

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 4-15
	DATE July 31, 2015

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
STATE APPRENTICESHIP AGENCY DIRECTORS
STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS AND STAFF
LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS AND STAFF
OFFICE OF APPRENTICESHIP FIELD STAFF
OFFICE OF APPRENTICESHIP STATE AND REGIONAL DIRECTORS

FROM: PORTIA WU /s/
Assistant Secretary
Employment and Training Administration

JENNIFER SHEEHY /s/
Acting Assistant Secretary
Office of Disability Employment Policy

SUBJECT: Expanding Registered Apprenticeships and Pre-Apprenticeships to Create a Pathway to Good Middle Class Jobs for Youth and Adults with Disabilities.

1. **Purpose.** To disseminate a white paper and provide information and resources on promising strategies to promote the inclusion of youth and adults with disabilities in registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships.
2. **References.**
 - TEN NO. 13-12, Defining a Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program and Related Tools and Resources. Visit: http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/TEN_13-12_Acc.pdf.
3. **Background.** The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is committed to promoting policies and programs that make full use of America’s talent and ensure all workers, including those with disabilities, are trained with the skills employers need to fill jobs now and in emerging growth industries. In support of this vision, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) understand that expanding

registered apprenticeships¹ and pre-apprenticeships² will help more Americans, including youth and adults with disabilities, access this proven path to employment and the middle class.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, many of America's jobseekers desire to participate in the modern global economy, but lack the skills and education needed to succeed. As a result, businesses report that they cannot find qualified staff. This trend not only affects recent high school graduates, but also adults in disadvantaged populations - women, minorities, and people with disabilities - where the unemployment rate is much higher than the average. If needs for training and education are not addressed, the U.S. will face critical shortages as the baby boomer generation begins to retire.

Registered Apprenticeship is an effective "earn and learn" model with a long history of providing career ladders and pathways to the middle class; 87 percent of apprentices are employed after completing their programs, and the average starting wage for apprenticeship graduates is over \$50,000.³ Studies from other countries show that employers reap an average return of \$1.47 for every dollar they invest in apprenticeships in increased productivity and performance.⁴ Unfortunately, too few American workers and employers have access to this proven training solution to prepare for better careers or meet the need for a skilled workforce. This is particularly true for people with disabilities.

Although Federal legislation mandates that youth and young adults with disabilities have equal opportunity to benefit from the full range of career/technical educational programs and services available to their peers without disabilities, research conducted by ODEP in 2007 and 2012 revealed that youth and young adults with disabilities rarely participate in apprenticeship programs. To capitalize on the potential that apprenticeship holds for improving employment opportunity and self-sufficiency for youth and young adults with disabilities, the call by the Obama Administration to double the number of apprentices over the next 5 years, and the \$100 million in American Apprenticeship Grants funding that is being made available to reward partnerships that help more workers participate in apprenticeships (see <http://www.doleta.gov/oa/aag.cfm>), ODEP and the ETA's Office of Apprenticeship are collaborating to disseminate the aforementioned research paper and to highlight innovative

1 Registered apprenticeship is a time-tested system that uses an effective "earn and learn" model that is accessible to all levels of the labor force. The registered apprenticeship program, administered by ETA's Office of Apprenticeship, offers paid on-the-job learning with related technical classroom instruction that can lead to a long-term career pathway and sustained employment.

2 Pre-apprenticeship is defined as a program or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a registered apprenticeship, and has a documented partnership with at least one, if not more, registered apprenticeship programs. In order to be considered a pre-apprenticeship program, programs must demonstrate required components of a quality pre-apprenticeship program as outlined in the TEN 13-12, entitled Defining a Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program and Related Tools and Resources. Visit: http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/TEN_13-12_Acc.pdf.

3 "American Job Training Investments: Skills and Jobs to Build a Stronger Middle Class," White House Fact Sheet (April 2014).

4 "It Pays to Hire an Apprentice: Calculating the Return on Training Investment for Skilled Trades Employers in Canada," Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (June 2009).

ways in which registered apprenticeship can be used to promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

The research paper, entitled *Registered Apprenticeship Programs: Improving the Pipeline for People with Disabilities*, provides an overview of registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships, highlights prior apprenticeship initiatives that have focused on persons with disabilities, and discusses challenges associated with providing apprenticeships programming. In addition, recommendations are provided regarding actions that Federal agencies could take to promote apprenticeship and strategies are presented for increasing employment of people with disabilities through registered apprenticeship. The report also:

- Highlights the registered apprenticeship program as a career planning strategy.
- Emphasizes the need for career and technical education preparation and planning.
- Identifies job growth industries in the registered apprenticeship program.
- Underscores the continuing need for increased pre-apprenticeship opportunities to ensure youth and adults develop the skills and transferable competencies needed to enter, retain, and advance in registered apprenticeship programs.

To view the report, visit: <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pdf/ApprenticeshipReport.pdf>. For more information about registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, including information on how apprentices can find opportunities and employers can start a program, visit the Office of Apprenticeship's website: <http://www.doleta.gov/OA/>.

4. **Technical Assistance and Resource Materials.** DOL continues to create resource materials and to provide technical assistance resources to aid the American Job Center network, employers, Federal agencies, and others to support expanded partnerships with quality pre-apprenticeship programs and registered apprenticeship programs. These materials include:

- **Labor Standards for the Registration of Apprenticeship Programs (Title 29, CFR Part 29).** To ensure that apprenticeship remains a highly successful talent development strategy, DOL and other key stakeholders have worked closely to revise the regulations governing the National Apprenticeship System. These revised regulations, published on October 29, 2008, update Title 29 CFR, Part 29, and provide a framework that supports an enhanced, modernized apprenticeship system. Under these regulations, registration agencies can issue interim credentials to apprentices for completing components of the occupation and registered apprenticeship programs may be competency-based, time-based, or a hybrid of the two approaches. See <http://www.doleta.gov/OA/regulations.cfm>.
- **Employers FAQs.** Registered apprenticeships hold many benefits for employers and their employees. Employers can learn about how to develop a business-driven, registered apprenticeship program to attract companies, increase wages, and benefit their communities. Visit: <http://www.doleta.gov/OA/employer.cfm>.

- **Registered Apprenticeship College Consortium (RACC).** RACC is a national network of postsecondary institutions, employers, unions, and associations working to create opportunities for apprenticeship graduates who may want to further enhance their skills by completing an Associate’s or Bachelor’s Degrees. Visit: <http://www.doleta.gov/oa/racc.cfm>.
 - **TEN No. 10-09, *Toolkit and White Paper on Improving Transition Outcomes of Youth with Disabilities through Apprenticeship (2009)*** provides information on a white paper and toolkit which focuses on expanding apprenticeship opportunities for youth and young adults with disabilities. Visit: <http://www.dol.gov/odep/categories/youth/apprenticeship/TEN10-09acc.pdf>.
 - Improving Transition Outcomes of Youth with Disabilities by Increasing Access to Apprenticeship Opportunities issue paper. Visit: <http://www.dol.gov/odep/categories/youth/apprenticeship/ApprenticeshipIssuePaper.pdf>.
 - Apprenticeship Toolkit. Visit: <http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/Apprenticeship.htm>.
 - **Apprenticeship Community of Practice (CoP) website** provides free information about innovations in registered apprenticeship programs. For first-time users of the CoP, go to the homepage, and click on the “join this community” button in the top right corner of the screen to acquire a username and password. Visit: <http://21stcenturyapprenticeship.workforce3one.org>.
5. **Action Requested.** DOL asks recipients to distribute this information to appropriate managers and staff in State Workforce Agencies, State Workforce Investment Boards, Local Workforce Investment Boards, American Job Centers, State Apprenticeship Agencies, and other public workforce system partners.
6. **Inquiries.** Questions about this TEN may be directed to Ms. Franchella Kendall of the Office of Apprenticeship at (202) 693-3798 or Kendall.Franchella@dol.gov or Rhonda Basha of the Office of Disability Employment Office at (202) 693-4732 or Basha.Rhonda.L@dol.gov.
7. **Attachment.**
- *Registered Apprenticeship Programs: Improving the Pipeline for People with Disabilities*