



## The Value of Registered Apprenticeship for Adult Learners

[Registered Apprenticeship](#) programs can be an ideal entry point for adult learners into high-quality, industry-validated career pathways for in-demand occupations that pay a family-sustaining wage. [Pre-apprenticeship](#) programs are specifically designed to help individuals prepare for successful entry into, and persistence to complete, a Registered Apprenticeship program. These programs are uniquely beneficial for adult learners because they are designed to accommodate career transitions and often build upon, and provide credit for, adult learners' previous education and work experience. **Specifically, Registered Apprenticeship programs provide adult learners with:**

- **Practical Experience While Learning.** Apprentices have the opportunity to immediately apply what they learn in the classroom to build real-world skills. Work-based learning under the mentorship of an experienced professional ensures that apprentices can build knowledge in context rather than merely trying to understand abstract concepts.
- **Financial Benefits.** Apprenticeships are jobs. Apprentices earn a paycheck while learning critical skills that organizations need to sustain operations and be competitive. Apprentices earn progressive wage increases, determined by the employer, over the course of their apprenticeship in recognition of their skill building. Because employers typically provide paid tuition or educational support as part of the related instruction component of an apprenticeship program, apprentices do not need to take on student debt to advance in their career pathway.
- **Career Advancement.** In addition to being a paid job, employers typically retain successful apprenticeship program completers as full-time permanent roles for the occupation which they trained. In fact, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) reports that [94% of successful apprenticeship program completers are retained by the employers](#) following program completion, making an average annual salary of \$80,000. In addition, most programs demonstrate to apprentices how their apprenticeship training is part of a longer-term career pathway to encourage retention.

- **Credentialing and Certifications.** All successful apprenticeship program completers earn at least one nationally recognized portable occupational credential from the DOL or a State Apprenticeship Agency and most programs embed the opportunity to earn at least one or more industry-validated credentials or certifications. In addition, many program sponsors offer coursework from community or technical colleges or universities that award college credit that can be applied toward an academic certificate or degree.
- **Skill Development.** Registered Apprenticeship programs enable adult learners to gain technical skills specific to an in-demand trade/profession, as well as critical “soft” or “employability” skills like communication, teamwork, and problem-solving in real workplace situations. Apprenticeship programs also often incorporate critically needed digital and information literacy skills. Apprentices also learn industry-current technology and methods, and often benefit from a structured support system within an apprentice cohort or through a training partner or service provider.
- **Personal Development.** Adult learners benefit from increased confidence through skill mastery, development of mentorship relationships for ongoing professional development, and the ability to continue an academic-linked career pathway to earn academic certificates or degrees.

State and local support for pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs not only benefits adult learners but also **creates additional, significant benefits for communities and key stakeholders** such as:

- **State and Local Workforce Development.** While reducing barriers for career changers, Registered Apprenticeship programs can also create new opportunities for rural and urban economic development and accelerate small business growth through skilled worker development. Creating a more highly skilled local workforce pipeline for in-demand occupations can address both immediate, critical labor shortages in key sectors and reduce the likelihood of longer-term skills gaps.
- **Economic and Employer Benefits.** According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, [every \\$1 invested in apprenticeships generates \\$28 in public economic benefits](#); DOL also commissioned a report showing that American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI) employers reported a [positive 44.3% return on every \\$100 they invested in apprenticeship](#). Effective Registered Apprenticeship programs can reduce unemployment costs and increase tax revenue through higher wages while addressing critical labor shortages in key sectors.
- **Social Benefits.** Registered Apprenticeship programs put adult learners on a pathway for long-term careers that pay competitive, family-sustaining wages, accelerating intergenerational economic mobility and reducing the likelihood of long-term reliance on public assistance.

Learn more at [Apprenticeship.gov](https://www.apprenticeship.gov) and access resources at the [DOL Registered Apprenticeship Technical Assistance Center of Excellence website](#).