

Registering an Apprenticeship Program in Pennsylvania

A Guide for Employers or Sponsors

June 2023

OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

This detailed guide on registering your apprenticeship program in Pennsylvania includes step-by-step instructions to developing your program, completing your registration paperwork, registering your program with the state, and launching and maintaining your program.

THE BASICS

Registered Apprenticeship (RA) is a structured education and training program that takes place in the workplace and includes formal on-the-job training (OJT) and classroom-based related technical instruction (RTI). An apprentice is a full-time, paid employee from the start of the program. An apprenticeship must include at least 2,000 hours of OJT and a required 144 hours of RTI annually, and programs can last from 1 to 6 years.

An apprenticeship is not an internship, nor is it a short-term training program. Apprentices work full-time and are paid a wage that is subject to minimum wage regulations, but may begin below that of incumbent worker. As the apprentice hits milestones such as completing a certain number of program hours or demonstrating job competencies, their wages increase according to the agreement signed by the employer and the apprentice at the beginning of the program.

THE BENEFITS OF REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

Registered Apprenticeship is an effective way for businesses to ensure an ample supply of well-qualified, highly trained workers by engaging directly in their preparation, education and training. Unlike traditional postsecondary education programs that are designed to prepare students for any number of careers and generally focus more on theory than practice, apprenticeship is designed by and for the employer and is highly specialized to meet the unique needs of a specific job. Because apprentices learn primarily in the workplace, they are trained using the same state-of-the-art equipment that they will use on the job. Moreover, they will be instructed and mentored by skilled workers who have done the job the apprentice is training to do and who will ensure that apprentices are acculturated to workplace norms and expectations. Those who complete a registered apprenticeship receive a credential that is nationally recognized as a mark of distinction.



Employers that support apprenticeship training within their organization generally report the following benefits from their apprenticeship programs:

- Filling vacancies that otherwise couldn't be filled due to skills gaps among available workers
- Attracting a broader range of candidates and diversifying the workforce
- Improving employee morale and loyalty—thus reducing turnover
- Ensuring that workers are trained to the employer's standards using the employer's equipment and protocols
- Shortening the amount of time before new employees are productive
- Decreasing error and accident rates
- Ensuring that the knowledge and experience of aging workers is transferred to the next generation of workers
- Improved collaboration between employers and education/training providers

WHY REGISTER YOUR PROGRAM?

Graduates of apprenticeship programs receive a national, industry-recognized credential, and registration means the program has met national and independent standards for quality and rigor. Registration tells prospective employees, customers and suppliers that the business invests in its workforce and believes employees are its most important asset.

Registered apprenticeships have access to certain federal and state funding programs, such as the GI Bill (which provides supplemental support to veterans engaged in apprenticeship), the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (which may provide wage reimbursements to the employers or wrap around services for apprentices) and PA workforce development grants.

HOW TO START AND REGISTER A PROGRAM

Registering your program is easy, and involves four main steps:

STEP #1: Develop your apprenticeship program (p. 3)

STEP #2: Complete your registration paperwork (p. 4), including:

- Standards (p. 6)
- Appendix D (p. 13)
- Appendix A (p. 7)
- Appendix E (p. 14)

STEP #3: Register your apprenticeship program with the State (p. 17)

STEP #4: Launch and maintain your program (p. 18), including:

- Accessing RAPIDS (p. 18)
- Recruiting Apprentices (p. 18)
- Accessing Funding (p. 19)
- Maintaining Your Program (p. 19)
- Completing Appendix B – Apprentice Agreement (p. 20)

Detailed instructions for each of these steps are contained in this guide.

Attendance at an ATO “**Registered Apprenticeship Initial Orientation Session**” is required to move forward with building a registered apprenticeship program and will serve as a great source of information about the process. To register to attend an Orientation Session, please complete an online **Information Request Form**, [available here](#).

After submitting your information via the form, you will receive a follow up email outlining material and resources for your review, as well as an Outlook meeting invite for the Registered Apprenticeship Initial Orientation Session on the date that you selected within the Information Request Form. After attending an Orientation Session, you will be assigned an Apprenticeship & Training Representative (ATR) who can provide additional assistance as you register your apprenticeship program.

STEP #1: Develop Your Apprenticeship Program

There are a couple of different types of program sponsorship. Non-Joint programs are sponsored by a single employer that is not unionized (Individual Non-Joint). Joint programs are sponsored jointly by a unionized employer and the union(s) that represent the company’s workers (Individual Joint). Group sponsors register programs that allow multiple employers to join, and these employers can be unionized (Group Joint), non-unionized or both (Group Non-Joint).

Once the type of sponsorship is determined, the initial steps to developing an apprenticeship program are to determine which occupation will be apprenticed, what training will be provided, and who will provide it.

IDENTIFY A SPECIFIC OCCUPATION

Traditionally used to train workers in the building trades, apprenticeship is increasingly being used to train workers across sectors, including manufacturing, healthcare, logistics, and information technology. [Apprenticeshipstandards.org](#) has a searchable database of occupations that have already been apprenticed that you can use as a model for your program.

DEVELOP A TRAINING PLAN

Apprenticeships produce skilled workers through a combination of on-the-job learning and related technical training (virtual or in-person). The training plan for this learning is called the **Work Process**. It details the skills and knowledge an apprentice will learn on-the-job and through formal instruction to become fully proficient during their apprenticeship program.

The training plan will specify the length of the program, and what format the apprenticeship program will take, including:

- **Time-Based:** A time-based apprenticeship approach that measures skill acquisition through the individual apprentice’s completion of the required RTI and OJT hours.

- **Competency-Based:** An apprenticeship approach that requires successful demonstration of acquired skills and knowledge by an apprentice, as verified by the program sponsor, with an OJT component and RTI.
- **Hybrid:** A program that uses a combined competency and time-based apprenticeship approach that requires the apprentice to complete a specified minimum number of OJT hours, RTI hours and the successful demonstration of competency in the defined subjects.

Many examples of work processes from registered apprenticeship programs already exist that sponsors can customize to meet their individual needs. A US Department of Labor database of existing work processes can be found [here](#)¹, but sponsors should note that these examples may not reflect the current requirements and standards in PA. Additionally, some organizations may not be able to access Dropbox links.

IDENTIFY A TRAINING PROVIDER

Many different organizations can provide the related technical instruction portion of an apprenticeship program, including community colleges, Career & Technical Centers (CTCs), online providers, or even the sponsors themselves. Sponsors of registered apprenticeship programs are eligible to be placed on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), qualifying them for additional State and Federal assistance. Training can be provided on site or in partnership with an external education provider.

ESTABLISH AN APPRENTICESHIP & TRAINING COMMITTEE (ATC)

Apprenticeship and Training Committees (ATCs) help manage apprenticeship programs. They are required for Joint programs (known as Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committees (JATCs)), but are recommended for all programs. Joint programs are sponsored jointly by a unionized employer and the union(s) that represent the company's workers. ATCs/JATCs provide structure and oversight for apprenticeship programs, bringing together and aligning the sponsor's key internal stakeholders to carry out the responsibilities and duties required of a program sponsor. ATCs/JATCs take the lead on developing the program, including creating the work process, identifying the technical training provider, and registering the program with the state. Once a program is launched, ATCs/JATCs can play a role in the recruitment, supervision and support of apprentices. They also lead the important work of periodically reviewing the program, making sure the apprentices and journeyworkers have the tools and support they need to make the program a success for both employers and employees.

STEP #2: Complete your Registration Paperwork

Once you develop your apprenticeship program, the next step is to complete the paperwork necessary to formally register it with the PA Apprenticeship & Training Council. These forms include your program's Standards and its accompanying Appendixes:

- **Standards of Registered Apprenticeship:** Standards are the sponsor's written plan outlining all terms and conditions for the recruitment, selection, employment, training,

and supervision of their apprentices. It specifies the legal requirements of all Registered Apprenticeship programs, and includes details of your specific program.

- **Appendix A – OJT, RTI, & Selection Procedures:** Appendix A contains the details of your training plan and program. This includes the Work Process Schedule, which specifies the competencies the apprentice will learn during their on-the-job training (OJT), and information on the program's Related Technical Instruction (RTI), including who will provide the technical training. It also specifies other program details like the minimum wage scale for apprentices in the program and how apprentices are selected.
- **Appendix D – Program Summary:** Sponsors prepare this document to help present their program to the PA Apprenticeship & Training Council (PATC).
- **Appendix E – Employer Acceptance Agreement:** Employers who join a Group Sponsorship complete an Employer Acceptance Agreement. It contains information similar to what is included in Appendix A, but is specific to the employer who is joining the Group-sponsored program.

Templates for each of these documents have been created and are available on the [PA CareerLink® apprenticeship resources webpage²](#). The templates are easy to customize, and only require inputting a few of the details about your program. Each template has the areas for sponsor input indicated.

There are two additional appendixes that are not required for registration but are used after the program is approved:

- **Appendix B – Apprentice Agreement:** The Apprentice Agreement is used to enroll individual apprentices after the program is registered. It contains the apprentice's personal, demographic and employment information. It also specifies the rate at which an apprentice's wages will increase as they progress through the program. See page 20 for guidance on completing the Agreement.
- **Appendix C – Affirmative Action Plan (AAP):** The AAP is aimed at increasing the recruitment of qualified women and/or people of color for possible selection into the apprenticeship program. Sponsors with five or more apprentices are required to submit an AAP to the ATO within two years of their program's registration. To expedite this process, Compliance staff help the sponsor create an AAP as part of the program's Provisional Review Process, which takes place one year after the program is approved and registered with the state. Sponsors can either create their own AAP, or use the AAP Builder available in RAPIDS with assistance from the ATO. The AAP Builder provides a streamlined process for conducting utilization analysis and makes use of the most accurate, up-to-date national demographic data.

OCCUPATION ADDITION

If you are an existing program sponsor that wants to register an additional occupation, this is considered a Trade/Occupation Addition. To register an Occupation Addition, an existing sponsor must submit a new Appendix A, Appendix D, and Appendix E (for Group sponsors) for

each new occupation added. A current or updated version of the Standards should also be attached if the program is more than 5 years old.

The sections that follow provide detailed instructions on how to customize the apprenticeship registration templates to a sponsor's specific program.

Instructions for Completing Program Standards

Standards are the sponsor's written plan outlining all terms and conditions for the recruitment, selection, employment, training, and supervision of their apprentices. They specify the legal requirements of all Registered Apprenticeship programs, and includes details of your specific program. Standards also include a comprehensive list of apprenticeship-related definitions as a reference.

Start by completing the information on the **Cover Page**:

- **INDIVIDUAL NON-JOINT/ INDIVIDUAL JOINT/ GROUP NON-JOINT / GROUP JOINT:** Identify the type of program being registered. *Non-Joint* programs are sponsored by a single employer. *Joint* programs are sponsored jointly by an employer and the union(s) that represent the company's workers. *Group* programs allow other employers to join.
- **DEVELOPED BY:** Enter the name of the organization sponsoring the program. If the program is Joint, the sponsor will be the Employer *and* Union.
- **FEIN:** Enter the sponsor's Federal Tax Identification Number.

There are 3 sections of the Standards that need to be customized in addition to the signatures:

SECTION 1 – PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION/SKILLED OCCUPATION

p. 8

Enter the sponsor's name and the name of the occupation that's being apprenticed.

On page 2, indicate whether or not the sponsor will establish an Apprentices and Training Committee (ATC), and the frequency with which the offices of the JATC will rotate.

ATCs are required for Joint programs (JATCs), but are recommended for all programs. ATCs provide structure and oversight for apprenticeship programs, bringing together and aligning the sponsor's key internal stakeholders to carry out the responsibilities and duties required of a program sponsor. ATCs take the lead on developing the program, including creating the work process, identifying the classroom training provider, and registering the program with the state. Once a program is launched, ATCs can play a role in the recruitment, supervision and support of apprentices. They also lead the important work of periodically reviewing the program, making sure the apprentices and journeyworkers have the tools and support they need to make the program a success for both employers and employees.

SECTION 23 - ADJUSTING DIFFERENCES; COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**p. 14**

Provide the name, address, phone number, and email of the person tasked with resolving complaints regarding the apprenticeship program.

SECTION 32 – PROGRAM SPONSOR INFORMATION**p. 17**

Provide the sponsor's name and contact information, and indicate the preferred communication type.

SECTION 33 - OFFICIAL ADOPTION OF REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP STANDARDS**p. 18**

The Standards should be signed and dated by the sponsor and union representative (*if applicable*). Program sponsor(s) may designate the appropriate person(s) to sign the standards on their behalf.

Instructions for Completing Appendix A – OJT, RTI, and Selection Procedures

Appendix A contains the details of your training plan and program. This includes the Work Process Schedule, which specifies the competencies the apprentice will learn during their on-the-job training (OJT), and information on the program's Related Technical Instruction (RTI), including who will provide the technical training. It also specifies other program details like the minimum wage scale for apprentices in the program and how apprentices are selected.

Start by completing the general information about your program:

- **SPONSOR NAME:** Enter the name of the organization sponsoring the program.
- **FEIN:** Enter the Sponsor's Federal Tax Identification Number.
- **UNION NAME** (*if applicable*): If the program is being registered as *Joint*, indicate the name of the union that is co-sponsoring the program.
- **PROGRAM TYPE:** Choose whether your program is Individual Non-Joint, Individual Joint, Group Non-Joint or Group Joint.
- **OCCUPATION:** Enter the name of the occupation that is being registered.
- **O*NET CODE:** The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Code system classifies workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating or disseminating data. SOC Codes can be found [here](#)³.
- **RAPIDS OCCUPATION CODE:** RAPIDS occupation codes are available [here](#)⁴.
- **Are you a program sponsor that already has a registered occupation?:** If the sponsor has other registered apprenticeship programs choose 'YES'. If 'YES', input the RAPIDS program ID number(s), otherwise write 'Not applicable'.

- **RAPIDS PROGRAM ID#:** If the sponsor is already registered, they can locate their RAPIDS Program ID Number in RAPIDS.
- **Inclusion on the ETPL?:** All programs are eligible to be placed on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Inclusion on the ETPL makes your registered apprentices eligible for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) services which can support costs for the on-the-job training component of apprenticeships programs and pay for the cost of related technical instruction including tuition, books, supplies, fees, uniforms, tools and other required items.
- **Is the program already registered nationally?:** If the program has already been registered nationally with the US Office of Apprenticeship (OA) choose 'YES'.
- **Are the local apprenticeship standards based on National Guidelines for Apprenticeship Standards?:** National Guidelines for Apprenticeship Standards (NGS) are a template of high-quality apprenticeship program standards submitted by a labor union, trade or industry association, employer, workforce intermediary, education provider, or other organizations with national scope. If the program's PA standards are based on an NGS choose 'YES'.
- **Is this program already registered in a different state?:** If the program has already been registered with a different state choose 'YES', and then indicate which state(s). If 'NO', write 'Not applicable' in the text box.
- **Will you use a different state for Program and Apprentice Numbers?:** If the program is registered in another state, Pennsylvania apprentices may be registered under a different state's program. If the program will use a different state for Program and Apprentice Numbers choose 'YES', and then indicate which state. If 'NO', write 'Not applicable' in the text box.
- **Does the Program Sponsor share apprentices with another Registered Apprenticeship Program in another U.S. state and/or territory?:** Likewise, if other state's apprentices will be registered through the sponsor's Pennsylvania program choose 'YES', and then provide the other program's RAPIDS number. If 'NO', write 'Not applicable' in the text box.
- **Is the sponsor a non-profit agency?:** If the sponsor is a non-profit organization choose 'YES'.
- **Does this program have an inmate program?:** If the program will be actively recruiting individuals transitioning from incarceration to life in the community choose 'YES'.
- **Is there a Written School to Apprenticeship (STA) Agreement?:** School to Apprenticeship (STA) agreements enable high school seniors to gain direct entry into Registered Apprenticeship programs. If the program has STA agreements choose 'YES'.
- **Group Sponsors Only – Joint Employer Engagement?:** Indicate if your program will recruit joint employers, non-joint employers, or both. The ATO uses this information for data tracking purposes only, and response will not affect program registration. Individual programs should select *Not Applicable*.

Here is a breakdown of how to complete each section of Appendix A:

1. TYPE OF APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

There are three different kinds of apprenticeship programs – time-based, competency-based and hybrid - which are defined by the way in which an apprentice’s progress is measured and qualifications are awarded. Check the box that corresponds to the type of program you are registering.

- A **time-based** program measures progress based on the number of hours an apprentice has spent in on-the-job training (OJT) and related instruction (RTI).
- A **competency-based** program measures progress based on the apprentice’s demonstrated ability to perform the duties associated with the occupation.
- A **hybrid** program includes both time-based and competency-based requirements.

Examples of work processes for each type of apprenticeship program can be found on the on the [PA CareerLink® apprenticeship resources webpage](#)⁵.

2. TERM OF APPRENTICESHIP

Sponsors should specify the total number of months/years of their apprenticeship program, and the number of hours of OJT and RTI per year or in total. Apprenticeship programs are at least a year long, with each year comprised of 2,000 hours of OJT and 144 hours of RTI. For **time-based** and **competency-based** programs, enter the total number of RTI hours for the apprenticeship program; for **hybrid** programs, enter the amount of OJT and RTI hours.

3. RATIO OF APPRENTICES TO JOURNEYWORKERS

Any skilled worker who will be providing mentorship for some or all of the apprentice’s OJT is considered a journeyworker. In the state of Pennsylvania, the required apprentice to journeyworker ratio is:

- 1 apprentice to 1- 4 journeyworkers
- 2 apprentices to 5-9 journeyworkers
- 3 apprentices to 10-14 journeyworkers
- Each additional apprentice requires an additional 5 journeyworkers

For joint programs, the apprentice to journeyworker ratio should be consistent with proper supervision, training, safety, continuity of employment, and applicable provisions in Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs).

Exemptions to PATC’s standard ratios may be granted upon written request and approval of PATC. The ratio language must be specific and clearly described as to its application to the jobsite, workforce, department, or plant.

4. WORKFORCE NUMBERS

Individual sponsors should specify the total number of employees within the company, including the number of females and people of color. The US Department of Labor (DOL) uses this data to track apprenticeship outcomes. Individual sponsors should also specify the total number of journeyworkers within the company, including the number of females and people of color. The total number of journeyworkers will help determine how many apprentices can be enrolled in the program.

For Group-sponsored programs, accumulate the total workforce numbers for all Employer Acceptance Agreements (Appendix E).

5. PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Specify the number of hours of the apprentice's probationary period if the program is time-based, the percent of the required competencies if competency-based, or both if it's a hybrid program. If both, choose "and" from the dropdown; otherwise choose "or". The probationary period cannot exceed 25 percent of the length of the program or one year, whichever is shorter.

6. APPRENTICE WAGE SCHEDULE

Specify the minimum hourly journeyworker wage rate. This is the lowest wage someone will make after successfully completing their Apprenticeship program.

A key component of apprenticeship programs is reward for skill gain. As the apprentice develops new competencies, they earn a larger percent of what their final wage will be when they complete their apprenticeship program. This gradual increase in salary is detailed in the Wage Schedule.

Apprentices should earn at least two wage increases over the course of the apprenticeship program: the entry level wage to start, an increase at least once during the program, and then a final increase at the end of the program which results in the full journeyworker entry wage.

Time-based programs have Periods measured in hours, while Competency-based programs have periods measured by "competency levels" defined in the work process. Hybrid programs will include both time-based and competency-based advancement. Some programs may have more Periods and some may have less, so only use as many Period rows as necessary. There is no set format for how the wages should increase over time. That is up to the discretion of the sponsor.

Below is an example of what a Wage Schedule might look like for a **Time-based** 4-year program:

Period*	% of Journeyworker Wage	Wage Amount in Dollars	Hours	Competency
1 st	50%	\$20.00	1000	
2 nd	56%	\$22.40	1000	
3 rd	62%	\$24.80	1000	
4 th	68%	\$27.20	1000	
5 th	74%	\$29.60	1000	
6 th	80%	\$32.00	1000	
7 th	86%	\$34.40	1000	
8 th	92%	\$36.80	1000	
9 th				
10 th				
11 th				
12 th				
13 th				
14 th				
15 th				
16 th				
17 th				
18 th				
19 th				
20 th				
21 st				
22 nd				
23 rd				
24 th				
Journeyworker Entry Wage	100%	\$40.00		

Below is an example of what a Wage Schedule might look like for a **Competency-based** 4-year program, where each period lasts ~6 months:

Period*	% of Journeyworker Wage	Wage Amount in Dollars	Hours	Competency
1 st	50%	\$20.00		Competencies 1-2
2 nd	56%	\$22.40		Competencies 3-4
3 rd	62%	\$24.80		Competency 5
4 th	68%	\$27.20		Competency 6
5 th	74%	\$29.60		Competencies 7-8
6 th	80%	\$32.00		Competency 9
7 th	86%	\$34.40		Competencies 10-11
8 th	92%	\$36.80		Competency 12
9 th				
10 th				
11 th				
12 th				
13 th				
14 th				
15 th				
16 th				
17 th				
18 th				
19 th				
20 th				
21 st				
22 nd				
23 rd				
24 th				
Journeyworker Entry Wage	100%	\$40.00		

Below is an example of what a Wage Schedule might look like for a **Hybrid-based** 4-year program:

Period*	% of Journeyworker Wage	Wage Amount in Dollars**	Hours	Competency
1 st	50%	\$20.00	1000	Competencies 1-2
2 nd	56%	\$22.40	1000	Competencies 3-4
3 rd	62%	\$24.80	1000	Competency 5
4 th	68%	\$27.20	1000	Competency 6
5 th	74%	\$29.60	1000	Competencies 7-8
6 th	80%	\$32.00	1000	Competency 9
7 th	86%	\$34.40	1000	Competencies 10-11
8 th	92%	\$36.80	1000	Competency 12
9 th				
10 th				
11 th				
12 th				
13 th				
14 th				
15 th				
16 th				
17 th				
18 th				
19 th				
20 th				
21 st				
22 nd				
23 rd				
24 th				
Journeyworker Entry Wage	100%	\$40.00		

7. ON-THE-JOB TRAINING WORK PROCESS SCHEDULE

The Work Process Schedule specifies the competencies the apprentices will learn during their on-the-job learning, and should be attached as **Appendix A-1**. The DOL maintains a database of hundreds of Work Processes from apprenticeship programs that have already been registered that can be customized to meet your organization's specific needs. Access the database [here](#)⁶.

8. RELATED TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (RTI)

Specify if training will occur during work hours, not during work hours, or both. Specify whether or not apprentices will be paid for time spent attending classroom training.

Provide details about the organization(s) that will be providing the RTI, including contact information, the type of organization providing the training, and how the training will be delivered. The Appendix A template includes space for up to three RTI providers, but not all programs will have this many. Include details of the technical training that will be provided (e.g. topics to be covered, hours per topic, etc.) as attachment **Appendix A-2**. A template for Appendix A-2 is available on [PA CareerLink® apprenticeship resources webpage](#)⁷.

If using a third-party vendor for the instruction component of the program, please submit a letter verifying such from the training provider(s) as part of Appendix A-2. These Letters of Support should include:

- An affirmation of the partnership that exists between the sponsor and the training provider that specifically states that the training provider will be providing the RTI for the occupation being registered.
- Language that describes the training provider's relevant expertise.
- A high-level summary of the training that will be provided (i.e. topics, hours, etc.).

9. APPRENTICE QUALIFICATIONS AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

Specify whether the apprentice will be at least 16 years of age or at least 18 years of age, and whether or not a high school diploma or equivalent is required. Also specify any specific education, physical, aptitude, or drug tests that an apprentice is required to pass prior to starting the program. If an aptitude test is required, please specify what the applicant needs to do to "pass" and how the test will be validated. If there are no requirements for any of the types of qualifications, type 'Not applicable'.

Enter any additional details of the Selection Procedures for this occupation, or submit as a separate attachment labeled **Appendix A-3**.

10. OFFICIAL ADOPTION OF APPENDIX A

Sign and date the document.

Instructions for Completing Appendix D – Program Summary

Appendix D provides the PA Apprenticeship and Training Council (PATC) with an overview of your apprenticeship program. It includes 22 questions that highlight the information the PATC is particularly interested in, including details on the sponsor's workforce, the program's training provider, and the program's focus on safety. It's also a useful tool for helping sponsors to identify different aspects of their program that need to be thought through in advance of program registration.

The document is presented in lieu of a formal and lengthy verbal presentation to the Council. However, sponsors should be prepared to give a brief 3-minute elevator pitch that provides an overview of their new program. The pitch should include information such as details on the occupation, the RTI that will be provided, the competencies that will be taught, and why the training is best provided through an apprenticeship program. Taken together, Appendix D and the elevator pitch provide you with an opportunity to 'sell' your program. This form should be completed using information contained in the other Appendixes. A template for Appendix D is available on the [PA CareerLink® apprenticeship resources webpage](#)⁸.

On the first page of Appendix D, sponsors should start by providing basic program details: sponsor name, union name (if applicable), program type, occupation, length of program, and the number of apprentices expected to enroll in the first year after registration. All sponsors must complete the first 18 questions. Only group sponsors are required to complete questions 19-22.

Instructions for Completing Appendix E – Employer Agreement

Group sponsors provide program administration and assist with instruction and supportive services. This may be a beneficial option for small and medium-sized employers that may not have the capacity to operate programs on their own. Group sponsors aggregate demand for apprenticeship programs, enabling them to meet the required enrollment levels to run RTI classroom sessions and allowing these smaller employers to participate.

When an employer joins an existing Group-sponsored program they are able to leverage an existing apprenticeship framework. The apprentice will work for the employer, but the overall operation of the apprenticeship program is managed by the intermediary organization that sponsored the program. This provides the employer with the flexibility of getting started almost immediately.

Employers interested in finding Group-sponsored programs in their region can search for them using the [Apprenticeship.gov Partner Finder⁹](#), which lets employers search for apprenticeship programs by county.

The screenshot shows the 'SEARCH SPONSORS' button highlighted with a red border. Below it, a message states: 'This search only renders Apprenticeship Program Sponsors'. There are two main search filters: 'Search by State or National' with a dropdown menu showing 'Select a state', and 'Select a County(s)' with a dropdown menu showing 'Select...'. A 'Deselect All' link is also present next to the county dropdown.

Group sponsors are required to submit two completed Employer Agreements during their registration process. There are 6 sections of the Employer Agreement that need to be completed, 7 if the program is Joint:

1. EMPLOYER INFORMATION

At the beginning of Appendix E, enter in the occupation and name of sponsor. For example:

The undersigned employer hereby subscribes to the provisions of the Registered Apprenticeship Standards for **[OCCUPATION]** formulated and registered by **[SPONSOR]** and agrees to...

Enter the name and address of the employer joining the Group-sponsored program, and the contact information for the person at that employer who will manage the apprenticeship program.

2. WORKFORCE NUMBERS

Specify the total number of employees within the company, including the number of females and people of color. The US Department of Labor (DOL) uses this data to track apprenticeship outcomes. Specify the total number of journeyworkers within the company, including the number of females and people of color. The total number of journeyworkers will help determine how many apprentices can be enrolled in the program.

3. APPRENTICE WAGE SCHEDULE

Specify the minimum hourly journeyworker wage rate. This is the lowest wage a fully qualified worker will earn in the apprenticed occupation. The journeyworker wage must be equal to or higher than what is listed in Appendix A. It's recommended that the sponsor create a template for their employers to use with their minimums from appendix A pre-filled-in.

A key component of apprenticeship programs is reward for skill gain. As the apprentice develops new competencies, they earn a larger percent of what their final wage will be when they complete their apprenticeship program. This gradual increase in salary is detailed in the Wage Schedule.

Time-based programs have Periods measured in hours, while Competency-based programs have periods measured by "competency levels" defined in the work process. Hybrid programs will include both time-based and competency-based advancement. Some programs may have more Periods and some may have less, so only use as many Period rows as necessary. There is no set format for how the wages should increase over time. That is up to the discretion of the sponsor. Please refer to the examples on pages 10 and 11 for guidance on how to complete these tables. Also specify whether or not the apprentice will be paid for time spent attending RTI training.

After completing the wage scale, specify if training will occur during work hours, not during work hours, or both. Also specify whether or not apprentices will be paid for time spent attending classroom training.

4. RATIO OF APPRENTICES TO JOURNEYWORKERS

Any skilled worker who will be providing mentorship for some or all of the apprentice's OJT is considered a journeyworker. In the state of Pennsylvania, the required apprentice to journeyworker ratio is: 1 apprentice to 1- 4 journeyworkers; 2 apprentices to 5-9 journeyworkers; 3 apprentices to 10-14 journeyworkers; each additional apprentice requires an additional 5 journeyworkers. For joint programs, the apprentice to journeyworker ratio should be consistent with proper supervision, training, safety,

continuity of employment, and applicable provisions in CBAs.

Exemptions to PATC's standard ratios may be granted upon written request and approval of PATC. The ratio language must be specific and clearly described as to its application to the jobsite, workforce, department, or plant.

6. QUALIFICATIONS & SELECTION PROCEDURES FOR APPRENTICESHIP

Identify any additional qualifications or selection procedures that the employer may have beyond what's included in Appendix A. Any additional qualifications required by the employer should be discussed with the program sponsor.

7. JOINT APPRENTICESHIP AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

Insert the frequency with which the offices of the JATC will rotate. If your program is not Joint, write "Not Applicable".

9. OFFICIAL ADOPTION

The employer and union (if applicable) should sign and date the document.

Additional Resource – Job Book

Job Books are useful tools that allow the apprentice and employer to easily record the apprentice's progress in meeting the competency requirements of the program. They are based on an apprenticeship program's work process, and include space to record the date that specific competencies are achieved. Though not required to register a program, Job Books provide a useful tracking tool to help manage an apprenticeship program and ensure it is meeting its goals. A template for creating customized Job Books is available on the [PA CareerLink® apprenticeship resources webpage¹⁰](#).

STEP #3: Register Your Apprenticeship Program with the State

The last step to starting your apprenticeship program is formally registering it with the State, which involves submitting it for review and approval by the PA Apprenticeship and Training Council (PATC). The Council is made up of 11 members, with representatives of employees, employers, and the general public. Their diverse backgrounds and expertise around apprenticeship help them vet programs and provide suggestions for improvements. The Council's approval of a program certifies that it meets the requirements established by the State, thereby making it eligible for government support.

The process for presenting your apprenticeship program to the PATC is as follows:

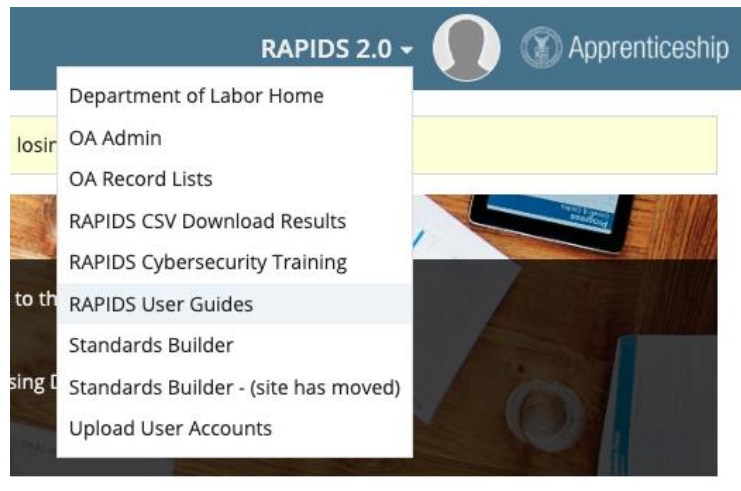
1. If they haven't already done so, sponsors should reach out to their regional Apprenticeship and Training Representative (ATR) who can assist them in presenting their program for review.
2. PATC meetings typically happen one to two times each month. Sponsors must submit their program to their ATR for review at least two weeks in advance to be added to the "Review of Standards of Apprenticeship" section of the upcoming PATC agenda.
3. Once added to the PATC agenda, sponsors will attend that month's PATC meeting, either in person or via telephone, to present the program for review. Sponsors should be prepared to give a three-minute elevator pitch about their new program. Council members will review the information contained in Appendix D and have an opportunity to ask questions and/or request clarification about the program from the sponsors.
4. At conclusion of the program review, the sponsor will be told the program will be voted on at the next regular meeting of the Council the following month. This "buffer" is intended to allow Council members to do additional research, ask questions, and receive any needed clarification in order to make a fully educated vote the following month. In rare instances a program can be approved after its initial review, but only with a unanimous vote by the Council.
5. Once initially reviewed by the Council, the sponsor's program will be added to the "Approval of Standards of Apprenticeship" section of the PATC agenda at the next regular meeting of Council. As with the prior month's meeting, sponsors are able to attend, either in person or via telephone, to make an additional three minutes of opening remarks when their program is reviewed for the second time.
6. After the program's second review, the Council will vote on approval. A present voting member from the Council must make a motion to approve, and have it be seconded. The Council must have at least 6 voting members present to conduct a vote. The program must receive a majority vote by the Council present at that time to be approved, with the Deputy Secretary in charge of determining a tie-breaker vote if it comes to that. Once the Council concludes voting, the program is officially registered!

STEP #4: Launch and Maintain Your Program

Congratulations you've officially registered your new apprenticeship program! Now it's time to start and maintain it. Generally this involves four main things:

ACCESSING RAPIDS

Your ATR will activate your program in the Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Data System (RAPIDS), the federal system of record for apprenticeship programs. You will be provided with a login ID and password, which will allow you to enroll apprentices and keep their status up-to-date. Detailed guides on how to use the RAPIDS system are available on RAPIDS. Once logged-in, sponsors can access the guides through a dropdown menu in the upper-right portion of the homepage. Your ATR can also provide assistance if you run into trouble finding and using the user guides.



RECRUITING APPRENTICES

Apprenticeship programs are a great tool to recruit high quality workers who see the potential for career advancement with an employer that invests in their development. There are many organizations that can help create a pipeline of talent into RA programs, including:

- **Local Career & Technical Centers (CTCs):** CTCs can provide pipeline of apprentices that have a desire to work in the skilled trades and demonstrated technical expertise.
- **Community Colleges:** Community colleges are also a great source of candidates who already have some technical training.
- **PA CareerLink® One-Stops:** Many individuals who access PA CareerLink's® services are eligible for additional financial assistance and other support through WIOA federal funding. The staff at your local PA CareerLink® will work with you to determine what support your program and apprentices are eligible for.

- **Community and Faith-based Organizations:** Many CBOs and FBOs work with underserved populations that are ideal candidates for RA programs.
- **Links with Pre-Apprenticeship (Pre-RA) Programs:** Pre-RA programs provide workers with foundational skills that will help them succeed in a full apprenticeship program.

All apprentices need to complete an **Apprentice Agreement** (Appendix B) to enroll in an apprenticeship program. See page 20 for instructions on completing the Agreement.

ACCESSING FUNDING

Now that your program is registered, it is eligible for a variety of sources of State and Federal support, including reimbursements for OJT expenses and apprentice wages. This includes funding for individuals eligible for support through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), who can be recruited through the state's PA CareerLink® One-Stops. Support may also be available from Pell Grants, WEDnet, and other initiatives such as PAsmart. For a list of all current funding opportunities, please visit the [PA CareerLink® apprenticeship resources webpage¹¹](#).

The **G.I. Bill®** also provides support for apprenticeship. Eligible veterans pursuing training through an apprenticeship program approved by a State Approving Agency (SAA) can receive their GI Bill® monthly housing allowance (MHA) in addition to their apprenticeship wages as well as potentially receive a supplies stipend. In Pennsylvania, the SAA is the Department of Education's Division of Veterans/Military Education. They can be reached at RA-VetED@pa.gov or 717- 787-2414. A Veterans Education Advisor will be assigned to walk employers through the approval process. After an employer is approved by the SAA, the VA adds this approval to their electronic system and the employer is then able to certify veterans into the program and then submit hours monthly for the veteran to receive their benefits, a process that the Veterans Education Advisor will provide guidance and instruction on. More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official [U.S. government VA website¹²](#).

MAINTAINING YOUR PROGRAM

Maintaining your program involves setting up the processes necessary to successfully implement it. This includes:

- **Establishing ATC/JATC meetings:** ATCs are required for Joint programs (JATCs), but are recommended for all programs. ATCs provide structure and oversight for apprenticeship programs, bringing together and aligning the sponsor's key internal stakeholders to carry out the responsibilities and duties required of a program sponsor. ATCs take the lead on developing the program, including creating the work process, identifying the classroom training provider, and registering the program with the state. Once a program is launched, ATCs can play a role in the recruitment, supervision and support of apprentices. They also lead the important work of periodically reviewing the program, making sure the apprentices and journeyworkers have the tools and support they need to make the program a success for both employers and employees.

- **Coordinate RTI:** Sponsors will have to coordinate RTI class scheduling, textbooks and supplies for each apprentice for each upcoming semester of their RTI.
- **Updating apprentice info on RAPIDS:** If your apprentice's status changes, be sure to update their info in RAPIDS within 45 days. Once your apprentices are 'Completed' in RAPIDS, they will automatically be issued a Journeyworker Certification from the State of Pennsylvania. RAPIDS user accounts are automatically deactivated if there are 210+ days of no activity. To prevent unintentional deactivation, the ATO recommends logging in at least once a quarter, even if there are no apprentice/program-related actions that need to be carried out.
- **Monitoring your apprentice's progress:** As your apprentice completes their training, they will advance in their knowledge and their salary will increase as a reward for this skill gain. Job Books provide a useful tool to keep track of how your apprentice is progressing. Developed directly from your program's work process, they allow for journeyworkers to easily check off which skills their apprentices have learned. A Job Book template can be found on the [PA CareerLink® apprenticeship resources webpage¹³](#).
- **Periodically review your program:** As with any new training initiative, it's good to check-in at least monthly to make sure your apprentices and journeyworkers have the tools and support they need to make the program a success.

Instructions for Completing Appendix B – Apprentice Agreement

An Apprentice Agreement is a signed commitment between the apprentice and the employer or sponsor. The apprentice agrees to perform the work and complete the related instruction courses. An Apprentice Agreement needs to be completed for each apprentice enrolled in the program. Sections A needs to be completed by the apprentice. Section B needs to be completed by the sponsor (for individual programs) or the employer (for group programs). The list of apprentice responsibilities from the Standards is included on page 2 for their reference, while page 3 is the Federal Voluntary Disability Disclosure Form which all apprentices are required to complete.

1. SECTION A

Section A captures the personal and demographic information of the Apprentice. The Apprentice needs to sign and date on line 17.

2. SECTION B

Section B includes information about the apprenticeship program, including the apprentice's progressive wage schedule. The program information required is what is already defined in the Standards and Appendix A, and should be identical to what is included there. Other particular sections to note include:

4. TOTAL LENGTH OF OJT HOURS: This is the total hours for the OJT component in the apprenticeship program, and not OJT just hours per year.

6. CREDIT FOR PREVIOUS JOB TRAINING HOURS: Credit can be given for prior experience towards meeting the on-the-job training competencies, but cannot be more than 80% of the term of the apprenticeship. Any previous credit given must be disclosed at this time. Sponsors may be asked to produce supporting documentation at registration for previous credit awarded.

8. TOTAL LENGTH OF INSTRUCTION HOURS: This is the total hours for the RTI component of the apprenticeship program, and not just RTI hours per year.

11. CREDIT FOR PREVIOUS INSTRUCTION HOURS: There is no limit to the credit apprentices receive for all technical training they have already completed. Any previous credit given must be disclosed at this time. Sponsors may be asked to produce supporting documentation at registration for previous credit awarded.

16. APPRENTICE WAGE PROGRESSION: A key component of apprenticeship programs is reward for skill gain. As the apprentice develops new competencies, they earn a larger percent of what their final wage will be when they complete their apprenticeship program. This gradual increase in salary is detailed in the Wage Schedule. On the next page is an example of what a Wage Schedule might look like for a 2-year program where the apprentice's starting wage is \$20/hour and their final wage is \$40/hour.

Period	% of Journeyworker Wage	Wage Amount in Dollars	Duration (hours)
1 st	75%	\$30.00	1000
2 nd	80%	\$32.50	1000
3 rd	85%	\$35.00	1000
4 th	90%	\$37.50	1000
Journeyworker Entry Wage	100%	\$40.00	

17. JOURNEYWORKER ENTRY WAGE: This is the wage the apprentice receives when they complete the apprenticeship program and should be equal to their end wage. In the example, this would be \$40/hour.

CONCLUSION

Apprenticeship programs are win-win for employers and employees. Employers are better able to hire and train workers with the specific skills they need, and ensure that the knowledge of their older workers is transferred to the younger generation before they retire. Employees are able to earn while they learn, earning an industry-recognized credential and developing their careers in partnership with their employer. The formalized structure of apprenticeship programs is what helps make them a success, and what qualifies them for additional sources of funding and other support. The information and resources provided in this guide are meant to make establishing apprenticeship programs easier, but you still probably have a lot of questions. Please reach out to us anytime at Apprenticeship@pa.gov to learn more. We look forward to working with you!

¹ <https://www.apprenticeshipstandards.org/>

² <https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/Apprenticeships/ResourcesForRAPrograms>

³ <https://www.onetonline.org/help/online/search>

⁴ https://www.monroeccc.edu/sites/default/files/programs/files/ASET/Copy%20of%20Available_Occupations.pdf

⁵ <https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/Apprenticeships/ResourcesForRAPrograms>

⁶ <https://www.apprenticeshipstandards.org/>

⁷ <https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/Apprenticeships/ResourcesForRAPrograms>

⁸ <https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/Apprenticeships/ResourcesForRAPrograms>

⁹ <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/partner-finder>

¹⁰ <https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/Apprenticeships/ResourcesForRAPrograms>

¹¹ <https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/Apprenticeships/ResourcesForRAPrograms>

¹² <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>

¹³ <https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/Apprenticeships/ResourcesForRAPrograms>