

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP FOR REENTRY

For the past several years, there has been a renewed interest in apprenticeships. The [federal](#) government and [states](#) have invested in efforts to increase the number of apprenticeships and also increasing the [diversity](#) in apprenticeships. The outcomes for apprenticeships makes a compelling case for expansion:

Impressive individual outcomes

\$300,000+ lifetime earning advantage

Impressive business outcomes

For every dollar spent on apprenticeship, employers get an average of \$1.47 back in increased productivity

Impressive public benefits

\$28 in benefits for every \$1 invested by the government

U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship
<https://www.dol.gov/apprenticeship/>

This momentum for diversity in apprenticeships includes programs that have opened up (pre) apprenticeships to men and women in corrections facilities and reentry programs, and programs that have been customized for specific populations, like young adults, women, or individuals with disabilities. The examples below are illustrative of this work. Recommendations for implementing these programs are provided after the brief profiles.

APPRENTICESHIP IN CORRECTIONS AND REENTRY

Trade-Related Apprenticeship Coaching

[Washington State Department of Corrections](#), through its Correctional Industries, sponsors the [Trades Related Apprenticeship Coaching \(TRAC\)](#) at the women's corrections facility. Inmates earn a certificate of proficiency in a range of Correctional Industries offered at the facility. The emphasis is on preparing women for traditionally male industries. Regardless of the industry, though, the women leave prison with a credential and competencies for union apprenticeships with the International United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners; the International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental, and Reinforcing Iron Workers; and/or the Laborers International Union of North America.

Vice Media Apprenticeships

[VICE Media](#), the leading youth media organization, sponsors a six-month apprenticeship program with the [Center for Employment Opportunities](#), a nationally recognized nonprofit organization providing transitional employment for formerly incarcerated individuals. In this apprenticeship program, young adults (18 to 25) are [trained](#) in a range of media-related skills through hands-on work in Vice Media divisions, including digital channels, newsrooms, and television and film operations.

For those interested in developing a Registered Apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship model, here are a few recommendations:

1. Learn more about the requirements for a federal or state Registered Apprenticeship.

Registered Apprenticeships, established in 1937, are work-based learning programs that provide an opportunity for employment and income while individuals are being trained and earning postsecondary credentials. The distinguishing factors include:

- Programs must meet standards for registration established by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), or a federally recognized State Apprenticeship Agency
- Programs provide on-the-job learning and job-related technical instruction resulting in an industry-recognized credential
- On-the-job learning is conducted in the work setting under the direction of one or more of the employer's personnel
- Participants are "employees" and earn wages from employers during training

A common perception is that (pre)apprenticeships are union-based employment. This is not a required element. The model can be union or non-union based, and these models can be used for training in a range of industries like manufacturing, construction, health care, retail, and transportation. The fact this is an earn-and-learn model eliminates the trade-off between earning an income or pursuing education and training that keeps many people from pursuing postsecondary training.

For more information on apprenticeship programs for people with criminal records, [Second Chance Jobs for Felons](#) provides an overview of apprenticeships and information about apprenticeships in states across the country. It is a useful site for providers and individuals looking for apprenticeship opportunities.

State apprenticeship offices approve state-specific Registered Apprenticeships separate from the federal program. For a list of the state offices of apprenticeship, check [here](#).

2. If working with individuals who need to “ramp up” to be successful in an apprenticeship, consider developing a pre-apprenticeship program.

Pre-apprenticeships have also emerged as a work-based learning opportunity. These are not registered with the DOL. They do provide an “on-ramp” to federal or state Registered Apprenticeship programs for people with the aptitude for and interest in an apprenticeship training/education program, but lack the skills or competencies to be successful. For example, these are often developed for [young adults](#) who need academic and technical training, as well as employability skills training and social supports.

3. Review the model components to ensure the design meets federal or state standards for Registered Apprenticeships, or “best practice” standards for pre-apprenticeship.

Apprenticeships can be offered as a time-based or competency-based model. Time-based models range from one to six hours and require a specific number of hours of on-the-job training (2,000 hours) and classroom instruction (1,400 hours). Competency-based apprenticeships must document “demonstrated, observable, and measurable competencies.” See, <https://www.doleta.gov/oa/apprentices.cfm>.

Apprenticeship model components include

- 1. Employer or business involvement**
- 2. Structured on-the-job training**

3. Related instruction
4. Rewards for skill gains (e.g., increased wages, new responsibilities)
5. Nationally recognized credential

Pre-apprenticeship model components include:

1. Employer-approved curriculum
2. Support services
3. Meaningful hands-on learning connected to education and training
4. Industry-recognized credential
5. Placement into a Registered Apprenticeship

4. Consider which population(s) the (pre)apprenticeship model will serve in order to make the necessary customization for the program.

The program components and required partners will be the same, but providers also customize designs to meet the unique needs of specific populations. For example, when designing programs for people currently or returning from incarceration, it is important to ensure that full employment would not be prohibited by state licensure or certification requirements. Also, including partners who understand the implications that a criminal record can have on access to housing or partners who can provide pro bono legal advice is critical. Programs that train women in fields that are male dominated should explicitly address with issues such as gender discrimination and sexual harassment. Since women often have children, social supports should include services to support family reunification, and child care supports when women have custody of their children.

5. Assemble the partners necessary to design, implement, and sustain the apprenticeship model.

Every Registered Apprenticeship has a “sponsor.” The sponsor is responsible for the overall design and implementation of the program. Similar to the diversity of reentry education and training providers, a variety of organizations can sponsor Registered Apprenticeships including:

- An individual employer or consortium of employers in an industry
- Industry associations
- Labor organizations
- Joint labor-management organizations
- Community colleges
- Community-based organizations

6. Early on, develop measures and mechanisms to track program and participant outcomes in order to make necessary program adjustments and improvement, and capture participant successes.

Data and evidence of success will be critical for Registered Apprenticeships. Even if not required for an external entity, having a strong data strategy as part of program design will make it easier to effectively collect and use relevant data from the very beginning of the program.

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