



Aligning the Registered Apprenticeship and Workforce Development Systems: A Resource

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About AIR

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) is a nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization that conducts behavioral and social science research and delivers technical assistance to solve some of the most urgent challenges in the U.S. and around the world.

For 15 years, AIR has partnered with organizations at the national, state, and regional levels to advance Registered Apprenticeship as a talent development strategy in the U.S. We work with businesses and industry associations to design, register, and operate apprenticeship programs. We coach and support states and territories on how to grow Registered Apprenticeship and better align the apprenticeship, workforce development, and education systems. We also focus on conducting research and identifying promising practices to increase the knowledge base about the apprenticeship model and expansion strategies; working with federal and state agencies to train stakeholders, develop policy, and design technical assistance initiatives; and advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion to ensure that women, people of color, individuals with disabilities, and other groups are accessing and succeeding in apprenticeship programs. AIR conducts this work through the organization’s Workforce Program Area within the Human Services Division.



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About This Resource

Significantly expanding the scope and scale of modern apprenticeship in the United States requires exponential growth in the number of Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) and the number of apprentices participating in them, as well as expansion into a broader set of industries and occupations. To achieve this growth, states need access to businesses and potential apprentices at scale, as well as federal and state funding to support business startup of RAPs and apprentice success. The workforce development system, with its local workforce development boards, American Job Centers (AJCs), and wide range of partners, offers such access and should be a key partner in every state's apprenticeship system.

Across the country, states are positioning local workforce boards and AJCs to play a wide range of roles in support of Registered Apprenticeship. Some of the roles local workforce boards and AJCs can play include:

- Developing sector and/or career pathway strategies utilizing Registered Apprenticeship;
- Increasing awareness and understanding of the apprenticeship model;
- Recruiting and screening candidates to be apprentices;
- Providing pre-apprenticeship programs and basic skills preparation;
- Providing supportive services to ensure apprentice success (such as tools, uniforms, equipment, books, childcare, or transportation);
- Recruiting employers and industry intermediaries through business services outreach;
- Contributing funding for on-the-job learning (OJL) or related instruction (often referred to as related technical instruction);
- Supporting employers and partners through the program development process;
- Connecting businesses with training providers to provide related instruction;
- Advising businesses and partners on sources of funding to support RAPs and their apprentices; and
- Possibly serving as RAP sponsors.

This resource is designed to help state apprenticeship expansion teams and workforce system partners understand the structure of each other's work, consider five dimensions of system alignment, and explore strategies to strengthen alignment. The System Alignment Checklist on

page 16 provides a tool to help states identify areas of strength and opportunities to better align the Registered Apprenticeship and workforce development systems.

Background on the Registered Apprenticeship and Workforce Systems

About the Workforce System

The public workforce system is a network of federal, state, and local government-funded agencies and programs that helps job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and that matches employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. The system includes nearly 550 state and local workforce development boards that coordinate and leverage workforce strategies with education and economic development stakeholders within their local communities and approximately 2,400 AJCs that deliver services to job seekers and employers. The system is authorized and funded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and collectively served 2.6 million job seekers nationwide in Program Year 2020 through its Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker, and Wagner-Peyser Employment Services programs.¹

The public workforce system provides a variety of services for job seekers, including job search assistance, career readiness training, college and career navigation, services for in- and out-of-school youth, and information on and funding for skills training.² Specialized programs also serve adult learners and individuals with disabilities. The workforce system also provides services for employers, such as recruiting and screening job applicants, support for On-the-Job Training (OJT), and customized training.



¹ WIOA Titles I and III National Performance Summary, Program Year 2020.

² Urban Institute. (2022). The public workforce system: Local workforce system guide. <https://workforce.urban.org/topics/public-workforce-system>

Workforce development activities and investments extend well beyond those funded by WIOA. Key partners of the public workforce system include workforce training and educational institutions, state and local governments, funders, employers, business intermediaries (e.g., chambers of commerce and economic development organizations), labor organizations, and others. Other publicly funded workforce development and education programs include the Trade Adjustment Assistance program, [GI Bill for veterans](#), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and National Farmworker Jobs Program, as well as [career and technical education](#) through the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V). Additionally, [community colleges](#) are part of the public workforce system and provide numerous credit and noncredit programs that improve workers' skills. Federal financial aid programs, such as the Pell Grant program and federal loan programs, also provide funding to support skill development. There are numerous other programs and initiatives that receive state and local funds and are part of the public workforce system. Coordination between public workforce system programs funded directly under WIOA and other publicly funded workforce development programs varies significantly by state and locality.³

About Registered Apprenticeship and the Registered Apprenticeship System

RAPs are industry-driven programs that combine paid OJL (often referred to as OJT) with related instruction to progressively increase workers' skill levels and wages. As participants in an “earn-and-learn” model, apprentices are employed and earn wages from the first day on the job.



RAPs are a flexible training strategy that can be customized to meet the needs of any business. RAPs can last for one to six years, depending on the occupation. Apprentices typically receive a minimum of 2,000 hours of OJL and a recommended minimum of 144 hours of related instruction. The U.S.

³ Urban Institute. (2022). What is a local workforce system? The public workforce system. *Local workforce system guide*. <https://workforce.urban.org/topics/public-workforce-system>

Department of Labor (DOL) has identified over 1,200 [apprenticeable occupations](#).⁴

RAPs also provide an effective, business-driven model for employers to recruit, train, and retain highly skilled workers. They allow workforce partners, educators, and employers to develop and apply industry standards to training programs, thereby increasing the quality and productivity of the workforce. As RAPs are a job from day one, this approach provides immediate employment and offers advancement along a



career path as apprentices complete their training. RAP graduates receive nationally recognized, portable credentials, and their training can frequently be applied toward further post-secondary education.

Oversight and governance of the Registered Apprenticeship system is provided by DOL. In 25 states and territories, DOL staff (state apprenticeship directors, multi-state navigators, and apprenticeship training representatives) register apprenticeship programs and apprentices; provide technical assistance; and conduct reviews for compliance with 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) parts 29 and 30, which includes quality assurance assessments. In 29 states and territories, the DOL-recognized State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) performs these responsibilities. SAA states are required to have a State Apprenticeship Council, which operates in an advisory role under the direction of the SAA.

State governments play a key role in U.S. apprenticeship expansion efforts. As leaders in workforce development, education, and economic development, states are natural partners in Registered Apprenticeship, and DOL sees them as key facilitators and drivers of Registered Apprenticeship expansion. Since 2016, DOL has invested nearly \$650 million to help states support strategic Registered Apprenticeship functions and increase the capacity of the Registered Apprenticeship system in the United States to create new RAPs and increase the number of registered apprentices. States use grant funds to support (1) increased capacity for

⁴ An apprenticeable occupation is one which is specified by industry and which must: (a) involve skills that are customarily learned in a practical way through a structured, systematic program of on-the-job supervised learning; (b) be clearly identified and commonly recognized throughout an industry; (c) involve the progressive attainment of manual, mechanical, or technical skills and knowledge which, in accordance with the industry standard for the occupation, would require the completion of at least 2,000 hours of OJL to attain; and (d) require related instruction to supplement the OJL (29 Code of Federal Regulations 29.4).

development, modernization, and diversification of RAPs; (2) partnerships and alignment to facilitate the integration of apprenticeship into workforce and education systems; (3) efforts to increase the number of apprentices enrolled in RAPs, including apprentices from underrepresented and underserved populations; and (4) innovation in program development and recruitment strategies.⁵

What are the benefits of aligning the Registered Apprenticeship and Workforce Systems?

Increasing alignment between the Registered Apprenticeship and workforce development systems offers many benefits to both systems, as described in the following table.

Benefits for Apprenticeship Expansion	Benefits to the Workforce System
<p>The workforce system, with its network of local workforce boards and AJCs, can help provide the infrastructure and capacity to operate the Registered Apprenticeship system at a larger scale.</p> <p>Accessing federally funded workforce development infrastructure, programs, and services will allow states to effectively sustain a greatly expanded Registered Apprenticeship system for years to come.</p> <p>The workforce development system has a significant footprint in key industry sectors and can extend the state’s apprenticeship outreach capacity to businesses.</p> <p>The workforce system serves millions of job seekers each year and has resources to support quality pre-apprenticeship programs that create on-ramps to Registered Apprenticeship for nontraditional populations.</p> <p>The workforce system can fund supportive services, which can introduce improvements and services to RAPs that increase the success of apprentices and support the success of underrepresented and underserved populations.</p> <p>The workforce system can help businesses reach a larger and more diverse pool of workers, as required under the apprenticeship Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) regulations.⁶</p>	<p>Registered Apprenticeships can provide workforce system customers access to a proven work-based learning strategy with strong outcomes. Apprenticeship’s “earn-and-learn” model is ideal for many served by the workforce system, as it combines OJL with related instruction, offering immediate employment opportunities as well as continuing career development.</p> <p>Registered Apprenticeship is fully aligned with employer-focused, work-based training that is a key focus of WIOA programs.</p> <p>Features of Registered Apprenticeship, including its flexibility, opportunities for immediate earnings, and emphasis on partnerships, make it an effective strategy to meet workforce system goals.</p> <p>The outcomes attained by apprentices and graduates of RAPs can lead to strong WIOA performance results.</p> <p>Adopting Registered Apprenticeship as a workforce strategy can help advance the goals of WIOA—a transformed public workforce system that improves employment opportunities for job seekers and workers through an integrated, job-driven system that links diverse talent to the nation’s businesses.⁷</p>






⁵ For more information, see [States as Key Drivers and Facilitators of Apprenticeship Expansion](#).

⁶ For more information, see [29 CFR 30.4](#) and this [Outreach and Recruitment Quick Reference Guide](#).

⁷ These benefits are described in [Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 13-16](#).

Dimensions of Registered Apprenticeship and Workforce System Alignment

States working to increase alignment between their Registered Apprenticeship and workforce development systems can do so across several dimensions, ranging from strategic planning and governance to service delivery to funding and outcomes. This guide presents opportunities for alignment across five dimensions:

				
<i>Strategic planning, policy, and governance</i>	<i>Business engagement and RAP development</i>	<i>Apprentice recruitment and support</i>	<i>Funding to support RAPs</i>	<i>Data and outcomes</i>

Strategic Planning, Policy, and Governance



States undertake regular strategic planning and policy development efforts to guide their workforce development investments and activities, in coordination with their economic development and education plans. Below are specific ways that Registered Apprenticeship expansion can be integrated into these plans and policies.

WIOA state and local plans. WIOA requires state workforce development boards to develop a unified state plan that outlines a four-year strategy for the WIOA programs. This plan must include an analysis of the workforce needs and workforce development activities in the state and a description of the state’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce and meeting the workforce needs of employers. Each local workforce development board, in partnership with appropriate chief elected officials, must also develop and submit a comprehensive four-year plan to the governor. State apprenticeship teams can work with state boards to build robust Registered Apprenticeship expansion strategies into the statewide plan. They can also work with state boards to provide detailed guidance to local workforce areas on how to integrate Registered Apprenticeship into local plans. Finally, they can work directly with local boards to build robust apprenticeship strategies into local plans and to support their implementation.

State and regional workforce board membership. Under WIOA, state and local workforce development boards must include a member of the Registered Apprenticeship system. This connection helps the workforce system align investments in skills training, career counseling, pre-apprenticeship programs, and other services with RAPs, and helps the Registered Apprenticeship system identify and pursue opportunities to align business engagement and apprentice recruitment efforts.

State policies and procedures. States create policies and procedures for local workforce development boards that provide direction on service design and delivery to customers. Examples include policies and procedures related to business services, job seeker referral, work-based learning, and OJT. These policies can include specific strategies for alignment with Registered Apprenticeship, as well as detailed processes and clearly articulated roles and responsibilities that can increase consistency across the state.

Business Engagement and RAP Development



The emphasis on work-based learning and business engagement in WIOA provides an opportunity for the workforce system to integrate Registered Apprenticeship into its business services portfolio. Since employers are at the center of the Registered Apprenticeship model, it automatically brings industry to the table. By working together, both the Registered Apprenticeship system and WIOA-funded programs can align education and training with the needs of employers to help businesses recruit and retain the skilled workforce they need to succeed.

Business services programming, staffing, and capacity. The workforce system has a range of business engagement staff members and capabilities, and these roles and activities vary from state to state. Some states have state staff assigned to focus on business engagement with particular industry sectors. Local workforce areas have a range of staff members who interact with businesses, including business services representatives (BSRs), Local Veterans' Employment Representatives, staff in the state's office of vocational rehabilitation, staff in the work-based learning unit, and community college staff. In some states, these staff members educate local businesses about the benefits of Registered Apprenticeship, including how it differs from apprenticeships that are not formally registered; assist them in developing standards; and connect them with appropriate state or federal apprenticeship staff. Local workforce development boards are involved in reaching out to employers, promoting RAPs as training and upskilling solutions, and encouraging employers to register as RAP sponsors.

Sector strategies and career pathways. Sector strategy and career pathway efforts provide a framework for integrated education and training systems where key partners, including workforce, education, economic development, and human services, come together to design and deliver a full spectrum of training, education, and related services that support the growth of talent needed to fill critical jobs in high-demand industries. RAPs, as a critical component of robust career pathways, provide students, job seekers, and workers with a combination of related instruction and paid OJL that enables participants to quickly develop their skills and apply and hone them in relevant work contexts. Full integration of pre-apprenticeship programs and RAPs into states' education and workforce systems will result in more comprehensive career pathways that benefit both businesses and workers.

Aligning Career Pathways

[Registered Apprenticeship and Career Pathways in Massachusetts](#) provides ideas, strategies, and resources that can be used to explore how pre-apprenticeship and RAPs can be better leveraged and aligned to help students, job seekers, and workers move along career pathways.

Workforce boards serving as RAP sponsors. Local workforce boards can serve as RAP sponsors themselves. Concerns about “the paperwork” and processes associated with Registered Apprenticeship often stand in the way of employers' becoming program sponsors, even if they are otherwise interested in adopting the Registered Apprenticeship model. Local workforce boards, acting as intermediaries, can play a significant role to reduce administrative burden to employers, as well as to support Registered Apprenticeship activity across businesses of all sizes and human resource capacities. Many local boards across the country are stepping up to play this role, often in collaboration with industry councils or sector partnerships.

Local Board Sponsors

[GuilfordWorks, a local workforce board in North Carolina](#), is the sponsor of a competency-based program in three industry tracks: welding, cybersecurity, and computer support. As this program grows, GuilfordWorks plans to expand into new industries.

[West Michigan Works!](#) is a Registered Apprenticeship sponsor for 28 occupations across healthcare, advanced manufacturing, construction, and information technology.

Apprentice Recruitment and Support



The workforce system can play a range of roles that contribute to recruitment and support of a diverse and qualified pool of apprentices as they prepare for, participate in, and complete RAPs.

Case management, career counseling, and job search assistance. Assessment and career

Registered Apprenticeship-Focused Career Advisors

[Maricopa County, AZ](#) has two career advisors who work exclusively with RAPs. They conduct orientations at the apprenticeship site and oversee enrollment into WIOA, which includes a needs assessment (e.g., tools, boots, clothing) and processing the required paperwork so that, in many instances, individuals don't need to go to the local AJC to receive these services.

planning can help to identify a WIOA participant who is a good fit for a RAP. Through case management, local workforce professionals can identify the service strategies and supports necessary to overcome any barriers to entry and completion of a RAP. Pre-vocational services, language skills, and job readiness may be provided under WIOA to prepare participants to enter into RAPs. WIOA funds can also be used to fund quality pre-apprenticeship programs that provide basic skills, work experiences, and other supports to help participants obtain the skills needed to enter and succeed in a RAP.

Recruitment of diverse apprentices. The workforce system can be an excellent recruitment source for RAPs by generating referrals from all demographic groups, thus helping sponsors fulfill their responsibilities under [the Apprenticeship EEO regulations](#). The workforce system can establish approaches to identify potential apprentices and clear points of entry into RAPs for job seekers. As part of this effort, it is critical that real-time information about open Registered Apprenticeship positions and opportunities be available to the public. Apprenticeship and workforce partners can collaborate to promote Registered Apprenticeship opportunities in their region through websites, knowledgeable employment services, and other staff. These strategies will also help workforce system case managers prioritize relevant apprenticeship opportunities for their clients.

Quality pre-apprenticeship programs and pre-vocational services. WIOA funds can be used to help Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker program participants obtain the foundational skills needed to be placed into a Registered Apprenticeship. For Youth program participants,⁸ quality pre-apprenticeship programs can be provided under the Work Experience program element. For participants in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs,⁹ pre-vocational services, which may comprise basic skills remediation, including computer literacy and work experiences, can support participation in a quality pre-apprenticeship. WIOA Title II Adult Education programs are also increasingly looking at ways to create quality pre-apprenticeships to serve their adult learners.

⁸ See WIOA Section 129.

⁹ See WIOA section 134.

Supportive services. WIOA includes funding to provide supportive services to eligible participants based on local policy that is consistent with state parameters. Supportive services may include tools, uniforms, work boots, transportation, childcare support, training and testing costs, housing support, and other activities and supports that may be necessary to enable an individual to successfully participate in WIOA-funded training services. WIOA Adult program participants can only receive supportive services funding if they are currently participating in a WIOA-funded career or training program. WIOA Youth program participants may receive supportive services as identified in the youth’s Individual Service Strategy, during both program participation and as part of follow-up services.

Research indicates that many apprentices withdraw during the first year of their RAP due to childcare and transportation issues. Addressing these issues, by using WIOA funds or through partner referrals for services, can assist WIOA participants in entering and successfully completing RAPs. Supportive services can assist apprentices in successfully participating in the OJL component and/or the related instruction component of an apprenticeship. In either case, individuals are able to participate in the RAP because they have the necessary support(s).

Partnerships with education and human services. The workforce system has robust partnerships with secondary and post-secondary education partners, adult education programs, and human services programs such as TANF and SNAP. Leveraging these partnerships can increase the diversity of the apprentice candidate pool and ensure that at-risk job seekers have opportunities to pursue participation in RAPs. These partnerships also offer opportunities to leverage additional funding sources for supportive services and training costs for WIOA-eligible participants.

Partnering for Pre-Apprenticeship

Through the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board’s Valley 2 Virginia program, the Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center is offering [a manufacturing technician training pre-apprenticeship](#) program for people with disabilities.

Over 16 weeks, students learn entry-level manufacturing and workplace skills to prepare them for specialized apprenticeship programs across Virginia.

Funding



WIOA funding can support a number of RAP components, all of which can be provided through partners in the workforce system. This funding helps reduce costs for businesses and apprentices, particularly for the startup of new programs. As mentioned previously, WIOA funds can be used to support RAP sponsors and apprentices through recruitment, screening, case management, quality pre-apprenticeship, and supportive services. They can also be used for the core elements of RAPs—OJL and related instruction.

OJL. Structured mentoring of apprentices by experienced workers is a key component of every RAP and is often described by the term “On-the-Job Learning” or OJL. Mentors support, advise, and instruct apprentices on the job. WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker program funding can be used to cover a portion of the supervision and extraordinary training costs associated with mentors overseeing an apprentice, equivalent to up to 50 percent of the apprentice’s wage rate (and 75 percent under special circumstances). The OJL is funded through a contract with the employer, not through individual training accounts (ITAs), and OJL contracts can cover one or multiple apprentices.

Related instruction. Under the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, classroom training is funded through ITAs, and ITAs can be used to support the costs of related instruction in an apprenticeship.¹⁰ To take advantage of potential ITAs, the apprenticeship program must be on the state’s eligible training provider list (ETPL).¹¹ Under WIOA, all RAPs are automatically eligible for the ETPL, and each state has a process in place to ensure this happens. In addition to ITAs for individual apprentices, contracts for cohort training are also available and could be used to support related instruction for a group of apprentices. For the WIOA Youth program, funds can pay for tutoring services, which can help youth apprentices succeed in related instruction.

Upskilling incumbent workers. WIOA permits local workforce development boards to use a small percentage of their funds for incumbent worker training.¹² Employers operating RAPs can leverage these dollars to help train their current workers, and local boards can ensure quality programming and outcomes by targeting incumbent worker training toward proven work-based learning solutions like Registered Apprenticeship.

¹⁰ Under WIOA Title I, training services may be provided to WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth program participants through ITAs. ITAs may be established on behalf of eligible individuals to fund occupational classroom training and approved web-based training from the state-approved eligible training provider list.

¹¹ WIOA requires states to maintain a list of providers approved to offer training—based on their ability to deliver training and education for in-demand occupations—to individuals eligible to receive WIOA ITA funds. Federal law calls this list the ETPL. RAPs are automatically eligible to be placed on the ETPL based on each state’s process for ETPL application and inclusion. Detailed information about the ETPL and Registered Apprenticeship can be found in [Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 8-19](#) as well as [Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 8-19 change 1](#).

¹² See WIOA sec. 134(d)(4).

Support for apprentices. Prior to entry into a RAP, workforce partners may provide potential apprentices with skill and interest assessments, case management and connection to barrier mitigation and career planning resources, quality pre-apprenticeship programs, basic skills training, work experiences, and other types of support. Once enrolled in a RAP, apprentices may benefit from ongoing case management and support services such as transportation, books, supplies, and childcare, as well as follow-up services to eligible individuals.

Data and Outcomes



The workforce system has a robust data and outcomes infrastructure that can be a valuable resource for Registered Apprenticeship expansion efforts. States managing DOL-funded state apprenticeship expansion grants can leverage their state’s WIOA case management system to track grant participants. The workforce system also captures data about apprenticeship services provided to WIOA-funded participants, helping the state understand and track the depth of its system alignment efforts.

WIOA case management and data tracking systems. The administration of WIOA funds requires state workforce agencies to maintain robust case management and data tracking systems. Many states have found ways to leverage these systems to support the case management and participant-level data tracking requirements of state apprenticeship expansion grants from DOL, either through co-enrollment or by adding components that allow apprenticeship-grant-specific tracking.

WIOA grants management and compliance expertise. State agencies overseeing WIOA funding have extensive experience with managing both formula-funded and competitive grants from DOL. These experts can be a useful source of information about DOL reporting systems, grant requirements, subrecipient monitoring, and other important grants management practices to support state offices receiving DOL-funded state apprenticeship expansion grants.

Registered Apprenticeship and positive WIOA performance outcomes. RAPs can help local workforce system entities—including local workforce development boards and AJCs—meet targets on important workforce system performance metrics. In addition to successfully meeting the needs of employers and job seekers, partnerships with RAPs can positively impact workforce system outcomes across many key measures, such as:

WIOA Funding to Support Registered Apprenticeship

[The Gulf Coast Workforce Development Board \(Texas\)](#) works with local Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to fund related instruction and OJL, as well as providing supportive services that include things like tools and work boots for WIOA-eligible apprentices. They report that case management and career coaching throughout the apprenticeship are paramount and must be delivered consistently to ensure success.

- **Employment**—An apprenticeship is a job, so job seekers enter employment when they begin a RAP. If they remain in their RAP during the second quarter after exit and, separately, during the fourth quarter after exit, that’s a positive outcome for both of WIOA’s employment rate metrics.
- **Earnings**—Apprentices earn progressive wage increases commensurate with skills acquisition. This generally means positive outcome on the Median Earnings metric under WIOA.
- **Credential Attainment**—Apprentices earn a national, industry-recognized credential upon completion.
- **Skill Gains**—Apprentices achieve training milestones, such as completing a year of the program or mastering specific competencies.

EXAMPLES: WIOA FUNDING SUPPORT FOR REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP AND OUTCOMES

- A WIOA participant could receive any combination of services, which could include pre-apprenticeship, training, and support services leading to placement in an apprenticeship. Upon entering the apprenticeship program, the individual could be exited from the WIOA program and counted as a positive placement for the second quarter after exit employment rate.
- The workforce system could provide continuing services after the WIOA participant begins a RAP. Once an individual is placed into a RAP, the cost of supportive services or classroom training (i.e., the related instruction component) may be covered.
- The workforce system may also incentivize an employer sponsor to hire WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker participants by reimbursing the employer for a portion of the OJT, per WIOA guidelines. The length of the OJT contract will not cover the entire duration of the RAP; it can, however, help offset the initial costs associated with onboarding a new apprentice.
- Once WIOA-funded services (OJT, supportive services, classroom training, etc.) have ended, an individual would be exited from the WIOA program and counted as a positive outcome for employment in the second quarter after exit and, if retained, a positive outcome for employment in the fourth quarter after exit. Only credentials that are earned by an apprentice while enrolled in WIOA and up to one year following exit from WIOA can be counted. Where tracking of earned credentials is required, the workforce system would track possible interim credentials earned by the apprentice while co-enrolled.

Strategies to Strengthen Alignment

States use a variety of strategies to build alignment between their Registered Apprenticeship and workforce development systems.

Relationship building

States are investing time and resources in building relationships between Registered Apprenticeship and workforce system leadership and staff. Learning about each other's programs, developing common terms, and developing clear processes and communication systems are essential to building alignment and partnerships that produce results.

Process mapping

States are documenting key business engagement, RAP development, outreach, and apprentice recruitment processes and identifying specific roles for workforce system staff, including case managers, BSRs, and others. Tennessee has a [detailed process map](#). For more information, see this resource on [mapping the apprenticeship program registration process](#).

Memoranda of understanding (MOUs)

States, local areas, and key Registered Apprenticeship partners are using MOUs and other interim documents, such as letters of commitment, to articulate roles, responsibilities, and performance outcomes. For example, in Texas, the community colleges enter into MOUs with RAPs to [define specific courses for which the apprentice may receive college credit](#) upon completion of the apprenticeship.

Staffing

Some states are creating and funding positions in local workforce areas to play the role of navigators or apprenticeship success coordinators, and many of these positions are aligned with or part of workforce system business services teams. These positions build the capacity of the apprenticeship system by working one on one with businesses to get the program development paperwork/processes underway and to vet interest and viability before passing them on to Office of Apprenticeship state offices or SAA teams that approve standards. For example, Michigan funds [apprenticeship success coordinators](#) in each of its local workforce areas to assist companies with developing a RAP and to help connect career seekers to Registered Apprenticeship opportunities.

Cross-training and communities of practice

States are investing time and resources to offer ongoing training to workforce system partners on Registered Apprenticeship and their role. They are also creating integrated communities of practice that include both apprenticeship and workforce system staff. Strong partnerships between these two systems bring together expertise with programs and funding, ways to engage specific populations, communication channels and opportunities for sharing about successes, new funding streams, opportunities to scale success for growth, and other benefits. For examples of training resources and communities of practice developed in Michigan, Iowa, Idaho, and Colorado, visit this [State Expansion Grantee Training Materials](#) resource page.

Conclusion and Resources

Aligning the Registered Apprenticeship and workforce development systems is a key component of bringing apprenticeship to scale in the United States. Because both systems are flexible and reflect the unique needs of each state, there are many ways to approach such systems alignment. This resource has presented a range of examples across five possible dimensions, along with a number of tactics states have used to achieve alignment success. The resources below offer opportunities for further reading on the value of alignment. The System Alignment Checklist on page 16 provides a tool to help states identify areas of strength and opportunities.

Resources

The following resources are available to support states in their work to increase alignment between the Registered Apprenticeship and workforce systems.

[Collaboration Opportunities: WIOA Youth Programs and Apprenticeship](#)

[Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 13-16](#) provides information about Registered Apprenticeship in WIOA, including sponsors as eligible training providers, state and local boards, the use of WIOA funding, reporting, and suggestions on coordination.

[Training and Employment Notice No. 13-12](#) defines a quality pre-apprenticeship program and provides related tools and resources.

[Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 08-19](#) identifies actions that states can take to meet requirements for training providers, program eligibility, and the state ETPL.

[Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 08-19, Change 1](#) provides clarification on RAPs as WIOA Title I eligible training providers.

[The State of Apprenticeship Among Workforce Boards](#)

[How Workforce Development Boards and Apprenticeship Programs Help Close America's Skills Gap](#)

System Alignment Checklist

State apprenticeship and workforce development teams are invited to use this checklist to reflect on their current state of alignment and identify action steps that will help them further their alignment goals.

	Current Status	Next Steps
Strategic Planning, Policy, and Governance		
We have held strategic planning sessions to discuss efforts to align the Registered Apprenticeship and workforce systems.		
Our WIOA state plan includes a robust strategy for the expansion of Registered Apprenticeship.		
Our state’s guidance to local workforce development boards on local area plans includes instructions on how to integrate apprenticeship expansion into their strategic planning.		
Local WIOA plans include Registered Apprenticeship expansion and alignment strategies.		
We have active apprenticeship representatives on the state workforce development board and all local boards.		
State WIOA policies related to local area planning and service delivery in the workforce system include Registered Apprenticeship, where appropriate.		

	Current Status	Next Steps
Our state’s WIOA Title II Adult Education program is pursuing opportunities to align integrated education and training programs with RAPs through quality pre-apprenticeship.		
Our state’s WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation program understands our Registered Apprenticeship expansion goals and is developing strategies to connect clients to RAP opportunities.		
Business Engagement and RAP Development		
We have identified roles for workforce system business engagement staff and created clear processes for referring businesses to appropriate points of contact for RAP development and registration.		
We have a clear approach to integrating Registered Apprenticeship into existing sector strategies and career pathway activities.		
We provide training to workforce system business engagement staff on Registered Apprenticeship and our state’s processes for program development and expansion.		
We provide training to apprenticeship staff so they know what other workforce services can be offered to sponsors before and after program registration.		
We provide information and support to local workforce boards on how to become intermediary program sponsors.		

	Current Status	Next Steps
Apprentice Recruitment and Support		
Case managers understand RAPs, know how to identify whether a WIOA participant is a good fit for a RAP, and understand how to support participants in RAPs.		
Job seekers and case managers can easily find real-time apprenticeship openings in our state.		
We use WIOA programs to expand quality pre-apprenticeship activities that prepare job seekers to enter RAPs.		
Local workforce boards are aware of new RAPs developed in their region and support sponsors in their apprentice recruitment strategies.		
We regularly co-enroll apprentices in WIOA where possible to support their success.		
State and local education and human service partners are part of our apprenticeship partner network and understand their role in apprenticeship expansion in our state.		
Funding		
Local workforce boards and AJC staff have participated in training on how to use WIOA funds to support Registered Apprenticeship.		
Local boards have the necessary policies and processes in place to ensure WIOA program funds are utilized to support the key components of RAPs—OJL and related instruction.		

	Current Status	Next Steps
We track how local boards use funding to support Registered Apprenticeship and recognize those that do so.		
Data and Outcomes		
The state apprenticeship team knows who the key personnel are in the state workforce agency who have experience with WIOA data collection and reporting.		
The state apprenticeship team has met with the state workforce agency to discuss how Registered Apprenticeship contributes to positive WIOA outcomes.		
Case managers understand the reporting requirements related to apprenticeship and can gather the needed information in data management systems.		

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