

## Registered Apprenticeships Eligibility and Guidance

Registered Apprenticeship (RA) is a federally authorized, employer-driven training model that combines paid on-the-job training with related instruction. It serves as an “earn and learn” strategy, offering job seekers immediate employment, sustainable wages, and a clear career path. Employers benefit from a skilled, productive workforce trained to industry standards. Program completers earn nationally recognized, portable credentials, with training often applicable to further post-secondary education. The U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Apprenticeship, in partnership with State Apprenticeship Agencies, oversees program registration, quality assurance, and compliance with federal and state standards. Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) may be registered with the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Apprenticeship or by other designated state apprenticeship agencies (SAA).

All RAPs consist of the following five core components – direct employer involvement, on-the-job training (OJT), related instruction, rewards for skill gains, and a national occupational credential:

- **Employer Involvement** - Employers are the foundation of every RA program, and the skills needed for workforce success form the core of the model. Employers must play an active role in building Registered Apprenticeship programs and are involved in every step of their design and execution.
- **On-the-Job Training** - Every RAP includes structured OJT. Companies hire apprentices and provide hands-on training from an experienced mentor. This training is developed by mapping the skills and knowledge the apprentice must learn over the course of the program to be fully proficient at the job.
- **Related Instruction** - Apprentices receive related instruction or classroom-style training that complements the OJT. This instruction helps refine the technical and academic skills that apply to the job. Related instruction may be provided by a community college, technical school or college, an apprenticeship training school, or by the business itself. This instruction can be provided at the school, online, or at the work site.
- **Rewards for Skill Gains** - Apprentices receive increases in pay as their skills and knowledge increase. Progressive wage gains reward and motivate apprentices as they advance through training and become more productive and skilled at their job.
- **National Occupational Credential** - Every graduate of a RAP receives a nationally recognized credential, referred to as a Certificate of Completion, which is issued by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) or a federally recognized SAA. This portable credential signifies that the apprentice is fully qualified to successfully perform an occupation. Many RAPs – particularly in high-growth industries such as health care, advanced manufacturing, and transportation – also offer interim credentials as apprentices master skills as part of a career pathway.

### **Training Duration:**

The length of training and the skills and competencies required for mastery of an occupation are set by industry. Traditional RAPs are time-based and require a specific number of hours of OJT and related instruction. In North Carolina, a RA requires at least 144 hours of classroom-based education for every 2,000 hours of on-the-job learning (2,000 hours = about one year).

### **RA Outcomes and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Funding Performance:**

RA is fully aligned with the employer-focused, work-based training that Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Funding (WIOA) envisions. Features of RA, including its flexibility, opportunities for immediate earnings, and emphasis on partnerships, make it an effective strategy to meet workforce system goals. Additionally, the outcomes attained by apprentices and graduates of RAPs can lead to strong WIOA performance results. Adopting RA as a workforce strategy can help advance the goals of WIOA – a transformed public workforce system that improves employment opportunities for job seekers and workers through an integrated, job-driven system that links diverse talent to the nation’s employers.

### **RA Expenditure Requirement for WIOA Funding:**

The Registered Apprenticeship Expenditure Requirement for WIOA Funding Commission Policy Statement directs Local Area Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) to spend 6% of their non-administrative WIOA Title I Adult and Youth funds annually on pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship-related activities, beginning with Program Year 2025 funding.

The 6% expenditure may be allocated from Adult funds, Youth funds, or proportionally from both, based on the aggregate total of funds. Each WDB retains discretion to determine how this requirement will be fulfilled within its Local Area.

The 6% Youth apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship expenditures will be captured and included in the Youth 20% work-based learning expenditures. WDBs must report the apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship and work-based learning expenditures separately.

Expenditures are to be reported monthly in the Workforce Information System Enterprise (WISE) Monthly Financial Report.

### **Supporting RA with WIOA Funding:**

With the significant expansion of RAPs in high-demand fields, WIOA Title I funds, in addition to other sources of public and private funds, can be used to support RAPs.

WIOA funding can be used to support RA in the following ways:

- **Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)**

RA sponsors are able to use ITA funds to support the educational portion (i.e., related instruction component) of the registered apprenticeship for eligible apprentices. ITAs can

also finance pre-apprenticeship training in preparation for formal RA if they are on the State Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). RAPs should be encouraged to register on the ETPL in order to receive funding support. Local areas should have up-to-date lists of RAP sponsors from their OA and SAA offices in order to promote and encourage participation.

- **Youth Occupational Skills Training**

Youth occupational skills training is a required program element under WIOA that includes RA as a viable training option for youth 16-24 that provides both a living wage and a pathway to self-sufficiency. This program element also emphasizes training that aligns with in-demand industry sectors and occupations, which is a key component of RAPs.

- **Youth Incentives**

Incentives may be used towards the completion of a registered apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship program. All youth incentives must adhere to the guidelines outlined in § 681.640 for youth.

- **Supportive Services**

WIOA funds can support a variety of supportive services for apprentices, including books, supplies, childcare, transportation, tools and uniforms.

- **On-the-Job Training**

WIOA expands the potential for utilizing OJT to support RA. In certain circumstances, up to 75% of the apprentices' wages may be reimbursed by public workforce system contributions if employers meet criteria.

- **Incumbent Worker Training**

Local Area WDBs may use up to 20% of their adult and dislocated worker funds to pay the Federal share of the cost of incumbent worker training, enabling current workers to remain on the job while in training, which is strongly emphasized in WIOA.

## **Calculation of the 6% Requirement**

- To comply with the 6% expenditure requirement for apprenticeship activities, local boards must expend 6% of their combined Adult and Youth program funds. This requirement is calculated on the aggregate total of non-administrative Adult and Youth funds, based on the final combined allocation after any transfers. Local boards have flexibility in how they distribute expenditures between Adult and Youth funds; however, any transfers of Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth funds will affect the total amount subject to the 6% requirement.

- Transfers *to* the WDB (in Adult or Youth funding) will **increase** the required 6% expenditure amount.
- Transfers *from* the WDB (in Adult or Youth funding) will **decrease** the required 6% expenditure amount.
- Transfers *within* the WDB (Dislocated Worker to Adult) will **increase** the Adult 6% expenditure amount.
- Transfers *within* the WDB (Adult to Dislocated Worker) will **decrease** the Adult 6% expenditure amount.