



MISSOURI REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP 2026 PLAYBOOK



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PREFACE

In 1937, the National Apprenticeship Act was signed into law, establishing standards for apprenticeship programs across the US. This framework for a federally recognized apprenticeship ensures quality and consistency in the training of an apprentice, while also providing regulations protecting the health, safety, and general welfare of apprentices. Regulations governing the National Apprenticeship System are found in [Title 29 CFR, part 29](#).

Registered apprenticeship has been commonly known as the training method used for the skilled trades within labor organizations. Modern apprenticeship initiatives are not only expanding the occupations that can utilize the apprenticeship training model beyond skilled trades, but also growing into all employer types. Efforts to expand and grow apprenticeship in Missouri has allowed employers to meet the training demands of today's workforce in technology, health care, education, advanced manufacturing, finance, and more. Today, an apprentice can receive relevant classroom or online training, designed with specific input from the employer to develop and train their workforce. The most important detail in the apprenticeship system is the employer – without the employer, there is no registered apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship roots run deep in Missouri, with some programs having been in operation since the signing of the National Apprenticeship Act. In 2016, various Missouri state agencies began investing in these programs and have continued to support thousands of apprentices through federal grants, state funded initiatives, tax credits, and by building a network for apprenticeship partners.

Apprenticeship Missouri became formalized in 2019, with the signing of Executive Order 19-20. The Executive Order established the Office of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning (OAWBL) to grow apprenticeship and other work-based learning opportunities for Missourians, with an initial goal to serve 20,000 new apprentices. To date, Missouri has served over 70,000 new apprentices and continues its efforts to reach more employers and partners, creating more opportunities for Missourians to learn and prosper in their jobs.

This playbook has been revised to incorporate updates since the original release in 2019 and serves as a practical resource on the registered apprenticeship training model for all parties. We hope it encourages you to consider registered apprenticeship as a solution for your workforce training needs.



APPRENTICESHIP MISSOURI GOALS:

- Increase apprentices served in Missouri
- Increase overall educational attainment
- Increase labor force participation by providing access to earn-while-you-learn training options
- Prepare people for work in high-demand fields, including current employees
- Offer more certificate and alternative credential programs
- Align educational requirements with business' needs
- Align K-12, higher education, and the workforce system
- Create, expand, and support programs with the highest need

APPRENTICESHIP STRONG

Key results since the Office of Apprenticeship & Work-Based Learning was established:

AMONGST THE **TOP STATES** FOR **ACTIVE, NEW, & COMPLETED**
APPRENTICESHIP DATA POINTS (JUNE 2026)



OVER 70,000 **NEW**
APPRENTICES SERVED



OVER 23,000 **ACTIVE**
APPRENTICES IN TRAINING



OVER 25,000 **COMPLETED**
APPRENTICES



OVER 340 **ACTIVE**
REGISTERED PROGRAMS

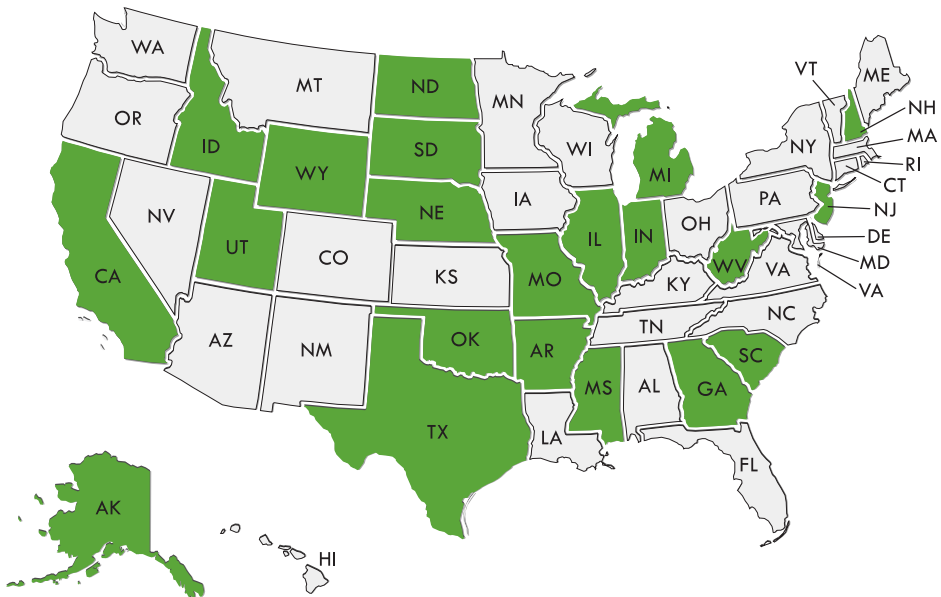


REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM

Nationally speaking, the registered apprenticeship system consists of two types of governing entities responsible for registering and overseeing registered apprenticeship programs: USDOL-Office of Apprenticeship (USDOL-OA) or a state-led State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA). Each state makes the determination as to which type of governing body will be in their state. All programs are registered following federal regulations and therefore meet the same quality standards. However, the key difference to know is that SAA states are likely to use state-developed documentation, have a different registration process across state lines, or even utilize a separate apprentice database system, as opposed to a USDOL-OA state.

Missouri is proudly a USDOL-OA state and has been since 1937.

■ Office of Apprenticeship (OA) □ Recognized State Apprenticeship Agencies (SAA)



PARTNERS IN THE MISSOURI APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM

The apprenticeship system in Missouri is diverse and has multiple entities involved with the implementation of programs statewide.

USDOL-OA

- Governing entity in Missouri. Registers new programs and ensures compliance of active programs long term
- Non-punitive arm of the USDOL, offering support, not penalties, to ensure program success
- Provides technical assistance and guidance

Department of Higher Education of Workforce Development-OAWBL

- Primary state agency in charge of apprenticeship expansion efforts
- Secures grants to provide additional resources throughout the state
- Develops tools, resources, and delivers technical assistance for statewide audiences
- Completes pre-apprenticeship program reviews and approvals
- Connects apprenticeship partners to internal and external resources

Intermediary

- Acts as the key partner to support apprenticeship program development and/or implementation; may serve as the program sponsor

Sponsors

- Entity that assumes full responsibility for the development, administration, and operation of a Registered Apprenticeship Program

Training Providers

- Delivers the related instruction to the apprentice

Employers

- Required partner in all registered apprenticeship programs
- Hires and employs the apprentices
- Provides on-the job training and mentor, along with established pay increases



STATE AGENCY SUPPORT PARTNERS

Many Missouri state agencies provide services and/or funding to support apprenticeship efforts.

- Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
 - Office of College and Career Readiness:
 - Guides and supports Missouri high schools and CTEs through registered apprenticeship programming
 - Supports Youth Apprenticeship Consultants team, an intermediary service provider network, for high schools and CTEs to develop and implement apprenticeship programs for youth
 - Adult Education & Literacy:
 - Provides preparation for Missouri's high school equivalency exam and English language learning services
 - Vocational Rehabilitation:
 - Offers expertise and technical assistance on workforce accommodations and assistive technology
- Department of Economic Development
 - Operates the Intern & Apprentice Tax Credit missourionestart.com/intern-apprentice/
 - Offers recruitment, training, and upskilling services to Missouri employers meeting eligibility

WHAT IS A REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP?

Registered Apprenticeship is a proven approach for preparing workers to meet the increasing demands for a highly skilled workforce while providing those workers with a clear career pathway. This customizable training model is employer driven and industry-aligned. It uses an “earn while you learn” approach that integrates paid on-the-job training, employer guided mentorship, and technical instruction aligned with national standards. Apprentices gain skills and progressive wage increases as they advance through the program.

Registered Apprenticeship can be used to skill up existing employees and support the training of new employees, including youth, as young as 16 years old.



WHY REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP?

Registered Apprenticeship is an employer-driven training model that offers significant benefits to both employers and workers. It is flexible and can be customized to meet the needs of any business. Apprentices can either be new hires or current employees identified as needing skill advancement. Because employers are directly involved with the educational development process, apprenticeship programs stay aligned with evolving technologies and innovations in training and talent development. There are more than 1,300 occupations approved for use under the registered apprenticeship system; employers also have the option to develop customized standards tailored to their specific business needs.

Registered Apprenticeship can be useful in addressing common employer pain points which include:

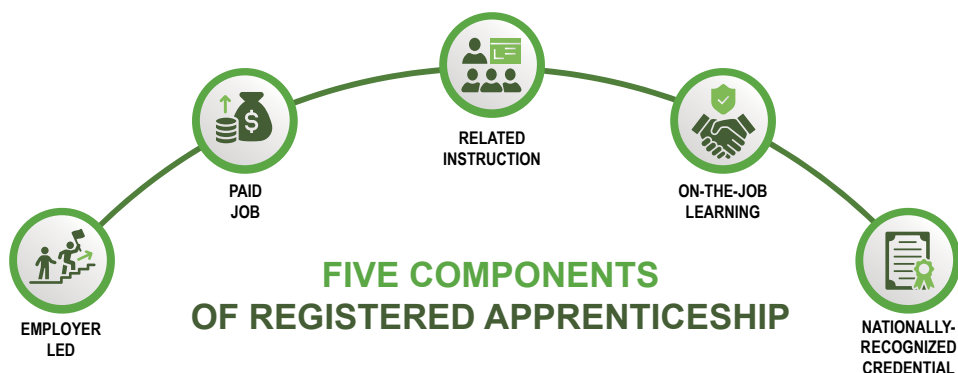
- Difficulty finding workers with the right skill set for open positions
- High turnover rates
- Skilled workforce is retiring

Benefits to registered apprenticeship programs for employers include:

- Development of skilled workers meeting employer's needs for the role
- Broadens the talent pipeline for positions
- Improved productivity, efficiency, and safety adherence
- Improved company culture
- Greater employee loyalty, reduced turnover, and development of future leaders; and more

CORE COMPONENTS

The combination of five core components is what makes a U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Registered Apprenticeship a top-tier quality training program that is mutually beneficial for the apprentice and employer.



1. **Employer Led:** Employers play an active role in building and designing each program and ensuring the training is in alignment with industry standards for the occupation.
2. **Paid Job:** Registered Apprenticeships are paid jobs! Apprentices receive an increase in pay as their skills and knowledge increase.
3. **Related Instruction:** Apprentices receive technical and academic instruction that applies to the job. Training can be provided by a college or university, a technical school, an apprenticeship training school — or by the business itself. It can be provided in a classroom, online, or at the job site.
4. **On-the-Job Learning:** Apprentices receive structured hands-on training from an experienced mentor.
5. **Nationally-Recognized Credential:** Every apprentice graduate receives a nationally recognized credential for mastering required skills and demonstrating required knowledge to be fully proficient in the specific occupation.

APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING DESIGN

Registered Apprenticeship programs are developed using the five core components above. The length of a program, or minimum requirements, can vary depending on the employer, the complexity of the occupation, or the type of program design used. Generally speaking, registered apprenticeships require minimum targets per year as part of the design.

On-the-Job Learning

- The amount of hours required varies by apprenticeable occupation. Requirements range from a minimum of 2,000 hours to 10,000 hours; refer to the occupation finder at apprenticeship.gov/apprenticeship-occupations for further details.
- Employer provides and assigns a skilled mentor, such as journey worker or subject matter expert.
- Can be more than one subject matter expert serving as a mentor
- Progression tracked as apprentice demonstrates mastery of competencies

Related Instruction

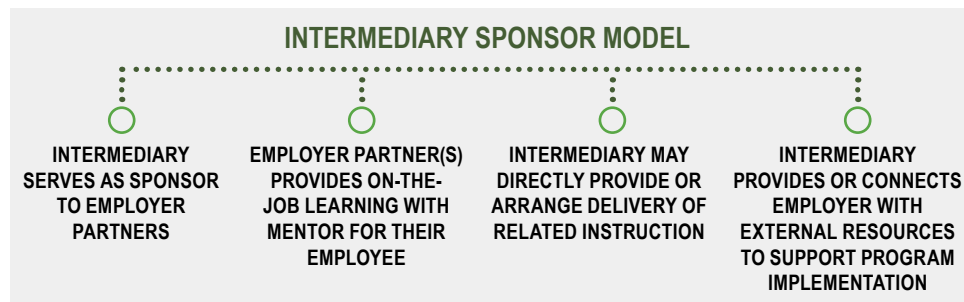
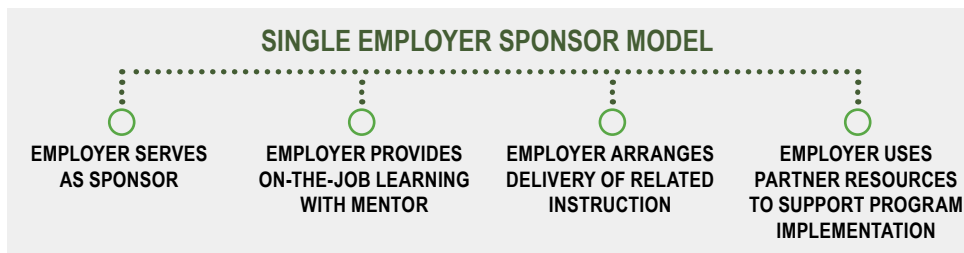
- 144 contact hours recommended per year of apprenticeship
- Administered by community colleges, university, career technology center, associations, online providers or employer in-house instruction
- Instruction can be provided via traditional classroom, online, hybrid
- Progression tracked as apprentice sufficiently completes required courses

The apprenticeship training model can be established using one of three different approaches, centered around the desired style for performance evaluation:

- **Time-based:** Measures skill acquisition through the completion of a minimum required amount of structured on-the-job learning. Time required is based upon the complexity of the apprentice occupation.
- **Competency-based:** Measures skill acquisition by the ability to demonstrate successful application of relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities through an appropriate means of testing and evaluation of competencies.
- **Hybrid:** Measures skill acquisition through the combination of hours spent in the program (structured on-the-job learning and related instruction) and competencies demonstrated in the workplace.

PROGRAM DESIGN: SPONSOR MODEL

A registered apprenticeship program is designed with the needs of the employer in mind. The organization responsible for designing and/or administering the apprenticeship program is known as the sponsor. Below are two sponsor model designs, Single Employer and Intermediary, either of which can be used depending on what best supports the employer's needs.



An intermediary serves as a strategic guide, supporting employers in building effective apprenticeship programs while ensuring employer input remains central. Intermediaries may offer expertise across HR operations, compliance, and workforce strategy, and may take on key responsibilities such as:

- **Program Design & Compliance:** Aligning business goals with apprenticeable occupations, designing OJL, and ensuring RTI meets USDOL-OA and industry standards.
- **Registration Support:** Guiding employers through program design and the process of establishing a registered apprenticeship program or onboarding into an existing one.
- **Administrative Management:** Tracking program milestones, such as OJL hours, RTI, and wage progression
- **Talent Acquisition:** Depending on capacity, intermediaries may support apprentice recruitment, connect employers with key stakeholders and external resources.

HOW TO START A REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

The Apprenticeship Missouri Team is here to help you get started. Our process for registration follows these simple steps. We will guide you along the way to help you develop and register your program.

CONTACT APPRENTICESHIP MISSOURI TEAM

01

Organization(s) interested in developing a Registered Apprenticeship (RA) program contacts Apprenticeship Missouri to begin discussions. Contact us at apprenticeship@dhewd.mo.gov.

INITIAL MEETINGS

02

Apprenticeship Missouri team meets with employer or other interested apprenticeship partner to discuss workforce needs and occupations of interest to determine if RA is a suitable training solution to meet the organization's need.

IDENTIFY RA PROGRAM SPONSOR & PARTNERS

03

Apprenticeship Missouri team assists with identifying RA Program Sponsor & Supporting Partners, including intermediaries, workforce development, and educational providers.

RA PROGRAM STANDARDS

04

Apprenticeship Missouri team assists Program Sponsor and supporting partners with developing the RA training program for each registered occupation. This includes apprentice qualification criteria, wage schedule, and more. Program Standards are submitted into Standards Builder to connect with USDOL-Office of Apprenticeship for official registration.

REGISTER RA PROGRAM

05

USDOL-Office of Apprenticeship reviews and formally registers the program upon final approval. Program Standards are signed by the Program Sponsor. USDOL-Office of Apprenticeship registers program in the online Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Data System (RAPIDS) and provides Sponsor with online access and capability to manage apprenticeship records. Review of RAPIDS is completed shortly upon registration.

06

HIRE APPRENTICES

Employer interviews and hires new employees for or enrolls current workers into the RA Program (Sponsor &/or Workforce Development partners may assist in apprentice recruitment & assessment efforts).

07

REGISTER APPRENTICES

Program Sponsor registers apprentice(s) in RAPIDS

08

APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Upon enrollment, apprentices begin training following the approved training plan. Apprentices receive hands on learning on the job with support from a qualified mentor and related technical instruction. Records & course transcripts are maintained to track apprentice progression. Program Sponsor updates apprentice records in RAPIDS accordingly.

09

COMPLETION CERTIFICATE

Program Sponsor notifies USDOL-Office of Apprenticeship when each apprentice completes his/her apprenticeship via RAPIDS. Program Sponsor generates & prints the Apprenticeship Certificate of Completion credential from RAPIDS and awards to RA program graduate.

REGISTERED? NOW WHAT?

- ☑ Explore resources available to support your apprenticeship program and apprentices.
 - Target a talent pipeline for development.
 - Partner with Apprenticeship Missouri to direct or connect to relevant state and local resources
- ☑ Market the apprenticeship pathway to talent pipeline audience and stakeholders
- ☑ Employers will screen their own apprentice applicants
 - Employers follow the uniform, non-discriminatory selection process they have established
- ☑ Maintain contact with training provider to track progress of apprentice
- ☑ Employers will remain in contact with USDOL-OA
 - Technical Assistance
 - Reviews

The Apprenticeship Missouri Team is available to provide ongoing support after registration.

PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

A pre-apprenticeship is a structured training program that prepares individuals for entry and success in registered apprenticeship programs by providing formal instruction to introduce individuals to the skills, competencies, and materials used in an apprenticeship position.

Pre-apprenticeship programs are a great opportunity to build a vetted, talent pipeline into a registered apprenticeship program.

Pre-apprenticeship programs are not regulated by the USDOL-OA team; however, USDOL does provide guidance for states to develop and approve quality pre-apprenticeship programs.

- [29 CFR 30.2](#)
- [20 CFR 681.480](#)
- [TEN 23-23](#)

NOTE: As of the publishing of this playbook, TEN 23-23 is under revision and an online pdf version is not accessible.

MDHEWD has oversight responsibility for postsecondary education in the state of Missouri, including pre-apprenticeship programs. The OAWBL team reviews all pre-apprenticeship programs to determine if programs meet the quality pre-apprenticeship programs guidelines and whether the program is eligible for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding.





To be approved as a quality pre-apprenticeship program in Missouri, the pre-apprenticeship program must incorporate **5 core components**, as described in TEN 23-23.

Training & curriculum alignment

- Pre-apprenticeship programs are to align with employer skill needs and registered apprenticeship selection criteria
- Pre-apprenticeship programs may be broad to expose individuals to various occupations but must still align with employer needs

Education and career services and support

- Incorporate career readiness support including education and career counseling, including career exploration
- Provides access to wrap around supports such as stipends, transportation, childcare, or other services necessary to succeed in the pre-apprenticeship

Hands-on learning activities

- Provided in a workplace, simulated lab experience, or other work-based learning environment to provide exposure to occupation
- May include on-the-job learning credited to the aligned active registered apprenticeship program
- Can be paid or unpaid

Opportunities to attain a federal industry recognized credential

- Program should include the opportunity to earn an industry-recognized credential

Partnership with an existing registered apprenticeship program

- Programs must partner with at least one active registered apprenticeship program to assist in placing completers into a registered apprenticeship program
- Partnerships with active registered apprenticeship should be documented

To submit a pre-apprenticeship program for review contact the OAWBL team at apprenticeship@dhewd.mo.gov and provide a thorough overview of the pre-apprenticeship program's design. Ensure the description supports all 5 components described.

All pre-apprenticeship programs must receive approval by MDHEWD in order to operate in Missouri. Based off the review, additional steps, which may include an application for training approval status with MDHEWD's Propriety Certification team may be required. Additional steps will be provided if necessary.

Q & A

What occupations are apprenticeable?

The USDOL recognizes over 1,300 occupations as apprenticeable. These occupations cross over a variety of industries. New occupations can be requested by employers to the USDOL. doleta.gov/OA/occupations.cfm

What is the earliest age that an individual can start as an apprentice?

Apprentices can begin as early as 16 years old and must be in pursuit of their high school diploma or equivalent. All workers under the age of 18 must obtain a work permit and the registered apprenticeship sponsor must ensure the program conforms to all federal and state child labor laws. Some exemptions to child labor laws exist that allow apprentices to engage in necessary training. dol.gov/agencies/whd/

Can an apprentice earn college credit?

Many apprenticeship programs are linked to postsecondary credentials and the opportunity to earn credit toward a two-year or four-year degree. Some apprenticeship programs are sponsored by the training providers that offer articulated credit for apprenticeship experience.

Who pays for an apprenticeship?

Registered Apprenticeships are designed for the employer to invest in the training of the apprentice. There are many resources that may be utilized to offset costs of the apprenticeship program. Traditionally, apprentices should exit an apprenticeship program with no debt.

What is the difference between a registered apprenticeship and an internship?

Registered apprenticeships are vetted programs that include full-time employment combined with on-the-job learning and related classroom instruction. Internships are planned, supervised structured learning experiences within a workplace that exist for a limited period of time and may be paid or unpaid. All Registered Apprenticeships are paid and result in a USDOL nationally recognized credential.

Can my organization provide the related technical instruction in-house?

Yes. Instructors of related instruction must meet the State Department of Education's requirements for a vocational-technical instructor or be a subject matter expert recognized within the industry as having expertise in the specific occupation. Instructors must also have training in teaching techniques and adult learning styles. [29 CFR 29.5\(b\)\(4\)\(i\)](#), [29 CFR 29.5\(b\)\(4\)\(ii\)](#)

RESOURCES

Potential Funding

- **Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant:**
 - <https://dhewd.mo.gov/initiatives/fast-track-workforce-incentive-grant>
- **Intern & Apprenticeship Tax Credit:**
 - <https://missourionestart.com/intern-apprentice/>
- **WIOA:**
 - <https://jobs.mo.gov/media/pdf/wioa-apprenticeship-flyer>

Mentorship

- **Registered Apprenticeship Academy:**
 - bit.ly/4oBWSKv
- **Workforce GPS:**
 - bit.ly/4vVqsgz

Recruitment

- **Missouri Apprentice Connect:**
 - <https://www.moapprenticeconnect.com>
- **MoJobs:**
 - <https://jobs.mo.gov>
- **Missouri Job Centers:**
 - <https://jobs.mo.gov/job-centers>

General

- **ApprenticeshipUSA:**
 - <https://www.apprenticeship.gov>
- **Apprenticeship Academy:**
 - <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/registered-apprenticeship-academy>

APPRENTICESHIP TERMS

APPRENTICE: Any individual employed by the employer meeting the qualifications described in the Standards of Apprenticeship. Apprentices will sign an Apprenticeship Agreement with the USDOL registered apprenticeship program sponsor for training and related instruction under Standards of Apprenticeship.

APPRENTICESHIP AGREEMENT: The written agreement between the apprentice and the Registered Apprenticeship sponsor, setting forth the responsibilities and obligations of all parties to the Apprenticeship Agreement with respect to the Apprentice's employment and training under these Standards.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION OF APPRENTICESHIP: Certificate issued by the USDOL-Office of Apprenticeship to those registered apprentices certified and documented as successfully completing the apprentice training requirements outlined in the Standards of Apprenticeship.

COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH: The attainment of manual, mechanical or technical skills and knowledge, as specified by an occupation standard and demonstrated by an appropriate written and hands-on proficiency measurement.

EMPLOYER: The organization employing an apprentice, providing wages and mentor, and has agreed to follow the approved Program Standards.

HYBRID APPROACH: An occupation using an apprenticeship approach that measures the individual apprentice's skill acquisition through a combination of a specified minimum number of hours of on-the-job learning and the successful demonstration of competency as described in a work process schedule.

INTERMEDIARY: An apprenticeship intermediary is an organization with the capacity, expertise, and network to help businesses successfully create, launch, and expand apprenticeship programs. Intermediaries could be any of the following: Industry Associations and Business Organizations, Community and Technical Colleges, Non-Profit and Community-Based Organizations, Labor Management Partnerships, or Workforce Development Boards. Intermediaries may or may not charge a fee and/or tuition – this will vary by the intermediary.

ON-THE-JOB LEARNING (OJL): The apprentice receives structure on-the-job training, becoming proficient in performing the tasks of the occupation with instruction and guidance from an experienced mentor.

MENTOR: An experienced, skilled worker who guides and supports an apprentice in their on-the-job learning. Mentor is chosen because they have attained a level of skill, abilities and competencies recognized within an industry as having mastered the skills and competencies required for the occupation and supervises the apprentice's on-the-job learning.

PROGRAM SPONSOR: The entity responsible for program development, administration, and operation of the apprenticeship program. Sponsor can be an Employer, Training Provider, or Organization.

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PARTNERS INFORMATION DATA SYSTEM

(RAPIDS): The USDOL digital platform used to manage information related to registered apprenticeship programs. It streamlines the process of registering, updating, and monitoring progress of apprenticeship and overall program.

REGISTRATION AGENCY: Refers to the USDOL, Office of Apprenticeship (OA), or a recognized State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) responsible for registering apprenticeship programs, providing technical assistance, assuring the quality of training and the competence of apprentice and overseeing with Title 29, CFR parts 29 and 30 and quality assurance assessments.

RELATED TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION: An organized form of instruction designed to provide the apprentice with the knowledge of technical subjects involving theory related to the apprenticeship occupation. Such instruction may be given in a traditional or online classroom, through occupational or industrial courses, online learning including webinars, or other forms approved by the Registration Agency.

STANDARDS OF APPRENTICESHIP: The set of guidelines and requirements that define the structure and operation of a registered apprenticeship program. Standards approved by the Registration Agency cover elements like on-the-job learning, related technical instruction, progressive wages, and program evaluation ensuring apprentice receives consistent and quality training.

SPONSOR: Any employer, training provider, association, or organization that assumes the full responsibility for development, administration, and operation of Registered Apprenticeship Program.

TIME-BASED OCCUPATION: The time-based approach measures skill acquisition through the individual apprentice's completion of at least 2,000 hours of on-the-job learning as described in a work process schedule.

Questions? Contact the Apprenticeship Missouri team at apprenticeship@dhewd.mo.gov



APPRENTICESHIP MISSOURI



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