

## Apprenticeship Policy

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) establishes sector strategies as a primary approach for meeting employer needs while simultaneously building and defining career pathways for individuals. Apprenticeships are a unique training where a combination of classroom and job-based training are required. Apprentices must gain and demonstrate competencies either over a period of time or at specific benchmarks in the apprenticeship program. Apprenticeships can be trade (nationally registered), registered apprenticeship (state registered) or company apprenticeships.

Apprenticeships combine rigorous, high-quality education with on-the-job training and other services that:

- Provide earn and learn opportunities;
- Ensure a talent pipeline and strategies to retain high-skilled employees and promote organizational and industry-specific knowledge;
- Align with the skills needs of industries in state or regional economies;
- Offer individuals a full range of educational options; and
- Help an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

### **DEFINITIONS**

Apprenticeships are a combination of on-the-job training and related instruction in which workers learn the practical and theoretical aspects of highly skilled occupations. Apprenticeship programs can be sponsored by individual employers, joint employers and labor groups, and/or employer associations, but are not recognized as “registered apprenticeship programs.”

Eligible Training Provider is a provider of training services who has met the eligibility requirements to receive WIOA Title I funds to provide training services to eligible individuals.

Eligible Training Provider List (or ETPL) is the commonwealth’s statewide list of approved providers of training services who are eligible to receive WIOA Title I funds.

Registered apprenticeship program means an apprenticeship program that is registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the “National Apprenticeship Act; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 USC 50 et seq.).

Registered Apprenticeship Program Sponsors can be Eligible Training Providers, including:

- Employers who provide related instruction
- Employers who use an outside educational provider: Employers can use two- or four-year post-secondary institutions, technical training schools or online courses for related instruction. The employer is the eligible training provider and must identify their institutional provider.

Joint Apprenticeship Training Programs are made up of employers and unions. They have an apprenticeship training school where the instructional portion of the apprenticeship program is delivered. The training schools are usually administered by the union, in which case the union would be the eligible training provider.

Intermediaries can serve as program sponsors when they take responsibility for the administration of the apprenticeship program. They can provide expertise such as curriculum development, classroom instruction and supportive services, as appropriate. The intermediary is the eligible training provider and must identify the instructional provider if an outside organization is providing the educational portion of the apprenticeship. They include:

- Educational institutions including two- and four-year post-secondary institutions or technical schools. In this model, the educational institution administers the program, works with employers to hire apprentices and provides classroom or online instruction for the apprenticeship program.
- Industry associations that administer the program and work with employer/members and educational entities to implement the apprenticeship program; and
- Community-based organizations that administer the program and work with employers, educational entities and the community to implement the apprenticeship program.

“Recognized post-secondary credential” means a credential consisting of an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship license recognized by the state involved or federal government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

### **APPRENTICESHIPS AS ELIGIBLE TRAINING PROVIDERS**

Under WIOA, all registered apprenticeships that seek to be included on the state’s eligible training provider list (ETPL) are automatically eligible to be included on the state’s list and must be provided an opportunity to consent to their inclusion. Once on the state’s ETPL, registered apprenticeships will remain on the list until they are deregistered or until the registered apprenticeship notifies the state that it no longer wants to be included on the ETPL. Non-registered apprenticeships must meet the requirements of other eligible providers of training services in order to be included on the state’s ETPL in Pennsylvania.

### **FUNDING APPRENTICESHIPS AND REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIPS**

There are several ways in which WIOA training funds may be used to support participation in registered apprenticeships and apprenticeship models. Apprenticeships,

whether federal or state registered can be funded for a combination of classroom training and on-the-job training. Training may be done by the employer-of-record or a third party contracted by the employer to deliver the training. For additional information regarding each training program summarized below, refer to the program-specific NWSA Job Connect local policy at [www.nwsajobconnect.org](http://www.nwsajobconnect.org).

**Individual Training Accounts (ITAs):** Because WIOA allows registered apprenticeships to be eligible for the state’s eligible training provider list (ETPL), an ITA may be developed for registered apprenticeship training.

- In order for a non-registered apprenticeship to receive ITA funding, the training program must be on the state’s ETPL
- An ITA contract may be developed with any registered apprenticeship program sponsor that administers an eligible registered or non-registered (but ETPL-approved) apprenticeship

**On-the-Job Training (OJT):** An OJT contract may be developed with an apprenticeship program for training participants.

- OJT contracts may be developed with an employer. The OJT contract may be made to support some or the entire OJT portion of the apprenticeship program subject to the requirements of the NWSA Job Connect local OJT policy.
- In order for an apprenticeship to qualify for an OJT contract, the employer and participant are subject to the requirements outlined in the NWSA Job Connect local OJT policy.
- If a participant is in a registered apprenticeship and employed as part of that arrangement, then the OJT will be treated as an OJT for employed workers. If a participant is in a registered apprenticeship but is unemployed, OJT funds will be treated as OJTs for unemployed workers.

**ITA/OJT Joint Funding:** There is no federal prohibition on using both ITA and OJT funds when placing participants into a registered apprenticeship program. A combination of an ITA to cover the classroom instruction along with an OJT contract to cover the on-the-job portions of the registered apprenticeship is allowed.

**Customized Job Training (CJT):** CJT funds can be used to support apprenticeship programs that are designed to meet the special requirements of an employer or group of employers who are willing to pay for a significant portion of the cost of the training and include a commitment by the employer(s) to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training.

- CJT contracts may be developed with an employer or a training provider.
- In order for an apprenticeship to qualify for a CJT contract, the employer and participant are subject to the requirements outlined in the NWSA Job Connect local CJT policy.

**Incumbent Worker Training (IWT):** Subject to availability of funds, incumbent worker training may be used for “upskilling” apprentices who already have an established worker/training relationship with the registered apprenticeship program.

### **PRE-APPRENTICESHIP**

Pre-apprenticeship programs provide instruction and/or training to increase math, literacy, and other vocational and pre-vocational skills needed to gain entry into a registered apprenticeship program. Pre-apprenticeship models that are aligned with the needs of key industry sectors create opportunities to advance students, job seekers, and workers along the talent pipeline. A pre-apprenticeship program funded with WIOA funding must have at least one registered apprenticeship partner; such pre-apprenticeship programs must possess or develop a strong record of enrolling their pre-apprenticeship graduates into a registered apprenticeship program. Once the participant is enrolled in the registered apprenticeship program, and if his/her funding has not been exhausted, a portion and/or the balance of funding may be used to cover the costs of the registered apprenticeship program’s classroom training/related instruction.

Pre-apprenticeship programs generally consist of the following:

- Training and curriculum that aligns with the skill needs of employers in the economy of the state or region involved;
- Access to educational and career counseling and other supportive services, directly or indirectly;
- Hands-on, meaningful learning activities that are connected to education and training activities, such as exploring career options, and understanding how the skills acquired through coursework can be applied toward a future career;
- Opportunities to attain at least one industry-recognized credential; and
- A partnership with one or more registered apprenticeship programs that assists in placing individuals who complete the pre-apprenticeship program into a registered apprenticeship program.

It must be noted that pre-apprenticeship programs do not have the same automatic ETP status under WIOA as do registered apprenticeship programs according to 20 CFR Part 680.470(f). The USDOL does not register or regulate pre-apprenticeship programs, although they have defined the attributes of a quality pre-apprenticeship program in TEN 13-12.

Organizations offering pre-apprenticeship training programs that are seeking ETP status are required to go through the same vetting process and performance reporting requirements as all other training providers in the state. If the pre-apprenticeship training program is on the ETP list, WIOA Title I funds may be used to fund that program for eligible individuals.

The PA Department of Labor and Industry includes an Apprenticeship and Training Office that provides additional information and resources on apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship that can be accessed at <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Workforce-Development/apprenticeship/Pages/default.aspx>.

**REFERENCES**

WIOA Section 134(d)(1)(A)  
20 CFR Part 680.330  
20 CFR Part 680.470  
20 CFR Part 681.480  
TEGL No. 13-16

**HISTORY**

Name	Date	Rev Level	Description of change	Effective Date
Deb O'Neil	01/22/2021	A	New Policy required by Local Plan process	03/12/2021