



Registered Apprenticeship Activity: 2026 Overview

9,463

apprentice starts in 2026
through September 30

25,355

active apprentices

515

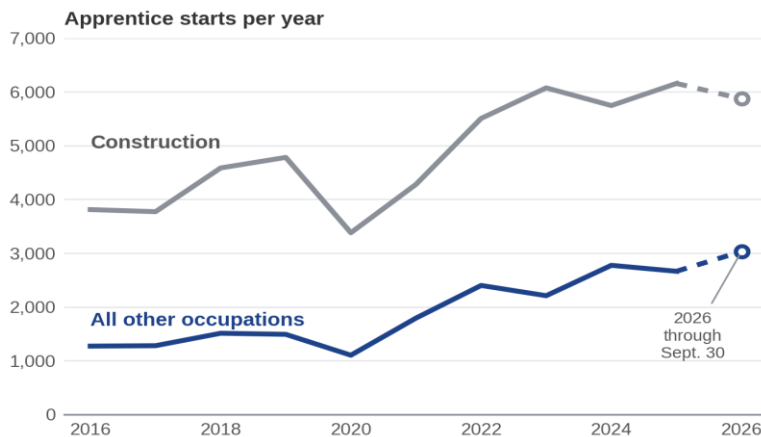
sponsors registering
apprentices in 2026

150

occupations with 2026 starts

GROWTH

Apprenticeship outside construction has doubled since 2016



New apprentices in non-construction occupations rose from 1,271 in 2016 to 2,662 in 2025, up 109%. Construction grew 62% over the same period.

Through September 2026, non-construction starts (3,128) already exceed the 2025 total.

Construction still accounts for about two-thirds of all starts.

Maintenance and repair is the largest group outside construction, with 2,882 starts from 2023 to 2025, led by union-run trades such as power line maintainer, millwright, and telecommunications technician.

EMERGING FIELDS

Apprenticeship growth is concentrated in a few occupations

Apprentice starts, 2023 to 2025

Certified nurse assistant
Healthcare support



Starts Sponsors

397 18

Teacher aide
Education



291 11

Early childhood educator
Education



144 14

Emergency medical technician
Healthcare practitioners



126 1

Application developer
IT



108 18

Community health worker
Community and social service



100 4

Cybersecurity support technician
IT



78 11

Medical assistant
Healthcare support



72 12

Five fields outside the trades produced 1,942 starts from 2023 to 2025: healthcare support, healthcare practitioners, education, IT, and community and social service.

60%

of emerging-field starts come from six occupations

Although certified nurse assistants account for 81% of healthcare support starts, they also account for some of the highest cancellations rates as seen on the next page. Teacher aide and early childhood educator are 87% of education starts.

Some have very few sponsors. One sponsor registered all 126 EMT apprentices.

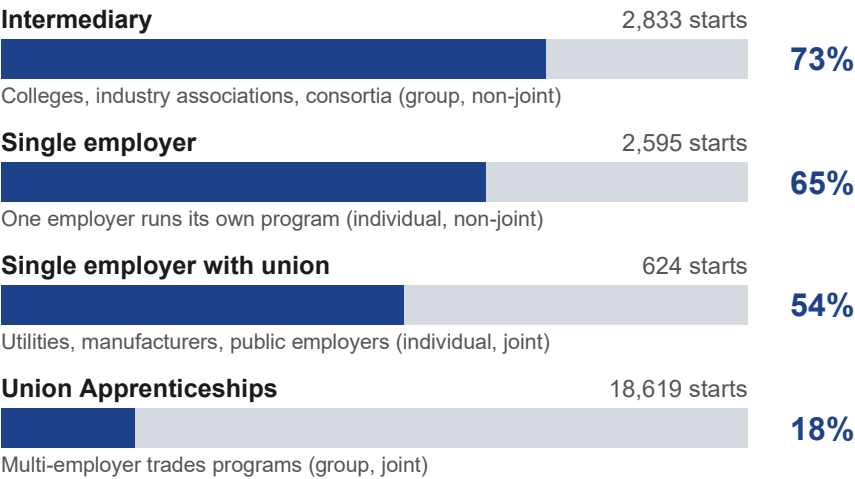
Illinois Demographics for Registered Apprentices

As of September 30, 2026, Illinois has 25,355 active registered apprentices. Most are young, with 83% under age 35 and nearly half (49.8%) between 18 and 24. Among active apprentices who reported race and ethnicity, 61.2% are White, 26.7% are Hispanic, 9.9% are Black, and all other groups together make up 2%. Men make up 79.6% of active apprentices and women make up 7.9%, with 12.5% not reporting gender. New apprentices starting in 2026 are slightly older and more diverse. About 79% are under 35. Among those reporting, 55.7% are White, 29.2% are Hispanic, 13.1% are Black, and all other groups together again make up 2%. Women make up 9.2% of new apprentices. All race groups other than Hispanic are non-Hispanic, and 17% of active and 20% of new apprentices did not report race or ethnicity.

WHO SPONSORS APPRENTICESHIPS

Employers and intermediaries are bringing apprenticeship into new occupations

Share of 2024 to 2026 starts outside construction, by sponsor type



Union apprenticeships train three of every four apprentices, nearly all in the building trades. However, healthcare, education, and IT apprenticeships come mostly through intermediaries and single employers.

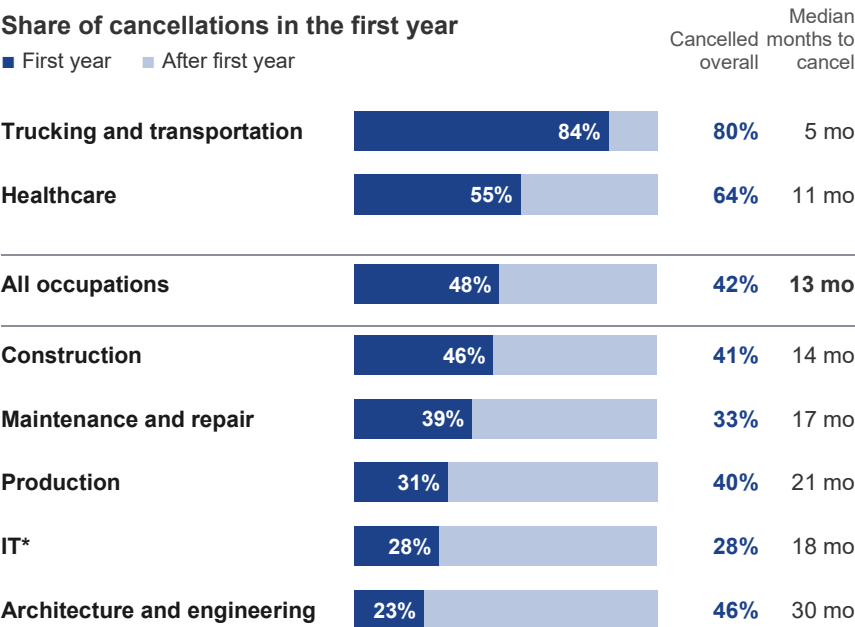
80+
new sponsors per year

In 2025, 56 single employers and 26 intermediaries registered their first apprentices. By September 30, 2026, new sponsors had already matched that pace.

Source: U.S. DOL RAPIDS registered apprenticeship records, starts January 2024 to September 30, 2026. Excludes correctional programs and records without a sponsor type. New sponsors counted by first appearance in the data.

WHEN ILLINOIS APPRENTICES CANCEL

The timing of cancellations depends on the occupation



A cancellation or exit happens when an apprentice leaves a program before completing, either because they chose to leave or because the employer ended the apprenticeship. About half of all cancellations happen in the first year. Cancellation timing varies widely by field.

Early exits

In trucking and healthcare, most cancellations come in the first year. Suitability, onboarding, and early mentoring could lower these rates.

Mid-program exits

In maintenance, production, IT, and engineering, most cancellations come after year one. Even with low first-year cancellations, engineering programs lose 46% of apprentices, the highest rate outside trucking and healthcare. Support should last through years two and three.

Source: U.S. DOL RAPIDS registered apprenticeship records for 33,042 apprentices who started 2016 to 2021; timing based on the 13,830 who cancelled. Excludes correctional programs. Healthcare combines support and practitioner occupations (176 cancellations). *Small sample (75 cancellations).