



## Registered Apprenticeship Sponsor Responsibility

### **What is an apprenticeship sponsor?**

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) describes an apprenticeship sponsor as any person, association, committee, or organization that operates a Registered Apprenticeship (RA) program. This entity assumes the full responsibility for administration and operation of the apprenticeship program. Sponsors can be a single business or a consortium of businesses; a workforce intermediary, such as an industry association or a labor-management organization; or a community college, workforce board, or community-based organization.

**Note:** A program sponsor takes on the legal responsibility of ensuring that the program is operated in compliance with the federal apprenticeship regulations at [Title 29 CFR parts 29 and 30](#). Sponsors have historically included employers or labor management organizations, but more recently represent a range of other organizations (described above) that must have a formal relationship with businesses that employ apprentices.

### **What is the principal role of the apprenticeship sponsor?**

Sponsors typically recruit, screen, and hire apprentices, or work with employers to do so. They develop formal agreements with apprentices identifying the length of the program, skills to be learned, the wages to be paid at different points in time, the development of the equal employment opportunity plan, and the required classroom instruction; and work with state apprenticeship agencies (SAAs) or DOL to make sure that their registered programs meet state and federal requirements.

### **What does a sponsor have to do to ‘register’ an apprenticeship program?**

To register an apprenticeship, a sponsor submits an application to the applicable registration agency (either DOL or the appropriate SAA). The application template must include a work process schedule that describes the competencies that the apprentice will learn and how on-the-job training and related instruction will teach those competencies. The application must also include a schedule of wage increases for the apprentice, a description of safety measures, and various assurances related to program administration and record keeping.

### **The four roles that are required for a high-quality apprenticeship program:**

- 1) Sponsor: the entity responsible for managing and administering the program
- 2) Employer: the essential partner for on-the-job learning (OJL)
- 3) Educational provider: the entity responsible for the provision-related training and instruction

- 4) Supportive service provider: the stakeholder(s) that brings resources to assist in the development and training of apprentices

### **Why should community colleges serve as apprenticeship program sponsors?**

Community colleges, workforce boards, and other intermediary organizations are increasingly serving as sponsors for RA programs. An active program sponsor does the “heavy lifting” of setting up an apprenticeship program by completing the required paperwork, setting the standards with employers, and arranging related instruction. Non-employer sponsors reduce the administrative burden of employers, allowing them to focus on on-the-job training, mentoring, and the apprentices. Community colleges are well positioned to serve as apprenticeship sponsors if they have the staff with required apprenticeship knowledge, skills, and expertise to perform this function well. Other advantages colleges bring to the table include:

- Knowledge of local and regional labor market demands.
- Expertise with assessment, curriculum, and skills development.
- A trusted partner for employers, students, and community-serving organizations.
- A resource for diverse students and workers, and a bridge to the untapped workforce.
- Partnership with local workforce agencies and funding opportunities.

### **RA sponsor responsibilities:**

The following is a list of responsibilities of the sponsor of a DOL RA program. The sponsor can register and operate its RA programs state by state, or they can register and operate a program on the national level. Although overall responsibility remains with the RA sponsor, the breadth and depth of each of the responsibilities can be shared and delegated to other entities participating in the RA program (e.g., employers, education providers, apprentices).

#### **1) Development of RA program:**

- Working with an employer(s), determine occupation(s) for which to build an RA program
- Determine program type: time-based, competency-based, hybrid
- Determine type of registration—national guidelines, national standards, state, or DOL / Office of Apprenticeship (OA)
- Develop related technical instruction (RTI) for each occupation
- Develop OJL competencies/metrics for each occupation
- Develop and accept Standards of Apprenticeship contract (boilerplate)
- Develop and accept appendices to standards
- Work Processes / RTI and Wage Scale (one for each occupation)
- Apprenticeship registration agreements
- Affirmative action plan (due two years from date of registration)
- Qualifications and selection procedures

- Employer acceptance agreement (if needed)
- Familiarity with RAPIDS registration system (the system used by the DOL to track registered apprentices)

## **2) Registration of RA program with federal/state OA:**

- Establish relationship with appropriate OA entity
- Determine where to register standards (national / state SAA / state OA office)
- Submit and present standards and appendices for review and approval by OA entity

## **3) Registration of approved RA program with other state agencies:**

- Determine where to register approved RA programs in the state
- Apply with the state workforce agency to be included on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)
- Register approved RA program with state's Veterans Affairs state approving entity, or under the Valor Act, for GI Bill benefits
- If registering with DOL, also register the approved program with the SAA for potential funding and/or support services of state funds

## **4) Registration of additional participating employers into approved RA program:**

- Identify employer(s) interested in participating in RA program
- Review program standards and all appendices with employers
- Modify appendices if necessary, making minor adjustments
- Secure employer acceptance agreement (with modifications) and signatures
- Identify employer's provider of RTI delivery and secure them on ETPL
- Identify employer's mentors for OJL delivery
- Identify and/or define employer's apprentice performance review process

## **5) Registration and monitoring of participating employer's apprentices—RAPIDS:**

- Access both state and federal RAPIDS and registration tools
- Register all new apprentices entering programs
- Update apprentice status (termination/completion)
- Update apprentice RTI and OJL completions
- Update apprentice wage-scale increases
- Request/award DOL certificates of completion to apprentice graduates

## **6) Monitoring of participating employer RA programs and quality control:**

- Monitor and review apprentice selection and hiring processes
- Monitor and review apprentice wage-scale increase process
- Monitor and review education provider's RTI delivery
- Monitor and review employer mentor's OJL delivery
- Monitor and review employer's apprentice performance review process

**7) Reporting on RA programs and RA apprenticeships (state/federal):**

- Provide reporting on all new and existing RA programs
- Provide reporting on newly registered apprentices (e.g., demographic info)
- Provide reporting on terminated registered apprentices
- Provide reporting on completed/graduated registered apprentices

From DOL's [www.apprenticeship.gov](http://www.apprenticeship.gov)

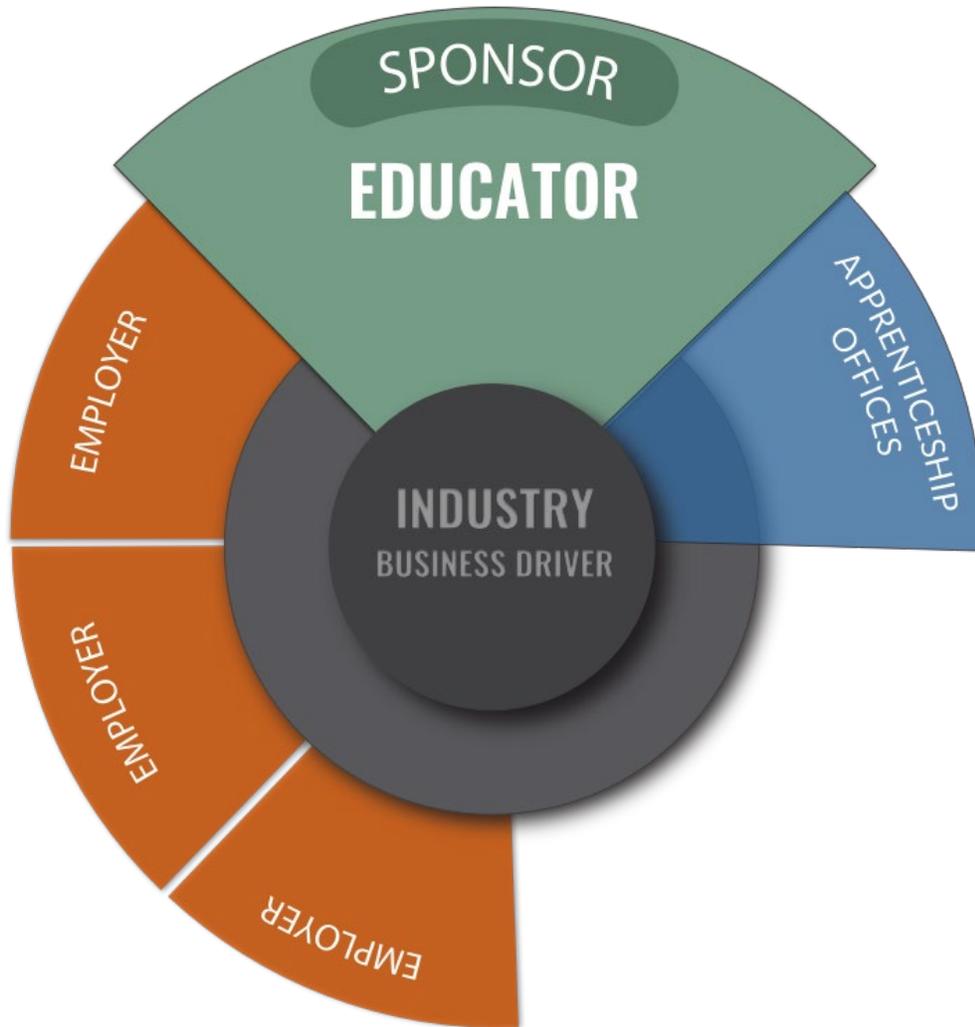
**Determine the sponsor model that is right for you:**

Understanding what you need to achieve allows you to better select a program partner model that is right for you. [Click on this link to see some of the most common apprenticeship partner models that leverage different sponsors.](#) The models below can help inform how you might approach and customize your own apprenticeship. The most relevant model for education-sponsored apprenticeships follows on the next page:

**Educator-sponsor model:**

Educational and instructional providers build partnerships with employers in their geography to develop industry-driven curriculum, enhance their reputation, and ensure students are connected with high-quality jobs. Employers have access to a pool of strong candidates and can leverage curriculum and classroom training delivered by the educational provider.

**Educator-sponsor model:**



**Educator sponsor:**

- Provides technical assistance for training plan development
- Develops curriculum for related instruction
- Delivers related instruction to apprentices

**Apprenticeship office:**

- Provides apprenticeship expertise to aid in program creation
- Provides technical assistance to sponsor throughout the program lifecycle

**Multiple employers:**

- Each employer signs single-page agreement with sponsor
- Each employer recruits and screens its apprentices
- Each employer provides on-the-job training