

Connecting Ticket to Work and Apprenticeships

Submitted To

U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Disability Employment Policy
200 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20210

Date Submitted

September 2020



OFFICE OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

About This Project

The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) sponsored the Apprenticeship Inclusion Models (AIM) initiative. The initiative focused on building capacity for inclusive apprenticeship programs. It also focused on developing and disseminating resources and tools to make apprenticeship onboarding and recruitment, education and training, and workplace experiences and mentoring more inclusive, specifically for people with disabilities. In particular, the initiative sought to learn how inclusive practices from education, workplace, and work-based learning settings could be applied to apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs. The AIM initiative used a universal accessibility lens in its work; thus, its activities were also designed to make apprenticeship programs more accessible for everyone. The initiative produced five briefs that provide information to support the scaling of inclusive apprenticeships and to inform and strengthen future national policy around inclusive apprenticeship, workforce development, and employment.

The AIM Policy and Practice Briefs

In support of AIM's objective to develop and disseminate resources and tools to make apprenticeship more inclusive of people with disabilities, the initiative has produced five briefs that provide information to support the scaling of inclusive apprenticeships and to inform and strengthen future national policy around inclusive apprenticeship, workforce development, and employment.

The entire series can be found at: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep>

In This Series:

- Strengthening Supports for People With Disabilities in Pre-Apprenticeships Through Policy, Design, and Practice
- Funding Inclusive Apprenticeships: Strategies for Braiding, Blending, and Aligning Resources
- Using Universal Design for Learning in Apprenticeship
- Connecting Ticket to Work and Apprenticeships
- Emerging Lessons for Inclusive Apprenticeship Programs: Managing Through the COVID-19 Crisis and Beyond

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Carolyn Jones, Scott Robertson, Kirk Lew, and the whole ODEP team for their leadership and thoughtful review of this brief. In addition, we appreciate the review and feedback provided by Joyanne Cobb, Jeffrey Hemmeter, April Myers, and Robert Pfaff from the Social Security Administration. We also appreciate feedback from Caleb van Docto. We thank Kate Dunham for her constructive feedback and Karen Jarsky for her careful and thorough editing. Finally, we are grateful to the following individuals for taking the time to share information about their programs:

- Dee Gavaldon, Program Manager, Work Incentive Planning and Assistance at Crossroads
- Cindy Lennon, Apprenticeship Director, Able-Disabled Advocacy
- David Mitchell, Administrator, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Michelle O'Camb, Manager, Workforce Development Sacramento Employment and Training Agency/
Sacramento Works, Inc.
- Suzanne R. Paulson, Benefits Planning Resource Manager, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Mike Piper, Business, Legislative and Community Relations Coordinator, Vermont Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Jason Price, Vocational Rehabilitation Program Manager, Oklahoma Rehabilitation Services
- James Smith, Policy Manager and Ticket to Work Program Manager, Vermont Department of Vocational Rehabilitation

The AIM Initiative, and this briefing paper series, is a collaboration between lead contractor Social Policy Research Associates and our partners and subcontractors, JFF and Wheelhouse Group.

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Connecting Ticket to Work and Apprenticeships

Brief Highlights

Expanding apprenticeship is a key priority of the federal government. At the same time, apprenticeships have been an uncommon approach to employment for beneficiaries of the Social Security Administration's (SSA) Ticket to Work (TTW) program and the Employment Network service providers (ENs) that assist them.¹ In this brief, we examine how ENs and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies can better connect beneficiaries to apprenticeships.

TTW is a federal program administered by SSA that helps Social Security beneficiaries with disabilities² achieve their employment goals. Services for beneficiaries participating in TTW, who are known as Ticketholders, can include VR, financial literacy, benefits counseling, referrals, career exploration, employability skills training, job counseling, job placement services, and occupational training. Like Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) participation, participation in TTW has grown in the last decade.

Workforce agencies, which serve TTW Ticketholders, and other organizations considering becoming ENs should consider utilizing apprenticeships for several reasons:

- Apprenticeships provide mentoring, training, and ongoing support built into employment—structures that can help individuals with disabilities who have been out of the labor market and seek to enter or re-enter it.
- Apprenticeships pay competitive wages to individuals completing training programs and lead to higher-paying positions on the career ladder. In addition, many occupations with apprenticeships are projected to grow as fast as (or faster than) the average rate of growth for all occupations, and wages in a number of the top apprenticeship occupations are above the median annual wage for all occupations.³
- ENs and VR agencies, the entities that provide services to Social Security disability beneficiaries, are well positioned to serve as referral partners for RAPs because the services they offer (e.g., job readiness training, skills training, interview preparation, support services) can prepare qualified candidates for these apprenticeship programs.

¹ SSA does not track beneficiary participation in apprenticeship; however, our review of the Ticket to Work literature revealed almost no references to apprenticeship, and respondents interviewed for this brief who run TTW programs indicated that it was rare for TTW participants to enter apprenticeship. In addition, consistent, national-level data about the number of people with disabilities participating in apprenticeship is not available due to different state approaches to tracking apprenticeship participation and the fact that not all individuals with disabilities choose to disclose their disabilities to employers or apprenticeship programs.

² Specifically, individuals receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits based on disability.

³ See Torpey (2019). Further, starting wages and wage progression in apprenticeships are often transparent, allowing Ticketholders (particularly SSI beneficiaries) and the service providers assisting them to map out gradual benefits reduction, thereby mitigating the anxiety associated with losing benefits unexpectedly due to increasing income.

- Workforce agencies seeking to become ENs can utilize a streamlined process to do so. For example, TTW automatically considers public workforce system entities as qualified to become ENs.⁴ This makes it easier for service providers and workforce agencies, including those with pre-apprenticeships, to become ENs.

This brief identifies several strategies that can help ENs increase their capacity to place Ticketholders in apprenticeships:

ENs can develop pre-apprenticeship programs that align with RAPs, helping to create a pool of qualified candidates.

EN business outreach staff can expand their employer engagement strategies to include identifying apprenticeship job openings. This approach can include contacting state apprenticeship agencies to identify apprenticeships in the region.

State leaders can continue to encourage the creation of apprenticeships in a wide range of occupations. Currently, apprenticeships are most common in the construction trades. Some states have encouraged the creation of non-construction apprenticeships through grant programs or incentive funds.

RAPs are an important but currently underutilized approach for beneficiaries of SSA disability benefits who are using TTW to access supports for returning to work. In examining how ENs can better connect TTW participants to apprenticeship, we interviewed representatives from six ENs and VR agencies and conducted a review of several studies and other information about SSA disability program beneficiaries and TTW.⁵

In this brief, we present a detailed overview of the TTW program. We then examine RAPs as an option for helping people with disabilities to access sustainable gainful employment through the TTW program. We next offer a short profile describing the experience of a service provider that connects Ticketholders to apprenticeship. Finally, the brief concludes with considerations and recommendations.

⁴ The U.S. DOL's (2019) Training and Employment Notice 16-18, released under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), explains the application process and options for administrative structures.

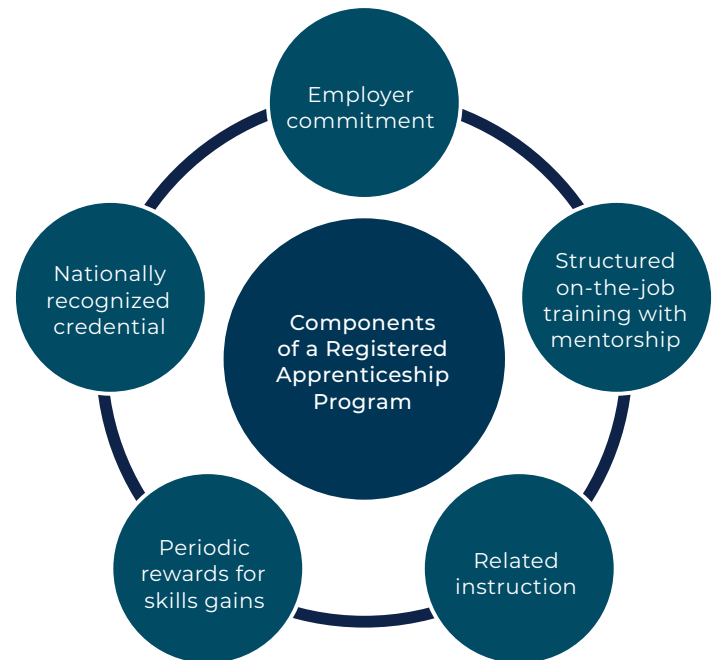
⁵ We identified respondents in several ways. For example, SSA sent an announcement drafted by SPR to their EN and VR agency listservs requesting interview respondents for the brief. Other respondents were recommended by AIM's technical assistance team.

Introduction

Currently, there are nearly 25,000 Registered Apprenticeship programs (RAPs) operating in the United States.⁶ These programs combine applied, on-the-job training with formal classroom instruction and provide skills training and career pathways to high-skill jobs for approximately 633,000 apprentices.⁷ RAPs have been embraced by employers across a variety of high-demand sectors, including information technology, health care, logistics, manufacturing, and construction.

As illustrated in Exhibit 1, RAPs present an opportunity to fully integrate employers and their employees into the nation's education and training pipelines by engaging and supporting them, at their places of work, with employers as the primary trainers. By integrating learning into the workplace, RAPs enable the flexibility needed for workers to adapt to the increasing demands brought by technological change. Moreover, apprenticeships provide career pathway opportunities that are accessible to learners with varying educational levels. This increases the pool of available talent, which is a benefit for both employers and jobseekers. Over the last decade, RAPs have been championed by the public workforce, the education system, and employer partners as a sustainable strategy to address skill shortages and to develop pipelines of qualified talent and career ladders for employees.

Exhibit 1. Core Components of Registered Apprenticeship Programs



Adapted from the U.S. Department of Labor's *Building Registered Apprenticeship Programs: A Quick-Start Toolkit*

The AIM Initiative

Expanding apprenticeship opportunities is a key priority of the federal government—one that was reinforced by the 2017 [Presidential Executive Order Expanding Apprenticeships in America](#).⁸ The promise of apprenticeship is that it provides a structured pathway to skilled jobs that pay living wages for those who want to learn by doing. At a time of increasing wage inequality and a deep recession in the United States, it is more critical than ever for funders, policy makers, and RAP practitioners to consider how RAPs can be designed to be more inclusive of all job seekers.⁹ Ensuring that there are multiple equitable on-ramps to apprenticeship opportunities is part of a current dialogue as we collectively consider how the good jobs of the future will be accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities.

⁶ RAPs were established through the National Apprenticeship Act of 1937, which instituted standards that safeguard the welfare of apprentices. The scope and purpose of the system, as well as the standards, policies, and procedures for programs, are outlined in Title 29, Part 29, of the Code of Federal Regulations (29 C.F.R. § 29). Title 29, Part 30 of the Code asserts that RAPs are equal opportunities and that discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age (40 or older), genetic information, or disability is prohibited.

⁷ According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2019), there were 24,788 active programs and 633,476 apprentices between October 1, 2018, and September 30, 2019.

⁸ While Executive Order No. 13801 references both RAPs and Industry Recognized Apprenticeships (IRAPs), this brief focuses on RAPs. See U.S. DOL (2012).

⁹ Guidance on targeted recruitment is specified in 29 C.F.R. § 30.8. Suggestions include recruiting from organizations and PA programs that serve underrepresented groups.

In support of these expansion efforts, the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) at the U.S. Department of Labor (U.S. DOL) sponsored the Apprenticeship Inclusion Models (AIM) initiative. The AIM initiative focused on learning how apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs can optimize learning for and inclusion of people with disabilities.¹⁰ Specifically, the project sought to address the accessibility of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs' recruitment, assessment, mentoring, training, and instruction efforts, as well as their general approach to supportive services. In support of these objectives, the initiative has produced five briefs that provide information to support the scaling of inclusive apprenticeships. In this brief, we examine how service providers can connect Social Security disability beneficiaries participating in the Ticket to Work program to apprenticeships as a means of returning to sustainable work.

This Brief: Ticket to Work

The Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-170) established the Ticket to Work (TTW) program. The Social Security Administration (SSA) administers the program and provides oversight. TTW offers a range of employment services and supports for participants between the ages of 18 and 64 who receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Broadly, SSDI and SSI beneficiaries are people with disabilities who are unable to perform work at a "substantial gainful activity" (SGA) level. SGA is work for pay that exceeds an annually set guideline, after consideration of work incentives. The majority of SSDI or SSI beneficiaries ages 18 to 64 who receive benefits because of their disability are considered "Ticketholders."^{11,12} Ticketholders begin receiving services after their ticket is assigned to an EN. The ticket assignment, which involves a short application process, is initiated by the EN and approved by SSA.

SSA designates entities as ENs via an application process.¹³ ENs may include state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies and other state or local government agencies, such as workforce agencies, community-based organizations, educational institutions, or employers. In recent years, there has been a special emphasis on growing the representation of workforce ENs—those run by public workforce agencies, such as state or local workforce boards or individual American Job Centers (AJCs); this effort reflects broader efforts to expand the capacity of the public workforce system to increase access for people with disabilities.¹⁴ Services provided by ENs include career counseling, VR services, and job placement and training.¹⁵ ENs are eligible to receive payments from SSA when the Ticketholders they support achieve defined milestones and certain outcomes for work and earnings.¹⁶

¹⁰ The U.S. DOL (2012) defines quality pre-apprenticeship programs in Training and Employment Notice No. 13-12. These programs blend classroom training with applied learning (e.g., work-based learning) and are designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in apprenticeships.

¹¹ TTW eligibility is somewhat more complex than is presented here; for more details, see SSA (n.d.-c).

¹² In addition to TTW, SSA offers a number of other work incentives that make it possible for SSDI and SSI beneficiaries to test their ability to work and continue to receive some or all of their cash and health benefits. While this brief does not explore those work incentives in detail, apprenticeship should be considered an option for all federal disability beneficiaries, including those who are not designated as Ticketholders but are making use of work incentives.

¹³ For information about becoming an EN, see SSA (n.d.-a).

¹⁴ These efforts pre-date and were continued by the passage of WIOA. They include WIA-era Work Incentive Grants, Disability Program Navigators at WIA One-Stop Career Centers, the Customized Employment Grant Program, and the workforce-legislation-spanning Disability Employment Initiative (DEI). For DEI, all grantees were required to provide integrated training and support services to job seekers with disabilities, become ENs, and provide Work Incentives Planning and Assistance program services. Under WIOA, the U.S. DOL (2019) released Training and Employment Notice (TEN) 16-18 to support the goals of expanding the capacity of the public workforce system to serve Social Security disability beneficiaries. The TEN explains the EN application process and notifies the system that (a) all public workforce agencies are automatically qualified to be ENs and (b) the requirement for applicants to include business plans is waived for public workforce agencies and workforce boards.

¹⁵ Alternative models include administrative ENs that handle all administration with SSA, leaving workforce agency ENs free to focus on providing services.

¹⁶ VR agencies may use a cost-reimbursement model rather than the milestone/outcome system. For more details about TTW payments, see SSA (n.d.-e).

What the Research Says About SSDI/SSI Beneficiaries and TTW

A substantial number of SSDI and SSI beneficiaries show an interest in returning to work, but participation in TTW is relatively low. The proportion of eligible beneficiaries who participated in the program (i.e., were assigned tickets) increased from 1 percent in 2003 to 2.5 percent in 2017.¹⁷ Similarly, between Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 and FY 2015, the number of ticket-eligible disabled beneficiaries increased from 13.5 million to 14.9 million. During that time period, the percentage of ticket-eligible beneficiaries with assigned or in-use tickets stayed at or below 3 percent.¹⁸ However, since the number of ticket-eligible beneficiaries increased between 2011 and 2015, the overall number of assigned tickets also increased in this period.

One potential reason for this low participation is that awareness of TTW and other work incentives among beneficiaries remains low. In the most recent National Beneficiary Survey of SSA beneficiaries (from 2015), respondents were asked about work supports that were most relevant to them based on their SSDI or SSI participation; only 27 percent were aware of the TTW program. However, 37 percent of SSDI and SSI beneficiaries indicated having goals for work or career advancement.¹⁹ One quarter of respondents saw themselves working in the next 2 years.²⁰ About 8 percent of beneficiaries were employed.²¹

Another potential factor for low levels of participation in TTW is that the program is designed to assist individuals who have qualified for public benefits because they cannot work. Other possible reasons that beneficiaries do not participate in TTW include discouragement from previous work attempts (26 percent), inaccessible workplaces (26 percent), and a lack of opportunities to find jobs for which they are qualified (23 percent).²²

While participation in TTW has increased somewhat since the program's initiation, the program has not been widely evaluated, and existing findings of positive impact on participant employment outcomes are modest.²³ A multiyear evaluation of TTW that ended in 2013 concluded that TTW and related programs had a limited but positive effect on the overall employment of Social Security disability beneficiaries and had motivated some participants to pursue employment.²⁴ That evaluation also cited early indications that the 2008 revisions and subsequent changes to TTW had been modestly successful in increasing beneficiary and EN participation and would potentially continue to do so in the future.²⁵

These indications of increasing participation in TTW and limited but positive effects on employment suggest that TTW remains an important option for helping SSDI and SSI beneficiary Ticketholders return to work. In the next section, we explore pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship as a pathway to employment for Ticketholders.

¹⁷ See SSA's Office of the Inspector General (2018).

¹⁸ According to SSA's Office of the Inspector General (2016), the percentage rose from 2.56 percent in 2011 to 3.15 percent in 2012, then dropped below 3 percent again for the next 3 fiscal years.

¹⁹ See SSA (2018c) for data from the National Beneficiary Survey.

^{20, 21, 22} Ibid.

²³ In 2013, Mathematica Policy Research completed a multiyear evaluation of the program (see Livermore et al., 2013, for a summary of a number of distinct reports). The Office of the Inspector General at SSA (2016, 2018) also assessed the program, as did the U.S. Government Accountability Office (2011).

²⁴ See Livermore et al. (2013). This report also explained that "the implementation of the 2008 regulatory changes coincided with the recession, and the analysis was unable to disentangle the effects of the TTW regulatory change from those of the recession" (p. 15)

²⁵ See Prenovitz et al. (2012). Further, a recent SSA Office of the Inspector General (2018) audit of SSA return-to-work programs included a review of program-level costs between 2000 and 2016 that yielded an estimate that TTW cost about \$2,300 per Social Security disability beneficiary and that the benefits forgone were \$5,000 per participating beneficiary.

Apprenticeship and Ticket to Work

Several key trends in public benefits for people with disabilities and in changes to the workforce system suggest that it is an auspicious time for apprenticeship to take its place as an option for Ticketholders. SSA has expressed interest in continuing to grow TTW, including by increasing the number of workforce agencies serving as ENs. Simultaneously, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) makes even clearer and pronounced the public workforce system's responsibility to support job seekers with disabilities and to increase access to paid work experience, especially RAPs.

Within this context, several factors suggest that RAPs are a strong option for organizations that serve TTW Ticketholders—especially workforce ENs and VR agencies. First, apprenticeships are paid opportunities that offer mentoring, training, and support built into employment—promising conditions for people with disabilities who have been out of the labor market and seek to enter or re-enter it. Second, the wage progression built into an apprenticeship is helpful from a planning perspective. The known wage progression makes it easier for Ticketholders to understand how their employment may affect their SSA disability benefits. For example, when they meet with a Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) benefits counselor, they can discuss how their benefits may change when they progress from one wage level to the next.²⁶

Third, ENs are well positioned to serve as referral partners for RAPs because the services they offer (e.g., job readiness training, skills assessments, skills training, interview preparation, support services) can prepare qualified candidates for a RAP. In fact, these services are the essential components of pre-apprenticeship programs, which serve as recruitment pipelines for RAPs by aligning their curricula with the entry requirements of apprenticeships. ENs can use their existing services to develop pre-apprenticeship programs that prepare TTW participants (and other job seekers) for partner RAPs with potential employers. ENs can identify RAP partners by:

- managing their regular job development activities;
- connecting with state and local initiatives that encourage the development of new apprenticeships in an array of fields²⁷ and
- contacting their state office of apprenticeship to identify local partners (if their state has such an office).²⁸

Moreover, AJCs and workforce boards that already have strong connections to RAPs can more easily serve people with disabilities and become ENs because of provisions in WIOA and TTW. First, TTW automatically considers public workforce system entities as qualified to become ENs.²⁹ Second, several WIOA provisions require AJCs to increase their capacity for serving people with disabilities.

²⁶ For more information about WIPA, see SSA (n.d.-g).

²⁷ Initiatives include the California Apprenticeship Initiative, Apprenticeship Carolina, and CareerWise Colorado, among others.

²⁸ For more information about and resources for ENs, see SSA (n.d.-b).

²⁹ TTW offers an AJC or workforce development board several options for participating, including becoming its own EN or joining an existing administrative EN. For more detail on ways an AJC can become an EN, see SSA (n.d.-f).

Specifically, WIOA requires AJCs to be fully accessible and to offer necessary accommodations for job seekers with disabilities; it also prohibits discrimination against job seekers—including people with disabilities—who seek assistance through the workforce development system. Further, VR is a core partner supporting WIOA governance and to the WIOA Title I programs for adults, dislocated workers, and youth. Finally, WIOA requires VR agencies to set aside at least 15 percent of their federal funds to provide “pre-employment transition services” to students with disabilities³⁰ who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services.³¹ These pre-employment services can include pre-apprenticeship and other services that can help young people—some of whom may become Ticketholders as adults—to prepare for an apprenticeship, among other employment options.

The next section provides an illustration for how an EN has been able to connect TTW participants to apprenticeships via a paired pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship model.

Profile of an EN Connecting TTW Participants to Apprenticeship

[Able-Disabled Advocacy](#) (A-DA) is one example of an organization that connects TTW participants to RAPs. A-DA has been supporting people with disabilities and other job seekers with barriers to employment since 1975 by helping them prepare for work and connect to gainful job opportunities. A-DA operates a RAP in the growing field of information technology (IT) and, in 2013, it became an EN to support SSDI and SSI Ticketholders interested in attaining employment. This situation positions the organization to connect TTW participants to apprenticeship opportunities.

Developing an Inclusive Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Program

In 2016, 3 years after becoming an EN, A-DA developed an IT apprenticeship program supported by a U.S. DOL American Apprenticeship Initiative grant to build upon years of experience conducting IT training. For their Computer Support Specialist apprentices, A-DA developed a paired pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship service-delivery model to ensure they had candidates qualified for the apprenticeship. During the pre-apprenticeship, participants attain [CompTIA](#) certifications (widely recognized industry certifications for IT support professionals) to demonstrate their competencies for local companies that will consider hiring them. Companies expect these apprentices to begin with core skill development, and A-DA's front-loaded pre-apprenticeship training addressed that need. During the apprenticeship, apprentices participate in 2,000 hours of on-the-job training and, with support from an instructor, attain additional CompTIA industry certifications. The average wage of the apprentices is \$23.00 per hour.

³⁰ Specifically, pre-employment transition services are for students with disabilities who are not older than age 21 or the state's maximum age for receiving special education services.

³¹ VR agencies are automatically classified as ENs and are not required to go through the application, and SSA has developed an organizational model allowing a Ticketholder who has completed their VR service to transfer their ticket to a workforce EN. This model, known as Partnership Plus, was designed to support collaboration between VR agencies and other ENs. For more information, see SSA (n.d.-d).

In keeping with A-DA's core mission of assisting people in attaining employment and navigating barriers to personal and economic self-sufficiency, the organization designed an inclusive pre-apprenticeship and RAP. Three primary drivers of inclusivity shape these activities. First, the organization's recruitment strategies reach job seekers with barriers to employment and job seekers who are underrepresented in RAPs, such as veterans, women, and people with disabilities. Second, A-DA provides individualized supports to facilitate participant success. These personalized supports include activities such as assisting participants who have disabilities with self-disclosing them to employers, helping them seek additional time to complete certification tests, and providing additional tutoring. And third, A-DA has well-trained and experienced staff, which is a critical resource for holding these discussions and identifying needed supports.

TTW and Apprenticeship

A small number of A-DA's IT apprenticeship participants have also participated in TTW, receiving career and benefits counseling. Additionally, prior to starting the apprenticeship, Ticketholders participated in the linked pre-apprenticeship program. The primary benefits of enrolling TTW participants in the combined pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship are twofold:

- The pre-apprenticeship and associated support services help TTW participants to transition into apprenticeship opportunities (i.e., competitive employment).
- A-DA and its staff can support apprentices who are deciding how and whether to self-disclose their disabilities to employers. Staff are well-trained in fostering these discussions and in identifying needed supports because of their extensive experience in supporting people with disabilities.

A-DA also has staff who can help prospective pre-apprenticeship Ticketholders review their SSDI and SSI benefits and make informed decisions about enrollment based on knowledge of how participation in apprenticeship can affect their benefits.

A-DA reported challenges referring TTW participants to apprenticeship opportunities for several reasons, including:

- Many Ticketholders come to A-DA prepared to start part-time work, and most apprenticeships do not offer the flexibility of part-time positions.
- Apprenticeship opportunities are not currently available for a broad range of occupations (except in the construction field). The Ticketholders A-DA has supported have typically not expressed interest in jobs in the construction trades. Thus, A-DA has found it challenging to find apprenticeship opportunities that align with Ticketholders' interests.³²
- A-DA's Computer Support Specialist apprenticeship training is a demanding program. Individuals are selected to participate based on assessment scores that include reading, math, and PC skills tests, as well as interview scores. Some applicants, including some Ticketholders, lack needed knowledge, skills, or abilities.

³² Although nationally there is increasing attention to developing apprenticeships in non-construction fields (e.g., IT, health care), some local areas still have only a limited number of apprenticeships in non-construction fields.

Conclusion

Paired pre-apprenticeship and RAPs can serve as supportive pathways for SSDI and SSI beneficiary Ticketholders to join the workforce. The supports provided by these programs connected to TTW include activities like skills training, interview preparation, assistance in deciding whether and how to self-disclose a disability to an employer, and mentorship during the apprenticeship.

Through our interviews, we identified several strategies that can help TTW ENs increase their capacity to place Ticketholders in apprenticeships:

ENs can develop pre-apprenticeship programs that align with RAPs. Pre-apprenticeships represent a common strategy for preparing a pool of qualified candidates for employer-sponsored RAPs. They also comprise activities and services similar to those provided by ENs in the process of supporting Ticketholders to become employed. The pre-apprenticeship curriculum is aligned to the entry requirements of the RAP and includes support services to help Ticketholders remain in and complete the program.

EN business outreach staff can expand their employer engagement strategies to include identifying apprenticeship job openings. Business development staff often conduct outreach to employers to identify job openings for the job seekers they support. While filling apprenticeship job openings, business development staff can contact their state apprenticeship agencies to identify apprenticeships in their region.

State leaders can continue to encourage the creation of apprenticeships in a wide range of occupations. Some respondents identified the lack of apprenticeships in a broad range of occupations beyond construction as a barrier to referring TTW participants to apprenticeships. Many states have encouraged the creation of non-construction apprenticeships through grant programs or incentive funds (e.g., the California Apprenticeship Initiative³³ and Virginia's executive order expanding RAs³⁴). State leaders can also partner with large technology companies to participate in IT and STEM apprenticeship programs.³⁵ These partnerships are often sought by tech companies via grants for developing or supporting apprenticeships.

³³ See California Apprenticeship Initiative (n.d.).

³⁴ See Commonwealth of Virginia, Office of the Governor (2015).

³⁵ For example, see IBM (2019).

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