

Educate Maine

Intro to Registered Apprenticeship with Educate Maine: A Comprehensive Guide

Educate Maine: Our Role in Your Apprenticeship

Mission: Educate Maine works to improve career readiness and increase educational attainment for all Mainers. We aim to connect education with careers, ensuring that students and workers are equipped to succeed in the Maine workforce.

Role in Apprenticeship: Educate Maine is an *intermediary sponsor*, meaning we help manage and support registered apprenticeship programs on behalf of, and in partnership with, employers. We act as a bridge between employers, apprentices, education providers, and the Maine Department of Labor. Our goal is to make it easier for companies to run apprenticeship programs by providing support from the development phase all the way through each apprentice's completion of the program. In addition to supporting employers, we also serve as a resource for apprentices. We connect with apprentices during their onboarding, throughout their program, and upon completion to ensure they are having high-quality experiences and can access supportive services outside of their employer, if needed.

What are the components of a Registered Apprenticeship Program?

1. Paid Job

- Registered Apprenticeships offer paid on-the-job learning experiences, meaning apprentices receive payment for work throughout the program.
- The apprentice's pay will increase according to a "wage scale" as they advance in the program—essentially, the more skills they acquire, the higher wages will be.
- Apprentices are considered regular employees in the same way that their supervisors and mentors are. "Apprentice" may or may not be in their official job title, but the apprenticeship program is intended to signify to everyone in the company that this individual is in a period of formalized training & development.

2. Structured On-the-Job Training (Steps and Standards)

- A benefit of registered apprenticeship is that the position the apprentice is training for is broken down into specific steps and standards that align directly

with daily tasks. This way, no matter who the apprentice is and no matter who is training them, all staff can ensure that the training experience is consistent, fair, and high quality.

- These steps and standards, known as a “Schedule of Work” are outlined on the document titled “Appendix A.” *Note: All apprentices should receive a copy of the Schedule of Work/Appendix A during their onboarding and have it explained to them.*
 - In **competency-based** apprenticeships, the apprentice will work with their mentor and supervisor to track their progress by checking off each skill as they master it.
 - In **time-based** apprenticeships, the apprentice will collaborate with their mentor and supervisor to create a system for tracking the hours they work on each skill.
 - In **hybrid** apprenticeships, the apprentice will work with their mentor and supervisor to track the time spent on each skill and check off each skill when deemed mastered/proficient.

3. Mentorship – Personal & Professional Development

- Mentors play a key role in supporting both technical skill development and personal growth by providing one-on-one guidance and feedback throughout the apprenticeship.
- At the start of their apprenticeship, each apprentice must be paired with a designated mentor within the company. The mentor can be their direct supervisor, another experienced employee, or a trusted figure within the company’s HR or leadership.
- Together, the apprentice and mentor should establish a regular schedule for check-ins, especially if they don't naturally work closely on a daily basis.
- Mentors will use their own job experience to answer questions and provide insights, helping apprentices navigate their path within the company and through the registered apprenticeship program.

5. Related Technical Instruction (RTI)

- RTI is the classroom-based or online education component of an apprenticeship program. For every 2000 hours of On the Job training, apprentices must complete 144 hours of related technical instruction. Apprentices and employers work together to determine the scheduling of RTI during and/or around their regular work schedules.
- RTI may include safety trainings, professional development, in-house training modules, obtaining necessary licenses or certifications, or classes provided by local or online educational providers.

- RTI complements on-the-job training by providing foundational knowledge, additional context, and addressing occupation-specific challenges that may not naturally arise often enough for an apprentice to fully learn and master those skills on the job.

6. Nationally Recognized Job Credential

- A **nationally recognized job credential** is a certification awarded to apprentices by the state of Maine upon completing a registered apprenticeship program. It confirms that the apprentice has met specific industry training standards and possesses the skills and knowledge required for that occupation.
- This credential is valid for life (does not expire) and is recognized across the country, allowing the apprentice to easily share their proficiency and qualifications to employers nationwide, not just in their local area or state.