identification is entirely voluntary.
- Choosing not to self-identify will not affect the application process.
- The information will be kept confidential and used for compliance monitoring only.

04

## Offer Accommodations

Every application should clearly state that reasonable accommodations are available for applicants with disabilities and explain how to request them, or include a section to fill in the information. This simple step not only meets legal requirements but also sends a message of inclusion from the beginning.

05

## Collect Only Necessary Information

Collect only the necessary data to evaluate applicants fairly. Avoid including in the form or asking about citizenship, marital status, or age unless legally required, and carefully review what is truly necessary.

A clear and concisely written application form and a thoughtful data collection process demonstrate that your program is open to all and serious about providing equitable opportunity. With these elements in place, sponsors can build a fair and consistent selection system.

# Sample Apprentices Application Form



<b>First Name:</b>	<b>Last Name:</b>	<b>Middle Initial:</b>
<b>Mailing Address:</b>		<b>City:</b>
<b>State:</b>	<b>Zip Code:</b>	<b>Phone Number:</b>
<b>Email:</b>		<b>Date of Birth:</b>

**Position / Program Applying For:**

**Are you available to work full-time?:**  Yes  No | **Are you willing to travel?:**  Yes  No

**How did you learn about our Apprenticeship Program?**  Website  Referral  Job Fair  
 Community Organization  Other:

**Highest Education Level:**  High School Diploma/GED  Associate Degree  Bachelor's Degree  N/A

**High School:** \_\_\_\_\_ | **Year:** \_\_\_\_\_

**List any schools, colleges, or universities attended since leaving high school:**

<b>Name of Institution:</b>	<b>Degree or Certificate:</b>	<b>Year:</b>
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<b>Name of Institution:</b>	<b>Degree or Certificate:</b>	<b>Year:</b>
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**Relevant Coursework / Training**

<b>Employer:</b>	<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Dates:</b>
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**Job Duties:**

<b>Employer:</b>	<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Dates:</b>
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**Job Duties:**

<b>Employer:</b>	<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Dates:</b>
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**Job Duties:**

<b>Employer:</b>	<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Dates:</b>
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**Job Duties:**

## Equal Opportunity Pledge

[Name of Sponsor] will not discriminate against apprenticeship applicants or apprentices based on race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), gender expression, childbirth and related conditions, sexual orientation, genetic information, or because they are an individual with a disability or a person 40 years old or older. [Name of Sponsor] will take affirmative action to provide equal opportunity in apprenticeship and will operate the apprenticeship program as required under Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations, part 30.

Completion of the following information is voluntary and will not affect your application or selection. Data collected will be kept confidential, maintained separately from your application, and used solely for compliance with federal Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) requirements under Title 29 CFR Part 30.

**Gender:**  Male  Female  Non-Binary  Prefer Not to Answer

**Race/Ethnicity:**  Hispanic or Latino  White  Black or African American  Asian  
 American Indian or Alaska Native  Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander  
 Two or More Races  Prefer Not to Answer

**Disability Status:**  Yes, I have a disability  No, I do not have a disability  Prefer Not to Answer

Applicants who require reasonable accommodation during the application or selection process are encouraged to inform us. Requests for accommodation will be considered on an individual basis and will not adversely impact your application. All information related to accommodation requests will be kept confidential and handled in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

**Do you need reasonable accommodations?**  Yes  No

If yes, please describe the accommodation requested.

## Other Required Attachments:

- 01** Resume **02** High School / College Transcript(s). **03** Two Reference Letters

 Send/drop off this completed application along with ALL required attachments to:  
123 Main Street, Seattle, WA 12345 or email to [program@company.com](mailto:program@company.com)

BY SIGNING BELOW, I CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IS TRUE AND COMPLETE.

Signature

Date

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# Sample Request for Reasonable Accommodation Form



As part of our commitment to ensuring equal opportunity for all apprentices, this form allows you to request reasonable accommodations that enable your full participation in the Registered Apprenticeship Program. Requests are voluntary, confidential, and will not negatively impact your apprenticeship status, opportunities, or advancement. This form is offered annually in accordance with 29 CFR Part 30 to ensure continued support throughout your apprenticeship experience.

<b>First Name:</b>	<b>Last Name:</b>	<b>Middle Initial:</b>
<b>Program Title:</b>	<b>City:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	<b>Phone Number:</b>	

**Do you need reasonable accommodations?**  Yes  No

**If yes, please describe the accommodation requested.**

All information provided on this form will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of assessing and implementing reasonable accommodations. This information will not be placed in your general apprentice file. I understand that submitting this form initiates an interactive process between myself and the program sponsor to explore reasonable accommodations that may support my successful participation in the Registered Apprenticeship Program.

**Apprentice Signature**

**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## PROGRAM SPONSOR USE ONLY

**Date Received:**

**EEO Coordinator/Representative:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Action Taken:**

**Date of Determination:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Sample EEO Language and Poster



## Your Right To Equal Opportunity

It is against the law for a sponsor of an apprenticeship program registered for Federal purposes to discriminate against an apprenticeship applicant or apprentice based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), sexual orientation, age (40 years or older), genetic information, or disability. The sponsor must ensure equal opportunity with regard to all terms, conditions, and privileges associated with apprenticeship.

## Filing A Discrimination Complaint

If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination, you may file a complaint within 300 days from the date of the alleged discrimination or failure to follow the equal opportunity standards with:

### U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship

200 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20210

Attn: Apprenticeship EEO Complaints



[ApprenticeshipEEOcomplaints@dol.gov](mailto:ApprenticeshipEEOcomplaints@dol.gov)

You may also be able to file complaints directly with the EEOC or the State fair employment practices agency. If those offices have jurisdiction over the sponsor/employer, their contact information is listed below.

### U.S Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

San Francisco Office

450 Golden Gate Ave 5 West, PO BOX 36025  
San Francisco, CA. 94102



800-669-4000

## Each Complaint Filed Must Be Made in Writing & Include the Following:

- 01** Complainant's name, address, and telephone number, or other means of contact, for contacting the complainant.
- 02** The identity of the respondent (i.e., the name, address, and telephone number of the individual or entity that the complainant alleges is responsible for the discrimination).
- 03** A short description of the events that the complainant believes were discriminatory, including but not limited to when the events took place, what occurred, and why the complainant believes the actions were discriminatory (for example, because of their race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), sexual orientation, national origin, age (40 or older), genetic information, or disability).
- 04** The complainant's signature or the signature of the complainant's authorized representative.

## Your Right to File a Complaint with Our Program

We strongly encourage apprentices to file complaints with our EEO / Program Manager. We will promptly investigate all complaints of discrimination or harassment.

You may contact the EEO / Program Director, Joe Smith, at 123 Main Street, Seattle, WA 12345, or [email\\_program@company.com](mailto:email_program@company.com)

**Filing a complaint with our program does not limit your rights to file formal complaints with the US DOL or EEOC.**

# Creating A Consistent Selection Process

After designing a strong application process, the next critical step is building a selection process that applies your criteria fairly, consistently, and transparently. A structured selection system based solely on merit helps eliminate bias, demonstrates compliance, and builds confidence in your program's fairness.

01

## Establish Objective Selection Criteria

Focus on qualifications that are truly necessary for success and on what matters: the skills, abilities, and knowledge essential for success in the program. Ensure your criteria are clearly stated, job-related, applied to every applicant equally, and avoid unnecessary criteria that could unintentionally screen out qualified individuals.

02

## Create a Consistent Evaluation System

All applicants should be evaluated using the same rating system. This means developing rating sheets, structured scoring guides, and standardized interview questions that keep evaluations consistent, objective, and defensible.

03

## Train Your Reviewers

Ensure everyone involved in reviewing or interviewing applicants understands how to apply the criteria consistently and follows EEO guidelines throughout the process.

A structured selection process turns fairness from an idea into something tangible and measurable. By consistently evaluating applicants and documenting decisions carefully, sponsors build trust, maintain compliance, and build stronger programs. Here's a simple scoring framework sponsors can adapt:

Criteria	Max Points	Notes
Education (High School Diploma or GED)	10 points	Required for eligibility
Relevant Work or Volunteer Experience	20 points	Rated based on quality and relevance
Basic Math or Literacy Assessment	20 points	Based on a standardized test or an internal assessment
Interview Performance	30 points	Scored against standardized questions and rubric
Interest and Commitment to Trade	20 points	Measured through an essay, interview, or short statement
<b>Total Possible Points:</b>	<b>100 points</b>	

Applicants could then be categorized as:

Highly Qualified	Highly Qualified	Highly Qualified
80–100 points	60–79 points	Below 60 points



## Bringing It All Together

Creating a fair, inclusive, and well-documented apprenticeship application and selection process is not just a regulatory requirement — it's an investment in the future of your program. By taking the time to structure your process thoughtfully, apply criteria consistently, offer accessible applications, and maintain strong records, you help ensure that your apprenticeship program opens doors for all qualified individuals.

Commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) isn't a one-time task. It's a foundation you build into every part of your program — strengthening compliance, trust, and long-term success. With the tools and strategies outlined in this guide, you are well on your way to creating a program that not only meets federal standards but also truly reflects the principles of fairness, opportunity, and equity that apprenticeship programs were built to uphold.

### Key Takeaways

- ✓ **Fairness starts with structure:**  
Define clear job-related qualifications and apply consistent selection methods to ensure every applicant is evaluated based on merit.
- ✓ **Inclusivity is built into design:**  
Use accessible application formats, invite voluntary self-identification, and offer clear options for reasonable accommodations.
- ✓ **Selection must be objective and documented:**  
Create standardized scoring systems, train reviewers, and keep detailed records of every application and decision.
- ✓ **Compliance is continuous, not one-time:**  
Sponsors must maintain application, selection, outreach, and accommodation records for at least five (5) years, and have a designated EEO Officer or coordinator overseeing these processes.
- ✓ **Every step strengthens your program:**  
A thoughtful approach to EEO requirements not only protects your program but also builds a stronger, more trusted, and more diverse apprenticeship pipeline.

## Additional Resources

For more information and practical tools to support your program's requirements with Title 29 CFR Part 30, we recommend exploring the following resources:



### Jobs For The Future

#### **5 Equal Employment Opportunity Steps to Take When Setting Up a Registered Apprenticeship Program:**

This tool documents the steps RA sponsors need to take under the Apprenticeship Equal Employment Opportunity regulations, 29 CFR Part 30.

#### **5 Initial Steps to Equal Employment Opportunity for Registered Youth and Adult Apprenticeships:**

This self-paced, online training course walks you through the first five actions RA programs must complete to meet EEO obligations.

#### **Responses to Potential Sponsors' Concerns About Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship:**

Organizations considering registering an RA program often have concerns about what EEO regulations mean for them. These talking points address many of their frequently asked questions.

## Other Resources

- **Kansas State EEO Information Page:** Information and resources on the EEO requirements and implementation for program sponsors. **Colorado State EEO Information Page.**
- **Apprentice Outreach and Recruitment:** This webpage provides a list of helpful tools, links, and training webinars for universal outreach following EEO regulations.
- **Conducting Demographic Analysis for Registered Apprenticeship Programs:** A quick reference guide for apprenticeship sponsors to help understand workplace demographics.
- **RAPIDS Partner Finder Guide:** The Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Database System, or RAPIDS, is a case management program that is the primary platform for managing apprentices, occupations, and relevant job openings.
- **US Department of Labor EEO Complaint Form:** Information and Complaint Form on how apprentices can submit formal complaints with the USDOL.
- **US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Contact Info:** Information and resources on finding and contacting your local field office and employee rights on EEO complaints.

This workforce product was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)'s Employment and Training Administration (ETA). The product was created by the recipient and does not necessarily reflect the official position of DOL/ETA. DOL/ETA makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership. This product is copyrighted by the institution that created it.