



2025 Apprentice Ambassador Cohort Apprentice Information

Description

The Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) includes leaders from state, business, industry, labor, education, and community-based organizations with the goal of evaluating and meeting the workforce needs of Illinois employers and workers.

The IWIB's Apprenticeship Committee, one of five IWIB committees, is dedicated to expanding and diversifying apprenticeship programs and apprentices throughout the State. The IWIB Apprenticeship Committee is continuing an Apprentice Workgroup to create a network of diverse apprentices and apprentice graduates of all ages and backgrounds from all economic development regions within the state and multiple industries. Individuals selected for this workgroup will be Apprentice Ambassadors for the State and their regions. **Members of this workgroup will have the opportunity to work alongside government-appointed IWIB leaders ranging from business to state employees to help shape the public workforce policy.**

The "ask" of Apprentice Ambassadors is to **(1)** provide feedback and experience as an apprentice, **(2)** be an advocate and example to other individuals and companies, and **(3)** be a mentor to other current or future apprentices.

Apprentice Ambassadors will serve as champions for Apprenticeship programs by sharing their success stories and promoting Apprenticeships to career seekers and employers. It also provides them a platform to feature their stories, share their perspectives, highlight how Apprenticeships increase opportunities for underserved populations, and bring awareness to other career seekers and employers.

Serving as an Apprentice Ambassador is a professional development opportunity. Apprentice Ambassadors will exercise valuable teamwork, leadership, and public speaking skills. Individuals chosen to join the Apprentice Workgroup will collaborate with IWIB members, appointed by Governor Pritzker, and members of the IWIB Apprenticeship Committee to aid in the strengthening of Illinois apprenticeship programs through innovation and creativity. Duties include event planning, business/apprentice engagement, community outreach, and more. The IWIB Apprenticeship Committee seeks hard-working, passionate leaders to progress the continuous growth of the Illinois workforce and apprenticeship programs.

Selection Criteria

Apprentices will be selected to maximize representation of the diversity of Illinois employer sizes, geographic region, industry sectors, and their responses within the application. The Apprenticeship Illinois Committee aims to choose one apprentice from each economic region. The Committee wishes to engage apprentices from diverse industries, genders, and racial/ethnic backgrounds.

**Only one application will be accepted per company. Please coordinate with your mentor or supervisor to determine who from your company will apply.*

To be an Apprentice Ambassador, an applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Be a current apprentice in an Apprenticeship program in Illinois for at least six months or a graduated apprentice from an Illinois program within 365 days from the application submission date.
- Be an apprentice/graduate from an Apprenticeship program in good standing who has shown exemplary leadership, mentorship, teamwork, promotional activities, and/or has a transformative story as an apprentice.
- Be currently working in an industry/occupation similar to that in which they completed their Apprenticeship program (if an apprentice graduate).
- Willing to make a year-long commitment to promote Apprenticeship programs from the date of appointment as an Apprentice Ambassador

All applicants must complete the following:

1. Submit a complete application with responses to all required fields.
2. Have your employer complete the Apprenticeship Employer Ambassador application/commitment; and
3. Have a parent/legal guardian provide written authorization for the apprentice/graduate to participate in the Initiative (*if the apprentice/graduate is under 18 years of age and is not emancipated*).

At any time, the apprentice/graduate, the apprentice/graduate's Apprenticeship employer, or the apprentice/graduate's parent/legal guardian (if the apprentice/graduate is under age 18 and not emancipated) may request to remove the apprentice/graduate's application from consideration or request the apprentice/graduate's withdrawal from participation in the Initiative.

***Note:** the Apprentice Workgroup is limited to current or graduated apprentices in the State of Illinois only.

Eligible apprenticeship programs do not have to be registered with the U.S. Department of Labor. However, the apprenticeship programs must meet the following criteria:

1. *The program employs and pays the apprentice for full-time work with a structured on-the-job learning plan,*
2. *The program is at least one year in length,*
3. *The program provides the apprentice with a mentor, and*
4. *The program has supplemental coursework or training in addition to the on-the-job learning.*

Core Expectations for an Apprentice Ambassador

- Apprentice Ambassadors will commit to a one-year term beginning in December 2024 and ending in December 2025.
- Ambassadors will be expected to attend all events highlighted in yellow in the calendar of events below.
 - **Note: We ask employers to cover the cost of travel for the Apprentice Ambassador activities. However, for travel costs incurred for required events that the employer does not cover, Apprentice Ambassadors may be reimbursed once filing proper travel documentation. Note the ambassador will need to pay these costs upfront and submit proper documentation for reimbursement.*
- Apprentice Ambassadors' photos, names, titles, and the names of their Apprenticeship employers will be publicized on the www.ApprenticeshipIllinois.com website and included in press releases.
- Apprentice Ambassadors will be expected to share their perspectives on Apprenticeship programs and their own experiences.
- Apprentice Ambassadors are expected to maintain professionalism, open communication, and transparency with their Apprenticeship employer regarding their participation in this Initiative.

Apprentice Ambassador Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Location	Notes	Attendees
Early November 2024	Initial Onboarding Meeting	Zoom	Cover program details and expectations Cover travel submission process Cover ambassador and employer questions	Ambassador (Required) Employer (Required)
November 17 - 23	National Apprenticeship Week	Online	Will introduce 2025 ambassadors on social media as part of marketing for National Apprenticeship Week.	Ambassador (No attendance required)
December 12	Illinois Workforce Innovation Board Meeting	Zoom or In-Person	Graduation ceremony for 2024 Ambassador cohort and introduction of 2025 cohort to IWIB	Ambassador (required) Employer (optional)
January	Short 1-on-1 meeting with committee leadership.	Zoom	Discuss Ambassador goals during program and background with apprenticeship.	Ambassador (Required)
March	Ambassador Program Kickoff	In-person (Location TBD)	All-day workshop w/training on: IL Workforce System/IWIB Public Speaking Online Footprint	Ambassador (required) Employer (optional)
March	Spring IWIB Apprenticeship Illinois Committee (AIC)	In-person (Location TBD)	Will take place the day after the Ambassador Program Kickoff	Ambassador (optional) Employer (optional)
April	Quarterly Check-In	Zoom	Will meet once every 3 months	Ambassador (Required)
April	Workforce Summit	In-Person (Location TBD)	Ambassadors will be given an opportunity to speak at a special session on the Apprentice Ambassador program. Up to 3 ambassadors will be selected for this event.	Ambassador (up to 3 will be selected, others not required.)
June	Professional Development & Summer AIC Meeting	In-person (Location TBD)	Continued professional development on: Public presentation & media training Apprenticeship policy process	Ambassador (required) Employer (optional)
July	Quarterly Check-In	Zoom	Will meet once every 3 months	Ambassador (Required)
September	Fall AIC meeting	In-Person (Location TBD) & Zoom		Ambassador (optional) Employer (optional)
October	Online Professional Development	Zoom	Continued professional development and coaching. Topics TBD	Ambassador (Required)
October	Quarterly Check-In	Zoom	Will meet once every 3 months	Ambassador (Required)
November	National Apprenticeship Week (NAW)	In-Person (Location TBD)	Will be asked to attend a regional (NAW) event or webinar if able. Committee will provide direction on suitable events.	Ambassador (required) Employer (optional)
December	Winter IWIB & AIC Meetings	In-Person (Location TBD)	Recognition for participating and end of year celebration with IWIB and AIC.	Ambassador (required) Employer (optional)

If selected as an Apprentice Ambassador, the Apprentice Ambassador must agree to meet these core expectations.

Deadline to apply is OCTOBER 15, 2024.