

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIPS



**Q: What are Registered Apprenticeships?**

**A:** Registered Apprenticeships are innovative work-based learning and post-secondary earn-and-learn models that meet national standards for registration with the U.S. Department of Labor (or federally recognized State Apprenticeship Agencies).

**Q: Is a Registered Apprenticeship a Job?**

**A:** Yes, Apprentices start working from day one with incremental wage increases as they become more proficient. The average starting wage for an apprentice is approximately \$15.00 per hour.

**Q: How is Registered Apprenticeship different from other types of work-based training?**

**A:** Registered Apprenticeship training is distinguished from other types of workplace training by several factors: (1) participants who are newly hired (or already employed) earn wages from employers during training; (2) programs must meet national standards for registration with the U.S. Department of Labor (or federally-recognized State Apprenticeship Agencies); (3) programs provide on-the-job learning and job-related technical instruction; (4) on-the-job learning is conducted in the work setting under the direction of one or more of the

employer's personnel; and (5) training results in an industry-recognized credential.

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

**A:** Apprentices earn competitive wages, a paycheck from day one and incremental raises as skill levels increase. The average wage for a fully proficient worker who completed an apprenticeship translates to approximately \$50,000 annually. Apprentices who complete their program earn approximately \$300,000 more over their career than non-apprenticeship participants<sup>1</sup>.

**Q: Are all Registered Apprenticeships union-based?**

**A:** No. Registered Apprenticeship is used widely across all industries and includes union and non-union programs. Registered apprenticeship sponsors include unions, but also employers, community colleges and universities, workforce investment boards, industry associations, and the military.

**Q: Do you earn college credit while participating in a Registered Apprenticeship program?**

**A:** Today, most Registered Apprenticeship opportunities include on-the-job training,

and classroom instruction provided by apprenticeship training centers, technical schools, community colleges, and even distance learning. Often Registered Apprenticeship sponsors work directly with community colleges that ultimately provide college credit for apprentice.

**Q: What do I receive upon completion of a Registered Apprenticeship program?**

**A:** After completion of an apprenticeship program, the apprentice earns a nationally recognized credential from the Department of Labor that is portable and stackable. Additionally, an apprentice, along with earning a paycheck throughout the apprenticeship, is also elevated to journeyworker status that leads to increased pay and upward career opportunities.

**Q: How does a Registered Apprenticeship program benefit the sponsor (employer, Labor Management Organization, or Industry Association)?**

**A:** First and foremost, Apprenticeship sponsors develop highly skilled employees. Once established, Apprenticeship programs also reduce turnover rates, increase productivity, lower the cost of recruitment, and increase safety in the workplace/job site<sup>2</sup>.

**Q: How do I qualify for a Registered Apprenticeship program?**

**A:** Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors identify the minimum qualifications to apply for a program. The eligible starting age can be no less than 16 years of age; however, individuals must usually be 18 to be an apprentice in hazardous occupations. Program sponsors also identify additional minimum qualifications to apply, (e.g., education, ability to physically perform the essential functions of the occupation, proof of age.) All applicants are required to meet the minimum qualifications.

**Q: Who oversees or “runs” the Registered Apprenticeship system?**

**A:** The U.S Department of Labor’s Office of Apprenticeship, works in conjunction with State Apprenticeship Agencies to administer the program nationally. These agencies are responsible for registering apprenticeship programs that meet federal and state standards; protecting the safety and welfare of apprentices; issuing nationally recognized and portable Certificates of Completion of Apprenticeship to apprentices; promoting the development of new programs through marketing and technical assistance; assuring that all programs provide high quality training; and assuring that all programs produce skilled and competent workers. In addition, a wide variety of stakeholders exist, including state organizations, industry associations,

educational organizations (both secondary and post-secondary), workforce development organizations, economic development organizations, community-based organizations, and others. These stakeholders have a substantial interest in its success of Registered Apprenticeship.

**Q: What occupations can I train for through Registered Apprenticeship?**

**A:** The Registered Apprenticeship program offers access to 1,000 career areas, including the following top occupations: Able Seaman, Carpenter, Chef, Child Care Development Specialist, Construction Craft Laborer, Dental Assistant, Electrician, Elevator Constructor, Fire Medic, Law Enforcement Agent, Over-the-Road Truck Driver, and Pipefitter.

**Q: How long are Registered Apprenticeship programs?**

**A:** The length of an apprenticeship program depends on the complexity of the occupation and the type of program (Time-based, Competency-based, or Hybrid). Apprenticeship programs range from one (1) year to six (6) years, but the majority of programs are four years in length. During the program, the apprentice receives both structured, on-the-job training (OJT) and job-related education. For each year of the apprenticeship, the apprentice will receive normally 2,000 hours of on-the-job training and a recommended minimum of 144 hours of related classroom instruction.

**Q: Who are typical Registered Apprenticeship Partners?**

**A:** Through a proven system of public-private partnerships, Registered Apprenticeship partners with a wide range of organizations including, (but not limited to): Businesses, employer and industry associations, Labor-Management organizations, State and local workforce development agencies, Workforce Investment Boards, Two- and four-year colleges that offer associate and bachelor’s degrees in conjunction with a Certificate of Completion of Apprenticeship , U.S. Military, Community Based Organizations and economic development organizations.

**Q: Where can I find technical assistance resources to help me develop and registered my apprenticeship program with US DOL?**

**A:** DOL maintains a number of web-based resources available at <http://www.dol.gov/apprenticeship>. Here you can find our newest technical assistance products including our Quick Start Toolkit, which provides helpful steps and resources to start and register an apprenticeship program as well as our Federal Resources Playbook, which provides information on using the other Federal funds and resources to support your registered apprenticeship program.

## LEARN MORE

For more information on registered apprenticeships, please visit: [www.dol.gov/apprenticeship](http://www.dol.gov/apprenticeship)

For more information on apprenticeship in Southeast Michigan, please visit: [www.Mlapprenticeship.org](http://www.Mlapprenticeship.org)

**Janene Erne**

Regional Apprenticeship Administrator  
[janene.erne@winintelligence.org](mailto:janene.erne@winintelligence.org)

**Kinsey Mantay**

Regional Apprenticeship Administrator  
[kinsey.mantay@winintelligence.org](mailto:kinsey.mantay@winintelligence.org)