



**APPRENTICESHIP
GUIDE BOOK**





SUCCESS+

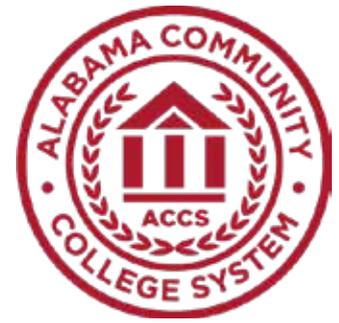


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A MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR KAY IVEY



Alabama enjoys the lowest levels of unemployment and the greatest levels of labor force participation in the history of our Great State. However, to meet the current and future demands of business and industry, more must be done to develop a workforce development system that offers a seamless educational journey for individuals to enter in-demand career pathways at every stage of life. Our youth need the kind of preparation best received through real-world experiences, and our adults need avenues to grow their skill sets while they are on the pathway to earning a family-sustaining wage. Alabama's employers are joining forces with education providers in an unprecedented effort to expand on-the-job training models. Apprenticeships offer an excellent opportunity for our citizens to maintain gainful employment while receiving the technical skills and work-based learning experiences needed to enter an in-demand occupation. Alabama is taking the lead in workforce development efforts. Our efforts are catching the attention of companies from around the globe and are providing more opportunities for Alabamians. By growing apprenticeship opportunities across industry sectors, the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship will help Alabama continue to lead the way.

God Bless Alabama,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kay Ivey".

Kay Ivey, Governor of Alabama

A MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR JOSH LANEY

It is my great honor to serve as the first director of the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship. My team and I have worked to create a resource for Alabamians in this booklet to lay out the foundations of apprenticeships and address the most common questions. As with any new endeavor, we know there will still be questions, and we stand ready to assist in any way possible as we forge ahead to expand apprenticeship programs to meet the training needs of our employers and citizens. With regional project management, the Office of Apprenticeship will be fully integrated in the workforce development system no matter where you are in the state. You are encouraged to reach out directly to the AOA for any advice or assistance needed for your success. Alabama is leading the nation by many measures of economic and workforce development, and with this initiative we are taking the lead on apprenticeships.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joshua J. Laney".

Joshua J. Laney

WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP?

Apprenticeships are esteemed opportunities.

Apprenticeships afford participants a chance to earn money while they learn in a non-traditional classroom setting. The earn-and-learn model provides apprentices an opportunity to see a direct relation between their increasing skills and increasing wages. Apprenticeship programs are one of the most effective ways to reach our labor force participation and attainment goals and to ensure that Alabamians are on career pathways leading to economic mobility and self sufficiency.

An apprenticeship is a form of work-based learning that provides formal, on-the-job training and classroom instruction.



Apprenticeships typically have five components:

ONE

Employer Involvement

TWO

On-the-Job Training

THREE

Related Technical Training

FOUR

Paid Work Experience

FIVE

Attainment of One or More Portable, Nationally Recognized Industry Credentials

Types of Apprenticeships

The different apprenticeships available to fit the wide range of employment training needs.

1. **Registered apprenticeships** are the most common and traditional form of apprenticeship. They can range from 1 year to 4 years depending on the skill needs and training requirements expected. They are “registered” with the AOA and the USDOL. As such, registered apprentices earn the most widely recognized and nationally portable certification for program completion. Even within the world of registered apprenticeships, there are different approaches and flexibility.

a) **Time-based apprenticeships** are the most common type of registered apprenticeship and define a period of time through which the employee will receive instruction and participate in on-the-job training. Time-based apprenticeships are sometimes referred to by the number of hours required to complete the program. Generally speaking, a “2,000 hour” program takes a year to complete, 4,000 hours takes two years, and so on. Time-based apprenticeships generally also include 144 hours of related classroom instruction each year.

b) **Competency-based apprenticeships** are a newer approach based more on skill attainment than time in training. This can offer employers and apprentices a way to work more quickly through completion of an apprenticeship. Apprentices are still required to complete a set number of hours of on-the-job training, but this can be less than with time-based approaches, because the apprentice can also demonstrate their skill attainment through completion of proctored examinations of skills and other skill attainment measures.

c) The **hybrid approach to apprenticeships** blends the time-and competency-based models. The hybrid model is the newest form of apprenticeship and continues to add flexibility to the training and assessment practices. This model is growing in popularity as employers are attracted to the flexibility and apprentices are attracted to the opportunity for faster progression in wages and employment.

2. **Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Programs (IRAPs)** are a brand-new form of apprenticeship. In fact, it is reasonable to say they are so new that many of the rules around them have not been written. Also, because IRAPs are so new, there’s no avoiding a bit of alphabet soup in this explanation, but don’t let it be off-putting. What is known about IRAPs is they are intended to engage groups of employers, industry coalitions, and other types of subject matter experts to serve as Standards Recognition Entities (SREs). Alabama plans to lead the nation in the development and implementation of these types of programs. Once established, industry-recognized apprenticeship programs created by Alabama approved SREs will be known as AIRAPs (Alabama Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Programs). AIRAPs created by AOA and approved SREs will enjoy the same tax benefits and many of the other financial supports available to other types of apprenticeships.

3. **Youth apprenticeships** are one of the hottest topics in all of workforce development and for good reason. Employers are increasingly recognizing that the old way of recruiting workers solely from the ranks of adults is not going to suffice in today’s competitive environment. There is a lot of discussion (and frequent confusion) about what youth apprenticeships are, but the answer is quite simple. A youth apprenticeship is a registered apprenticeship with a youth participating in it. According to Alabama law, a youth apprentice is anyone under the age of 18. The employer still defines the type of apprenticeship they want to build. The employer still chooses what skills are taught and what kinds of on-the-job training will be included. The primary difference is that the standards of the apprenticeship are written in a way that allows for flexible entry requirements. This means the apprenticeship won’t include requirements such as a high school diploma or a set number of years of experience before entering the program. This allows employers to begin recruiting students still in high school to “earn and learn arrangements”, which are beneficial to everyone.

4. **Pre-Apprenticeships** are not really apprenticeships but are commonly described as such. A pre-apprenticeship is any training program pointed at the completion of training standards which will later be useful in the completion of a registered apprenticeship. Employers share the standards of their apprenticeship with education providers and offer guidance on how those educators might best prepare students if they eventually choose to apply to the apprenticeship program. While most pre-apprentice programs do not require on-the-job training, they often include taking required coursework or earning industry-recognized credentials. Coupled with a competency-based or hybrid apprenticeship model, this can allow apprenticeship participants to join an apprenticeship program above the normal entry level. This is advantageous to employers as well because they get a more skilled and productive worker into their businesses faster.



5 Key Roles in Every Apprenticeship



Registration Agency

The United States Department of Labor (USDOL) has served as Alabama's registration agency, but with the creation of the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship (AOA), that is changing. The AOA will be taking over as the state's registration agency. The responsibilities of the registration agency include the initial review and approval of apprenticeship programs, technical support to the programs, and ongoing monitoring of program quality and compliance.

Apprenticeship Sponsor

The sponsor of an apprenticeship works with the AOA and employers to define the characteristics of the apprenticeship. These characteristics include: the specific occupations to be trained, the standards for entry into the program, and the requirements for program completion.

Employer

Employers are the heart of the apprenticeship. The needs of the employer drive the decision-making processes around program characteristics. An employer may serve as the sponsor of their own apprenticeship or they may join with other businesses from their industry in need of similarly trained workers to create a sector partnership. Each employer gets to define their own wage scales, recruiting, and retention policies, and the specific training model.

Related Technical Instruction (RTI) Provider

RTI providers deliver the classroom instruction component of the apprenticeship. In Alabama, the primary RTI provider is the Alabama Community College System. However, employers have the discretion to provide the RTI themselves or through an alternate provider.

Apprentices

The apprentices are the prize in the entire system. Apprentices are valued and appreciated by their employers who have decided to make a long-term investment in human capital. People from many backgrounds become apprentices, but the thing they have in common is a desire to improve their skills and be rewarded for their work.



What is the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship?

The Alabama Office of Apprenticeship (AOA) is a tool in the workforce development toolbox of our state. Created by a combination of legislation and executive order, the AOA officially came into existence on September 1, 2019.

The mission of the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship (AOA) is to expand the use of registered apprenticeships (RAs) and Alabama industry recognized apprenticeship programs (AIRAPs) in order to provide high-quality career training which will enable workers and employers to prosper in pursuit of the continued economic development of our state.

The AOA registers apprenticeship programs, offers technical assistance for the creation of programs, provides support for accessing state and federal assistance with programs, and conducts ongoing monitoring of program quality and compliance with state and federal law.

The AOA seeks to provide efficient and responsive customer service experiences to all parties involved in apprenticeships to ensure that Alabama's apprenticeship programs are moving at the speed of business.

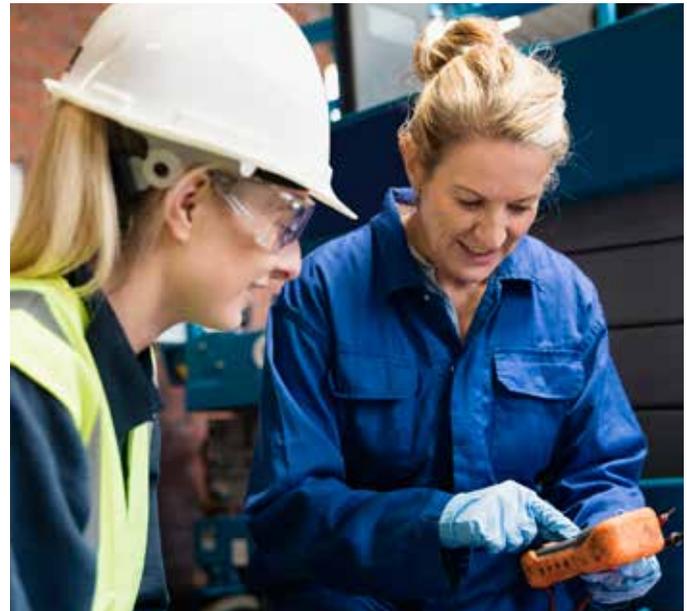
In what kinds of careers are apprenticeships available?

One of the largest misconceptions about apprenticeships is that they are only available in a limited number of career fields. An apprenticeable occupation must be a skilled occupation capable of being mastered through a combination of classroom instruction and on-the-job training. This leaves significant room for the inclusion of apprenticeships across all 16 career clusters.

Alabama has many long-established and successful apprenticeships in building trades as well as a growing number of manufacturing occupations.

Alabama also has new apprenticeships in information technology, healthcare, hospitality and tourism, and an ever-expanding variety of other occupational clusters.

The Alabama Office of Apprenticeship works closely with the Alabama Workforce Council and the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways to identify apprenticeable, in-demand occupations where apprenticeships can help meet the workforce goals of the state.





Why does Alabama need apprenticeships?

Alabama's **rapid growth and economic development** has brought new industry and new occupations to our state. Along with this increase in economic productivity, Alabama must face the challenge to provide the new and expanding employers with the workforce they need to keep our economic engine running at top speed. Apprenticeships are providing employers another training and recruitment pipeline to connect to Alabama's valuable pool of high-quality workers.

Record low unemployment rates have continued to tighten the pool of available workers. It is commonly said that anyone in Alabama who wants to work can get a job right now. While this might be generally true, many Alabamians want to get not only a job, but a career with family-sustaining wages and longevity. Apprenticeships serve as a vehicle for these hard-working Alabamians to grow their skill set and to take advantage of the high demand for their talents.

Low labor market participation has been cited as a reason for difficulty in filling available positions. Some people have been out of the workforce or have become discouraged because their skill set doesn't qualify them for many new and growing opportunities. Many of those same people do not have the financial resources to go back to school full time without working. The earn-and-learn approach offered by apprenticeships allows workers a new on-ramp to the highway to success.

Alabama isn't immune to the impacts of the **aging workforce** facing the nation. The average age of a skilled craftsman has continued to increase, with some employers facing a potential "silver tsunami" of retirement eligible workers. Those workers will leave their positions and take with them decades of institutional knowledge and on-the-job skills. Apprenticeships offer employers the chance to couple their most skilled veterans with the new generation before it's too late to salvage all that accrued wisdom.

Considering all of these factors, Governor Kay Ivey has led the development of a plan to meet the challenge. The **Success+ Post-Secondary Attainment Goal** is Alabama's program for improving the statewide level of education beyond high school. Whether it's a degree earned in a four-year college or university, a two-year degree earned at a community college, a professional certification, or a credential, or a non-degree credential or certification this additional preparation creates improved opportunities for Alabamians to better their lives by participating in the workforce and ensures that Alabama businesses can continue to grow with the skilled workforce they need. Apprenticeships are going to be key to reaching Alabama's postsecondary attainment goal of adding 500,000 credentialed workers to our workforce by 2025.



Why would an employer want to utilize apprenticeships?

Apprenticeships offer:

- A proven training model for high school occupations.
- The ability to attract a new and more diverse talent pool during record low unemployment.
- Excellent recruiting tool to help build talent pipeline for a stable and reliable pipeline of qualified workers.
- US Department of Labor data shows that 91% of participants who complete apprenticeship programs stay with the employer who trained them.
- Customized training that meets industry standards, tailored to the specific needs of businesses, resulting in highly-skilled employees.
- Increased knowledge transfer through on-the-job learning from an experienced mentor, combined with education courses to support work-based learning.
- A safer workplace that may reduce worker compensation costs, due to the program's emphasis on safety training.
- A systematic approach to training that ensures employees are trained and certified to produce at the highest skill levels required for the occupation.
- State tax credits and access to federal training dollars can help companies offset the costs of onboarding and training skilled workers.

Why would an employee want to participate in an apprenticeship?

From their first day of work, apprentices receive a **paycheck that is guaranteed to increase** as their training progresses. Apprentices also complete a combination of job-related instruction and hands-on training at the job site, leading to a nationally recognized and portable credential. Once the apprenticeship is complete, workers are on their way to a successful long-term career with a competitive salary and little or no educational debt.

With the growing types of apprenticeships available, apprentices receive practical on-the-job training in a **wide variety of occupations and industries**. Alabama apprenticeship models exist in health care, construction, information technology, transportation, hospitality and tourism, advanced manufacturing, industrial systems maintenance, and in new models that are being created every day.

Apprentices receive a quality education through hands-on training resulting in improved skills and competencies as well as the **potential to earn college credit** toward an associates or bachelor's degree.

When an apprentice graduates from a career training program, he or she earns a **certified portable credential** accepted by industries and employers across the U.S.



Why would parents want their children to be apprentices?

Apprenticeships offer parents the security of knowing their child can get post-secondary training while **avoiding the crushing load of student debt** often incurred with a college degree. Parents can take comfort in the **viability of the career paths** their students pursue. Rather than getting a degree and then beginning to search for an employer who wants to hire, apprentices are **connected directly with the employers** who value them and want them from the very beginning. The national credential earned by an apprentice provides **portable job credentials**, so even if markets shift, apprentices are more able to find **sustained employment**. For decades, the American educational system has pushed a “college for all” mentality or a system of tracking students into a vocational programs. Apprenticeships demonstrate how both models are off-the-mark. Apprenticeships combine academic and technical competencies to prepare students for a career pathway that requires classroom and on-the-job experience.

Why should educators encourage and facilitate apprenticeships?

Most educators will eventually face a student asking, “Why am I ever going to need to know this?” **Connecting classroom learning with on-the-job training** will help provide the answer to this dreaded question.

Educators want to provide the best training possible for their students. By connecting with employers to develop apprenticeships or pre-apprenticeships, educators are able to **keep their curriculum relevant and modern.**

The connections forged between employers and education providers through apprenticeships can help educators build career pathways in fields **aligned with their students’ interests and aptitudes.**



Youth apprenticeships can **engage learners earlier** and help students connect to the employers who need them.

Traditional work-based learning is an excellent way for students to gain work experience. Moving the work-based learning model forward to an apprenticeship means the **work experience is tied directly to the student’s training.**

MYTH

Apprenticeships take a long time to complete.

Apprenticeships are no different than a part-time job.

Apprentices must be 18 years old to begin work.

Employers must be careful not to train employees to a level where they can leave.

Apprenticeships are only for occupations such as manufacturing and construction.

Creating an apprenticeship in my company means my employees will become affiliated with a union.

Having a registered apprenticeship involves the US Department of Labor in the daily operation of my business.

Participating in an apprenticeship means not going to college.

Apprenticeship programs are for large employers who need a lot of workers.

COMMON MYTHS AROUND APPRENTICESHIP

FACT

Apprenticeships can take from one year to as many as five years. This varies depending on the skill set being trained, the prior knowledge and work experience of the apprentice, and the type of training model being used.

Apprentices are paid from their first day of work within the field of their training, and they are guaranteed a progressive wage as they learn more skills.

There is no law requiring an apprentice to be 18. In fact, employers can earn additional tax credits of \$500 per apprentice for apprentices under 18 years old. Additionally, the AOA is working to increase the number of apprenticeable occupations available to individuals under age 18.

Apprenticeship completers form strong connections to the employers who have taken care of them and provided them training. In fact 91% of completers stay with the employers who trained them.

Apprenticeships can be utilized anywhere there is a need for technical skill training and on-the-job learning.

While unions have successfully utilized apprenticeship programs for decades, there is no direct connection between apprenticeships and unions. Furthermore, creating an apprenticeship doesn't invite union participation.

The Alabama Office of Apprenticeship will be the provider of technical assistance and support for all aspects of apprenticeship programs in Alabama.

Most apprenticeships in Alabama include college credit bearing coursework, which is fully transferable towards associates and bachelor's degrees. Many apprenticeships directly culminate in an associate's degree.

An apprenticeship program can be useful for small businesses who need only a few workers. These workers are no less critical whether a company needs 2 or 20 skilled people. Consortia of small businesses can also leverage apprenticeships through group sponsorships.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Sponsors and employers can begin the conversation about establishing apprenticeships by contacting the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship at www.alapprentice.org.

Potential apprentices can find out about apprenticeship opportunities available to them as well as financial assistance for training by contacting one of Alabama's Career Centers. Find the contact information for the nearest center at joblink.alabama.gov/ada/r/contact

Interested postsecondary students can contact the Dean of Workforce Development at the Community College in their area to explore programs available that offer apprenticeship opportunities or can visit www.accs.edu

Educators can begin to establish partnerships with the employers by serving on their advisory councils, by attending Regional Workforce Council meetings: www.madeinalabama.com/workforce-and-training/regional-workforce-councils/, or by contacting the Alabama State Department of Education's director of workforce development: www.alsde.edu/sec/wfd.

Parents can find out about pre-apprenticeship and youth apprenticeship opportunities available to their students by contacting their school's guidance counselor, career coach, or career technical education director.

If you just aren't sure where to start, AlabamaWorks.com is an excellent launching point for learning about all of the resources available.

STEPS TO CREATING A REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP





WWW.ALAPPRENTICE.ORG

It is the policy of the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship (AOA) that no person shall ever be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, employment, or service administered by the AOA, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age (40 or older), genetic information, and disability. The AOA likewise prohibits such discrimination in any registered and approved apprenticeship program.