

Program Description: State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula, Round Four (SAEF4)

The State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula program (SAEF) supports the expansion of the National Apprenticeship System by funding states and territories to enhance their capacity to register programs and support apprentices and employers. In its fourth round of SAEF (SAEF4), the Department seeks to provide approximately \$85 million in formula funding, contingent upon the availability of federal funds, to support eligible states and territories expanding Registered Apprenticeship programs broadly and in specific industry sectors, including but not limited to Administration-wide priorities such as artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure, nuclear energy infrastructure, shipbuilding, advanced manufacturing, domestic mineral production, and information technology (IT).

Funding may also be used to bolster a state's capacity to expand Registered Apprenticeship, including hiring additional staff that can include Registered Apprenticeship navigators supporting local workforce areas or with key workforce partners, streamlining registration procedures, improving alignment between the Registered Apprenticeship, workforce, and education systems and supporting the adoption of learning and employment records (LERs) in Registered Apprenticeship programs for purposes of skill validation of Registered Apprentices and/or the acquisition of accelerated credit toward a degreed Registered Apprenticeship. Funds may also be used to work with sponsors and related instruction providers to develop new or modify existing Registered Apprenticeship related instruction programs to be eligible for Workforce Pell Grant funding. If any eligible states or territories do not apply for funding, at the discretion of the Department, **some or all of the remaining balance of funds of the total \$85 million may be provided to eligible states and territories that applied for funding**, in addition to the amount identified in Attachment IV Abstract. Additional funds would be allocated using the same performance-based formula applied to the base funding amount. Applicants should identify in their project abstract if they would be interested in additional funds, in addition to the amount identified in Attachment IV.

This year, the Department will not offer competitive funding for states, unlike in previous years. To date, 25 states received competitive funding through SAEF for innovative expansion strategies. Given the amount of funding awarded through prior competitions that remains available to states, no additional competitive funds will be awarded in SAEF4.

Formula grants will be allocated using a new, performance-based formula based on new and active apprentices (reported in the Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Database System (RAPIDS) for the prior fiscal year). The performance-based formula aligns with President Trump's goal of meeting and surpassing 1 million active apprentices. It provides funding to eligible states and territories to expand the National Apprenticeship System and encourages growth by incentivizing states to reduce barriers for employers and streamline the registration process. To encourage states to effectively apply innovative strategies to advance Registered Apprenticeship, the Department intends to continue using the performance-based formula in future rounds of SAEF, contingent upon the future availability of federal funds.

I. Required Application Document: Project Narrative

States must submit a streamlined project narrative to apply for SAEF4 grant funds. In applying for these funds, states must commit to the core requirements described above in Section 3 “Summary and Background,” that support statewide expansion of Registered Apprenticeship programs. States are encouraged to leverage existing public workforce and education system funding streams such as funds provided under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Career and Technical Education (CTE) funds provided through the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, and other relevant funding sources. States are also encouraged to leverage other DOL-funded national Registered Apprenticeship expansion investments and initiatives, including DOL-funded Registered Apprenticeship cooperative agreements, industry intermediaries, national outreach campaigns, and relevant tools and systems to increase the impact of funding and statewide expansion efforts. Additionally, SAEF4 funds may be used to bolster and accelerate the State’s training activities in their approved Statement of Work (SOW) under the SAEF3 Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA). **For more information regarding the specific project narrative application requirements see Attachment II Project Narrative.**

II. Eligibility

A. Eligible Applicants

For the purposes of this TEGL, all 50 States of the United States, the District of Columbia, and territories with more than 100 active apprentices as of the end of FY 2025 are eligible applicants. Accordingly, for the purposes of this TEGL henceforth, the term “state” means “any of the 50 States of the United States, the District of Columbia, and any territory with more than 100 active apprentices.” States and territories with fewer than 100 active Registered Apprentices (as of FY 2025 data), specifically American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, are not eligible to receive formula funding and are encouraged to continue utilizing funds provided under SAEF3 to further expand Registered Apprenticeship in their area. To view the Office of Apprenticeship’s (OA) FY 2025 Data and Statistics, please visit <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/data-and-statistics>.

The applicant will serve as the grantee and have overall fiscal and administrative responsibility for the grant. The applicant must also have the organizational capacity to:

- Carry out and/or oversee the programmatic functions of the grant;
- Receive and respond to all inquiries or communications from the Department;
- Oversee and manage all expenditures under the grant with an emphasis on transparency, accountability, and data-driven outcomes;
- Withdraw or draw down funds through the Department of Health and Human Services - Payment Management System (HHS-PMS);
- Submit all required deliverables;
- Amend the award agreement or SOW as necessary;

- Collect, synthesize, and report data received by employers for all training participants to the Department; and
- Work with the Department to close out the grant.

States (the Governor official) must identify the State agency that will be the grant recipient (e.g., State Workforce Agency eligible for funding under Title I of the WIOA, State Educational Agency, or an SAA). Only this entity will have responsibility for administering the project and will serve as the grant's fiscal agent. For SAA States, the SAA must be included as a partner if the State agency applicant is not the SAA, and the partnership must be documented in the application through a letter of commitment from the Head of the SAA. Each State is limited to one application. If a State submits multiple applications, the Department will only consider the most recently received application that is submitted by the deadline.

B. Eligible Participants

For the purposes of this grant program, eligible participants are persons 16 years of age and older who receive a direct, grant-funded service. Funds may also be used to support participants younger than age 16 who are enrolled in pre-apprenticeship programs that lead directly to enrollment in a Registered Apprenticeship; however, the participant must be at least 16 years old by the time they are expected to complete the pre-apprenticeship program and enroll in a Registered Apprenticeship. States can also use funds that support a broad range of activities that may not directly serve participants but support overall efforts to grow and expand Registered Apprenticeship statewide and therefore increase the number of apprentices enrolled in programs within the state.

III. Reporting

Grantees must follow the Department's reporting requirements for quarterly financial and performance reports. Details about grant performance reporting requirements are described in Attachment III Performance Reporting Requirements.

IV. Period of Performance

The POP is 36 months with an anticipated start date of July 1, 2026. States are encouraged to spend funds in alignment with their expansion needs and may expend all grant funds before the POP with no penalty.

The Department does not anticipate POP extensions for awards made under this funding opportunity. Please refer to Attachment IV Section IV. B for more information on preparing the SF424A and Budget Narrative.

V. Cost Sharing

This program does not require cost sharing (including matching) funds. Please refer to Attachment II for information about a required commitment for leveraged resources.

VI. Funding Restrictions, Policies, and Limitations

All proposed project costs must be necessary and reasonable and in accordance with federal requirements (including, but not limited to, regulatory requirements and award terms and conditions), grantees awarded funds will be prohibited for using funds to:

- Support the administration, operation, or any other activities that do not conform with federal law and regulations governing Registered Apprenticeship, including, for example, using funds to support a non-conforming State Apprenticeship Council as described in [Circular 2026-02](#).
- Support or develop duplicative state-specific alternative systems to Standards Builder or RAPIDS. States are encouraged to use tools developed by OA whenever possible to increase alignment across the National Apprenticeship System. States that are seeking to improve and enhance existing systems are encouraged to focus these improvements on strengthening and ensure efficient reporting to DOL. States are encouraged to use leveraged resources (reference commitment in Attachment II) to support these enhancements and align state systems with Standards Builder, RAPIDS, or other federal systems. These activities cannot duplicate or attempt to replace federal systems available to states.
- Support activities that do not comply with federal antidiscrimination law and that discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or other protected characteristics. For more information on prohibited activities, see the Department of Justice’s “[Guidance for Recipients of Federal Funding Regarding Unlawful Discrimination](#).”

VII. Additional Application Requirements

For all other application submission requirements that apply to this funding opportunity, see the [2026 DOL Application guide](#), Section V.