

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP



NATE CARLSON, TA PROGRAM DIRECTOR

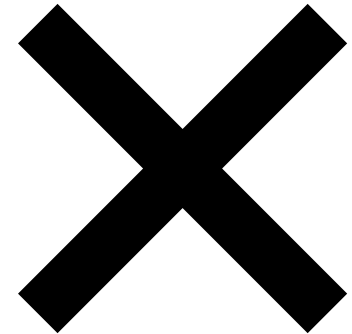


Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity
OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING
JB Pritzker, Governor

DEFINING APPRENTICESHIP

Apprenticeships are NOT...

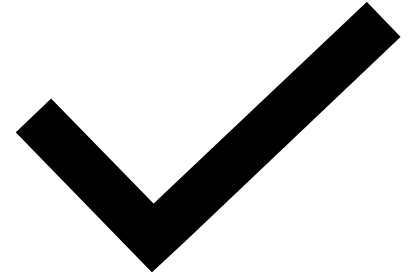
- Unpaid Internships
- Limited to the Trades/Construction
- Limited to Young People/New Hires
- A Magic Wand



DEFINING APPRENTICESHIP

Apprenticeships ARE...

- Paid jobs, usually FT with benefits
- Found in every sector
- Open to workers of all ages/backgrounds
- A life-changing career opportunity for participants that can revive communities and revitalize businesses



DEFINING APPRENTICESHIP

Most of all, apprenticeship is
AN INVESTMENT
in training and retaining
skilled talent.

DEFINING APPRENTICESHIP

An apprenticeship which **does not sufficiently train** or has been designed in such a way **that it will not retain skilled talent** is functionally **null and void**.

It is our role to ensure that employers not only invest in registered apprenticeship, **but that they make a worthwhile investment.**

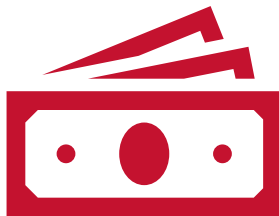
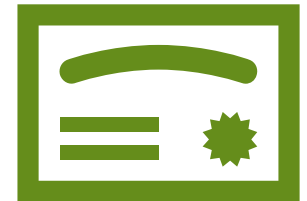
ABOUT APPRENTICESHIP ILLINOIS:

Our Regional Specialists will...

- Conduct in-person and virtual apprenticeship outreach through events and employer consultations
- Receive and pursue referrals received to the Apprenticeship Illinois website
- Work with employers to fully develop and register their apprenticeship programs from start to finish
- Connect employers to intermediary partners and other applicable services



THE SEVEN COMPONENTS OF REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP



1. APPRENTICESHIPS ARE... BUSINESS-DRIVEN.

What does this mean?

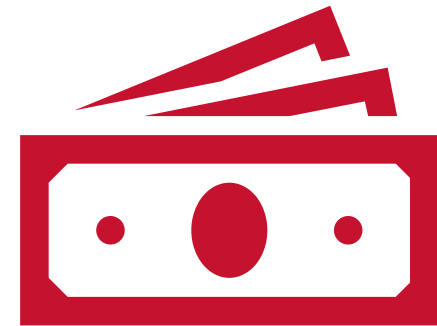
- Employers have final say on program design
- The Specialist role is about **empowering program registration** and **ensuring program quality**.
 - Find opportunities to include employer input/customization
 - Be honest when programs fall short; retention is important!



2. APPRENTICESHIPS ARE... A PAID JOB.

What does this mean?

- **Apprentices earn a progressive wage schedule**
- Apprentices earn a percentage of the journeyworker or experienced worker hourly rate.
- Wage reflects skill-gains in real time
- **Wage Schedules are entirely customizable**
- **ONET data is useful for determining wage competitiveness**



REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM FORMATS

1. Competency-Based

Apprentices earn wage increases and progress through their program by acquiring specific job-related competencies, which they are evaluated on by their assigned mentors and/or an employer-designed skills-based test.

2. Time-Based

Apprentices earn wage increases and progress through their program by meeting predetermined hour thresholds for specific competencies associated with their role.

3. Hybrid

Apprentices earn wage increases and progress through a combination of predetermined hour requirements and skills-based evaluations.



QUICK COMPARISON:

Both Wage Schedules below meet DOL requirements and end at the same wage, but which is more likely to incentivize retention?

Competencies Completed	Hourly Wage
0 (Program Start)	\$15
60 (Completion)	\$26

Competencies Completed	Hourly Wage
0-10	\$15
10-25	\$17
25-40	\$21
60 (Completion)	\$26

STAYING COMPETITIVE

The chart below from onetonline.org shows the median hourly wage for Registered Nurses in a specific region. We can use this data to ensure that programs we develop are competitive and likely to retain completers.

Local Wages

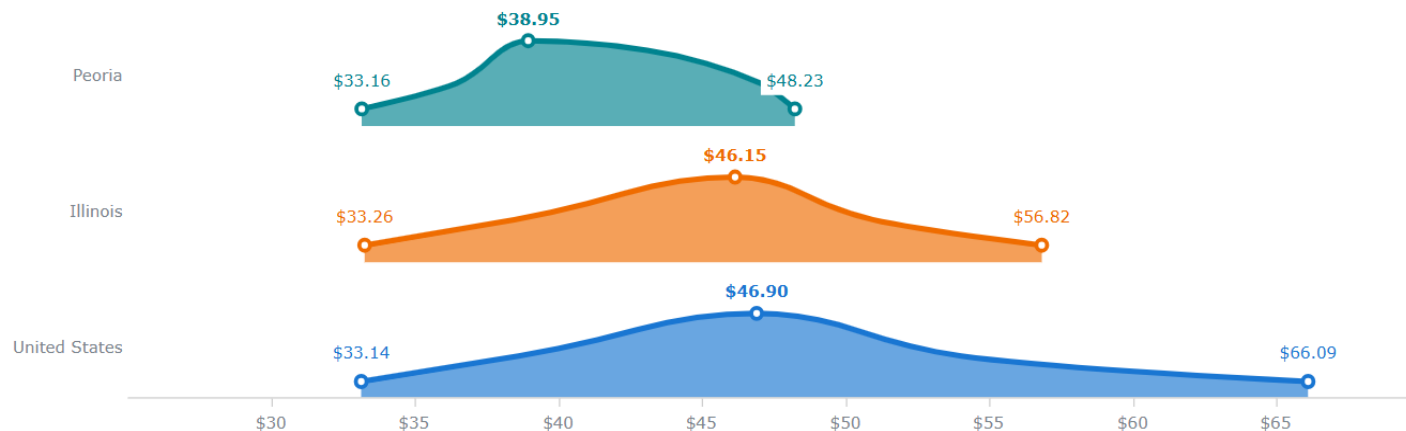
29-1141.00 - [Registered Nurses](#) ☀️ **Bright Outlook**

Wages for state: Illinois

Wages near ZIP Code: 61603

[Annual Wages](#)

[Hourly Wages](#)



3. APPRENTICESHIPS INCLUDE... ON-THE-JOB MENTORSHIP & LEARNING.

What does this mean?

- **Employers assign each apprentice an on-the-job mentor and establish a worksite ratio of journeymen to apprentices**
- Apprentices may work alongside mentors or have regular check-ins/training sessions.
- Mentors monitor apprentices' progress through their program, signing off on competencies
- All apprentices must complete at least 2,000 hours of on-the-job experience, regardless of program occupation and format.



4. APPRENTICESHIPS INCLUDE... SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATION.

What does this mean?

- **Apprentices must receive at least 144 hours of classroom learning per year**
- In most programs, this training is fully funded up-front by the employer
- Community Colleges and industry-recognized third parties are the most common RAP training providers
- Training can be front-loaded as necessary (CNA, CDL, etc.)



5. APPRENTICESHIPS FACILITATE... DIVERSITY.

What does this mean?

- Programs are designed to **reflect the communities in which they are located** through strong non-discrimination, anti-harassment, and recruitment practices that ensure access, equity, and inclusion.



6. APPRENTICESHIPS ENSURE... QUALITY AND SAFETY.

What does this mean?

- Skill Competencies are standardized for each occupation to ensure quality of training outcomes
- Mentor-Apprentice ratio encourages worksite safety
- Specialists take on an advisory role to help employers design programs with **high-quality apprentice outcomes**



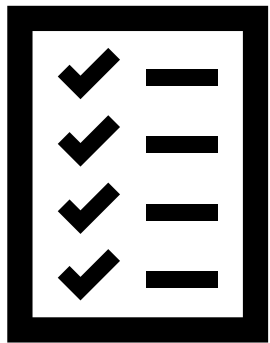
7. APPRENTICESHIPS PROVIDE... CREDENTIALS.

What does this mean?

- Apprentices who complete their program receive a **nationally-recognized Journeyworker certificate** from US DOL
- Additional credentials such as licenses, degrees, and certificates are often built into apprenticeships as part of program development.
- Better credentials = better value add for apprentices



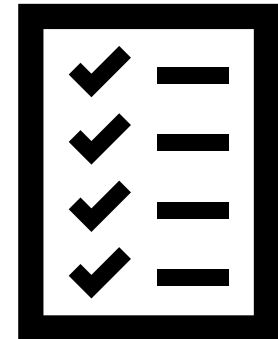
ROLES IN THE REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP ECOSYSTEM



ROLES IN THE RAP ECOSYSTEM:

Program Sponsor:

- The entity that is **legally responsible** for the apprenticeship program and maintains its documentation
- Employers, LWIAs, Community Colleges, and CBOs can all be sponsors on behalf of an employer
- The primary responsibility of an apprenticeship sponsor is to ensure apprentice information is kept up to date in RAPIDS (Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Database System)



ROLES IN THE RAP ECOSYSTEM:

Intermediary:

- An organization which **provides services** to registered apprentices and apprenticeship employers.
- Services may include:
 - Case Management
 - Wraparound/Supportive Services
 - Pre-Apprenticeship Skills Training
 - Classroom Instruction
- High-Impact Intermediaries such as Community Colleges, may function as both a Sponsor and an Intermediary.



ROLES IN THE RAP ECOSYSTEM:

Apprenticeship Training Representatives (ATRs):

- Illinois is a DOL Office of Apprenticeship (OA) state
- Programs are registered and monitored through the US Department of Labor
- ATRs...
 - Help program sponsors develop or revise a program for registration
 - Keep sponsors aware of any relevant policy changes
 - Assist sponsors with Affirmative Action planning



ROLES IN THE RAP ECOSYSTEM:

Regional Specialists:

- Funded by the Apprenticeship Illinois grant program through awards provided to Local Workforce Areas (LWIAs)
- Specialists provide an end-to-end concierge service to employers looking to develop or join a registered apprenticeship program.
- The primary function of the apprenticeship specialist is to work with ATRs to register programs on behalf of interested employers



ROLES IN THE RAP ECOSYSTEM:

Regional Specialists will...

- Conduct in-person and virtual apprenticeship outreach through events and employer consultations
- Receive and pursue referrals received to the Apprenticeship Illinois website
- Work with employers to fully develop and register their apprenticeship programs from start to finish
- Connect employers to intermediary partners and other applicable services



ROLES IN THE RAP ECOSYSTEM:

Integrated Business Services Team:

- Comprised of WIOA Title partners, local economic development organizations, CBOs, K-12 educators, post-secondary education institutions, municipalities, state agency partners, LWIB staff
- Pivotal in providing referral of services for employers and apprentices looking to get involved in registered apprenticeship
- Everyone has a role to play: Frontline staff can recruit and refer apprentices; Business Services Staff can recruit and refer businesses!



REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP: OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT



GOALS OF OUTREACH

Abstract —————> Tangible

Bureaucratic —————> Concise

Consideration Mindset —————> Design Mindset

Isolation —————> Interconnectivity

Interest —————> Investment

DEBUNKING APPRENTICESHIP MYTHS

- *Apprenticeships are only in traditional sectors and union shops.*
 - **WRONG! Apprenticeships can be found across all industries and occupations, and most programs are non-union.**
- *Apprenticeships mean red tape and bureaucracy.*
 - **WRONG! RAPS are business-driven, and Apprenticeship Specialists ensure a streamlined registration for employers!**
- *Apprenticeships are internships and are exclusive to new hires.*
 - **WRONG! There are many differences between internships and apprenticeships, and apprenticeships are open to all employees.**

REGISTERING AN APPRENTICESHIP

We can simplify the pieces of information needed to register an apprenticeship program into three easy categories:

The 3 C's of Registered Apprenticeship!

1. Competencies
2. Coursework
3. Compensation

COMPETENCIES

What skills should the apprentice have by the time they have completed their apprenticeship?

COURSEWORK

What training will the apprentice receive to support their skills growth?

COMPENSATION

How much is the apprentice going to be paid, and how are they going to earn their wage increases?

The Three C's: A Complete Package!



Competencies

- Brainstorm and Prepare Options prior to initial employer meeting
- Present as a “package” to employer during initial meeting
- Revise with employer as necessary

80% of the Paperwork for a Registered Apprenticeship can be completed and ready to present prior to meeting with an employer!



Coursework



Compensation

- Research local market wages prior to initial employer meeting
- Develop alongside employer after initial meeting

Employer Outreach Preparation

Once an employer has been referred to you, do the following prior to your initial meeting/call:

1. Ask them where they are located and what positions they are looking to develop an apprenticeship for.
2. Research their organization by reading their website and looking at reviews on Glassdoor/LinkedIn/etc.
3. Look at what job postings they are currently offering online and check to see if they are appearing on your area's Help Wanted Online report from IDES.



September 2026 Job Postings – EDR 7

Occupation	Job Postings
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	135
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	65
Registered Nurses	56
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	37
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	31
Retail Salespersons	29
Customer Service Representatives	27
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	21
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	19
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	18
Food Service Managers	17
Accountants and Auditors	17
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	17
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	17
Logisticians	14
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	14
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	14
Production Workers, All Other	14
Medical and Health Services Managers	13
Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	13

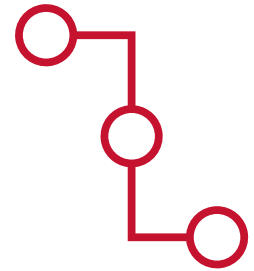
Source: <https://ides.illinois.gov/resources/labor-market-information/hwol.html>

Employer Outreach Preparation

Identifying Occupations/Competencies

With the occupations provided to you by the employer, you can identify an existing apprenticeship template or Work Process Schedule that can be customized to fit their needs.

- Over 1,300 occupations are already registered with DOL and have Work Process Schedules available at apprenticeship.gov
- If approved (with revisions) by the employer, you have successfully determined the COMPETENCIES for the apprenticeship program.



EXPLORE APPROVED OCCUPATIONS FOR REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

The "Search by Occupation" feature can be used to search for approved occupations using common titles/aliases and O*NET codes. Enter either a known, common title or an O*NET code and select a result from the suggestions for a detailed breakdown of the selected-occupation. To view a list of all available O*NET Codes, click [here](#).

BROWSE BY INDUSTRY

SEARCH BY OCCUPATION

Search by Occupation

SEARCH



BROWSE BY INDUSTRY

SEARCH BY OCCUPATION

Search by Occupation

SEARCH

[Learn more about how to use the information provided here](#)



Registered Nurse

Assess patient health problems and needs, develop and implement nursing care plans, and maintain medical records. Administer nursing care to ill, injured, convalescent, or disabled patients. May advise patients on health maintenance and disease prevention or provide case management. Licensing or registration required.

ONET Title: Registered Nurses

ONET Code: 29-1141.00

Alternative Occupations Titles:

Certified Operating Room Nurse (CNOR); Charge Nurse; Emergency Department RN (Emergency Department Registered Nurse); Oncology RN (Oncology Registered Nurse); Operating Room Registered Nurse (OR RN); Psychiatric RN (Psychiatric Registered Nurse); Relief Charge Nurse; School Nurse; Staff Nurse; Staff RN (Staff Registered Nurse); Registered Nurse Resident; Registered Nurse; Registered Nurse; Registered Nurse Resident; Registered Nurse; Registered Nurse Resident

★ Registered Occupation

The occupation title(s) listed below have been vetted by industry and approved by the U.S. Department of Labor for use in a Registered Apprenticeship Program. In some instances, there may be more than one occupational title to select from based on specific employer foci and needs. Each title includes a set of occupational **Work Process Schedules (WPS)** that provide employers with an approved set of work activities and educational coursework to help you get started creating your program.

[Open all](#) [Close all](#)

Registered Nurse Resident

Registered Nurse



Office of Apprenticeship
U.S. Department of Labor

Work Process Schedule

Registered Nurse		
Job Description: Assess patient health problems and needs, develop and implement nursing care plans, and maintain medical records. Administer nursing care to ill, injured, convalescent, or disabled patients. May advise patients on health maintenance and disease prevention or provide case management. Licensing or registration required.		
RAPIDS Code: 3056CB	O*NET Code: 29-1141.00	
Estimated Program Length: 2 Years		
Apprenticeship Type: ☒ Competency-Based ☐ Time-Based ☐ Hybrid		

Suggested On-the-Job Learning Outline

Record patient medical histories.		
Competencies	Date Completed	Initial
A. Record patients' medical information and vital signs.		
B. Monitor, record, and report symptoms or changes in patients' conditions.		

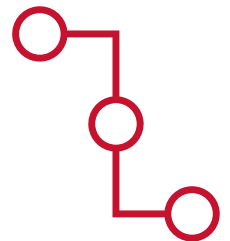


Employer Outreach

Identifying Available Training Curriculums

With the location information provided to you by the employer, you can determine which Illinois Community College Board district that the employer falls within, and partner with that community college OR if they are uninterested in active partnership, you can research and present their curricular offerings yourself.

1. Look at the certificate and degree programs offered by your community college and determine if any match the occupation you are building a program for.
2. If there are relevant programs, download/print its course descriptions, estimated total cost per student, and relevant scheduling options (online coursework, night classes, two-day per week scheduling, etc.)
3. If there are not relevant curricular offerings available at your community college, begin looking into industry/online training providers and collecting the same cost/time/coursework information on those programs as you would a college program



Employer Outreach

Presenting “The Full Package”

In one cohesive presentation:

1. The Seven DOL Components of Apprenticeship
2. Applicable WIOA Services, DCEO Tax Credit, CEJA Incentives, etc.
3. The Work Process Schedules and Curricular Offerings

Follow-Up Meetings may entail:

- Revising the Competencies List
- Finalizing Coursework Selections
- Discussing/Finalizing Progressive Wage Schedule

Employer Outreach

Miscellaneous Info Required

- Size of Company
- Address
- Complaint Contact
- Hiring Procedures
- Minimum Hiring Requirements
- Interest in opening program to other employers?
- Paid classroom time?*

Q&A



WORKFORCE POLICY LAB



- Partner with state agencies and education, workforce, and economic development stakeholders to develop and improve workforce development programs, policies, and systems
- Team - Advanced degrees in Human Capital Development, Economic Development, Higher Education Administration, Community Development, Public Administration, Communications, Social Work, Economics, and Systems Engineering
- Diverse lived experience includes:
 - Poverty
 - Race and gender bias
 - Immigration
 - First generation college attendance
 - Workforce program participation
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Military service
 - Neurodivergent