



Making ApprenticeshipUSA Work for the Public Workforce System: USING WORKFORCE FUNDS TO SUPPORT APPRENTICESHIP

ApprenticeshipUSA is an employer-driven training model that combines on-the-job training with job-related instruction. This “earn and learn” approach helps workers start new careers and helps businesses recruit and retain a highly-skilled workforce. Businesses can hire new workers or select current employees to join apprenticeship programs. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) advances the use of apprenticeship as an effective work-based learning approach that builds worker skills and establishes pathways to higher levels of employment and wages. WIOA funds can be used in a variety of ways to help job seekers and workers prepare for, enter, and complete apprenticeship programs.

While ApprenticeshipUSA is the term for the overall model, the term Registered Apprenticeship reflects the fact that a business has chosen to register its program with the U.S. Department of Labor or a State Apprenticeship Agency. Registering an apprenticeship program provides a number of benefits, such as a national credential for apprentices and potential state tax credits for businesses.

WIOA programs can support the on-the-job training component of apprenticeship programs. WIOA funds can also pay for the cost of related classroom instruction for the apprentice, including tuition, books, supplies, fees, uniforms, tools and other required items. Customized training and incumbent worker training are other ways that WIOA funds can support businesses that sponsor apprenticeship programs.

Basic skills training and pre-apprenticeship programs can be provided under WIOA to prepare participants to enter apprenticeship programs. WIOA youth services for tutoring, mentoring, and work experience can be used in combination with pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs.

This quick reference guide is a resource for local workforce professionals who are interested in using apprenticeship as an employment and training strategy in WIOA programs.

Note that in all instances, a participant’s eligibility for WIOA must be properly established and documented prior to the commitment of funds for Registered Apprenticeship programs.

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs: Use of Funds for Registered Apprenticeship Programs

WIOA SERVICE	SUPPORT FOR APPRENTICESHIP
ASSESSMENT, CAREER PLANNING, AND CASE MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment and career planning can help to identify if a WIOA participant is a good fit for an apprenticeship program.• Through case management, local workforce professionals can identify the service strategies and supports necessary to overcome any barriers to entry and completion of an apprenticeship program.
BASIC SKILLS PREPARATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-vocational services, language skills, and job readiness may be provided under WIOA to prepare participants to enter apprenticeship programs.
PRE-APPRENTICESHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WIOA funds can be used to fund pre-apprenticeship programs that provide basic skills, work experiences, and other support to help participants obtain the skills needed to be placed into an apprenticeship.
TRAINING AND EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) can be used to fund the related classroom instruction component of an apprenticeship program, as long as the apprenticeship program or the education/training provider for the apprenticeship program is on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Under WIOA, all Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors are automatically eligible to be placed on the ETPL.• WIOA participants can use ITA funds to pay for the cost of tuition, as well as fees, books, equipment, and other training-related costs (consistent with the policies for ITAs established by the local workforce board).• ITA funds can be used in combination with on-the-job training funds to support WIOA participants in apprenticeship.
ON-THE-JOB TRAINING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Under WIOA, on-the-job training (OJT) contracts may be established with employers to support the OJT component of Registered Apprenticeship programs.• While employer OJT reimbursement rates were 50% under the Workforce Investment Act, Governors and local boards may choose to provide reimbursement to employers of costs up to 75% of apprentice wage rates under WIOA.• OJT may be used with both job seekers and current (incumbent) workers already employed by the business.

CUSTOMIZED TRAINING

- WIOA funds can be used for customized training with the employer paying for a significant portion of the cost of the training, as determined by the local workforce board.
- Customized training can be used to support apprenticeship programs by meeting the special requirements of an employer or a group of employers.
- Customized training may be used for both job seekers and current (incumbent) employees.

INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING

- Under WIOA, local areas may use up to 20% of their adult and dislocated worker funds, and states may use their statewide activities and rapid response funds, for incumbent worker training. Employers pay a portion of the cost.
- Apprenticeships are a good way to up-skill entry-level employees, retain them, and provide workers with an upward career path. Therefore, incumbent worker training is an effective strategy to support apprenticeship programs.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

- To the extent that WIOA funds are available for supportive services, these services, such as transportation or child care, may be used to help WIOA participants who are preparing for apprenticeship programs. They may also help participants once they are enrolled in apprenticeship programs, to ensure retention and full participation in the related classroom instruction.
- Supportive services would most commonly be provided during pre-apprenticeship or at the beginning of an apprenticeship program. Once the apprentice is on the job, he or she will earn a wage and receive incremental wage increases throughout the apprenticeship, reducing the need for supportive services.

FOLLOW-UP SERVICES

- As with all WIOA services, local workforce professionals may provide follow-up services to participants in apprenticeship programs to help ensure successful completion.

WIOA Youth Program: Use of Funds for Registered Apprenticeship Programs

WIOA SERVICE	SUPPORT FOR APPRENTICESHIP
ASSESSMENT AND CASE MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through objective assessment and case management, local workforce professionals can determine if a pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship program is an appropriate service strategy for a youth participant.
PRE-APPRENTICESHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-apprenticeship is an identified program element for WIOA youth programs. Pre-apprenticeship programs can include basic skills, integrated instructional models, and other activities designed to prepare youth participants to enter and succeed in apprenticeship programs.
TRAINING AND EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of occupational skills training, WIOA funds can be used to pay for the costs of the related classroom instruction component of apprenticeship programs through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for out-of-school youth aged 18-24.
TUTORING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tutoring services can be used in combination with apprenticeship to help youth participants succeed, particularly during pre-apprenticeship or related classroom instruction.
MENTORING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers sponsoring Registered Apprenticeship programs can mentor WIOA-eligible youth hired as apprentices.
WORK EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under WIOA, local areas must spend a minimum of 20% of their youth program funds on work experience. On-the-job training can be supported with WIOA youth program funds and can be utilized to support youth participants in apprenticeship programs.
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To the extent that WIOA funds are available for supportive services, these services, such as transportation, may be used to help WIOA youth participants succeed in apprenticeship training. Supportive services would most commonly be provided during pre-apprenticeship or at the beginning of an apprenticeship program. Once the apprentice is on the job, he or she will earn a wage and receive incremental wage increases throughout the apprenticeship, reducing the need for supportive services.
FOLLOW-UP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 12-month follow-up period in the WIOA youth program can help to ensure participants continue to advance in, and graduate from, their apprenticeship programs.

Additional Federal Resources to Support Apprenticeship

In addition to WIOA, several other federal programs can be leveraged to support Registered Apprenticeship programs. For example:

- Apprentices may be eligible for Federal Financial Aid under certain circumstances. If the apprenticeship is connected to a post-secondary institution, apprentices may be eligible for Pell Grants - \$3,000 on average per apprentice to support tuition, books and lab fees. Also, the post-secondary institution may choose to provide federal work-study grants, which average \$2,000 per apprentice.
- By becoming approved for the GI Bill, Registered Apprenticeship programs can assist current and future Veteran apprentices in accessing the benefits they have earned. Veterans who qualify for the GI Bill can receive a tax-free monthly stipend (paid by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs), in addition to the wages they receive in an apprenticeship. Veterans also receive tuition and fee payments for classroom instruction. Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors can be certified under the GI Bill usually within 30 days.

Using multiple funding sources can help to offset the costs of apprenticeship for both employers and WIOA participants. For additional information on federal resources that can support apprenticeship programs, please visit the “Federal Resources Playbook for Registered Apprenticeship” available at <http://www.doleta.gov/oa/federalresources/playbook.pdf>.

For more information on Registered Apprenticeship programs and how the workforce system can use apprenticeship as an effective workforce strategy, visit the ApprenticeshipUSA toolkit at www.dol.gov/apprenticeship/toolkit/index.htm.