



# Fact Sheet on Quality Pre-Apprenticeship for Registration Agencies

## What are Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Programs?

In 2016, the U.S. Department of Labor’s (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) published two final rules ([EEO in Apprenticeship Final Rule - 29 Code of Federal Regulations \[C.F.R.\] 30.2](#) and the [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Final Rule - 20 C.F.R. 681.480](#)) that provided updated definitions of pre-apprenticeship programs and greater clarity and definition of pre-apprenticeship programs. In 2024, ETA published [Training and Employment Notice \(TEN\) No. 23-23](#) to provide additional pre-apprenticeship definitions and guidance that outlines the **five core characteristics** of quality pre-apprenticeship programs. These include:

1. Partnership with registered apprenticeship program sponsors
2. Sustainability through partnerships
3. Meaningful training combined with hands-on experience replicating a workplace that does not displace paid employees
4. Access to career and supportive services
5. Increased access for underrepresented or underserved populations

To read ETA’s guidance, visit [TEN 23-23 at DOL.gov](#).

## Benefits of Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Programs for Registration Agencies

Quality pre-apprenticeship programs offer substantial benefits for registration agencies, including the following:

**Establish a pipeline of apprentices:** Quality pre-apprenticeships develop a stronger pipeline of apprentices to registered apprenticeship programs to promote registered apprenticeship and bolster overall enrollment. Quality pre-apprenticeships also allow employers to explore new occupations for apprenticeship by first testing training through a pre-apprenticeship model before fully registering the apprenticeship program. This, in turn, can increase the number of individuals in registered apprenticeship programs and strengthen the overall system in a state.<sup>1</sup>

**Strengthen registered apprenticeship programs:** Quality pre-apprenticeship programs prepare individuals to succeed in registered apprenticeship programs by providing hands-on experience, job readiness training, and support services. This can lead to higher retention and completion rates for registered programs.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Principles for a High-Quality Pre-Apprenticeship | CLASP.org](#)

<sup>2</sup> [What are Pre-Apprenticeships and Why Do They Matter | Apprentiscope.com](#)



**Strengthen the registered apprenticeship ecosystem:** Quality pre-apprenticeship programs include partnerships with at least one registered apprenticeship sponsor. This fosters closer connections between programs and helps align training with employer needs, benefiting registration agencies overseeing apprenticeships.<sup>3</sup>

**Increase opportunity in apprenticeships:** Focusing on targeted recruitment and support services, pre-apprenticeships can facilitate entry for individuals living in low-income communities, women, people of color, youth, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and individuals who reside in rural communities. This helps registration agencies meet their recruitment and retention goals in apprenticeships. Quality pre-apprenticeship programs also help prepare all individuals to meet the minimum entry requirements for registered apprenticeships. This expands the pipeline of qualified candidates for sponsors and registration agencies.

**Build partnerships with federal partners:** Registration agencies can partner with federal agencies that embed pre-apprenticeship program requirements or funding into their funding guidelines. These federal partners include agencies like the Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Commerce (DOC), and others.

## How can Registration Agencies Enable High-Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Programs?

**Advise:** Disseminate DOL's Training and Employment Notice 23-23, which outlines the five core elements of quality pre-apprenticeship programs, to offer guidance and share best practices for these key elements. Develop state-level policies, regulations, or guidance highlighting quality standards for pre-apprenticeship programs.

**Encourage:** Emphasize documented partnerships between quality pre-apprenticeship programs and at least one registered apprenticeship program sponsor. Encourage registered apprenticeship sponsors to collaborate with quality pre-apprenticeship providers on activities like curriculum input, mentorship, direct entry, etc. Consider a sponsor's engagement with quality pre-apprenticeship programs as a positive factor during apprenticeship registration reviews.

**Promote:** Highlight successful pre-apprenticeship program models by showcasing them on [apprenticeship.gov](https://www.apprenticeship.gov) and state agency websites. Share case studies and effective strategies from quality pre-apprenticeship initiatives across different industries and populations.

**Support:** Provide technical assistance and resources to pre-apprenticeship program sponsors. These might include training sessions, workshops, or webinars for pre-apprenticeship providers on developing quality programs aligned with the DOL framework. You can also provide tools to support quality pre-apprenticeships in the form of curriculum, partnerships, supportive services, and more.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid



**Fund:** When developing apprenticeship grant solicitations, if possible, consider including funding opportunities for creating or expanding quality pre-apprenticeship programs, as was done in the recent round of Apprenticeship Building America grant solicitation.<sup>4</sup> Consider asking grant applicants to outline plans for quality pre-apprenticeship partnerships as part of their proposals. Additionally, work with federal partners like the DOE, DOL, and the Department of Health and Human Services to evaluate and provide input on the pre-apprenticeship programs they fund. If applicable, reinforce consistency in applying the DOL's quality pre-apprenticeship framework across federally funded initiatives.

### Explore the Registered Apprenticeship Academy Today!

The Registered Apprenticeship Academy is DOL's hub for training and development related to registered apprenticeship. For more information, visit [Registered Apprenticeship Academy | Apprenticeship.gov](https://www.dol.gov/raacademy) or email [raacademy@dol.gov](mailto:raacademy@dol.gov).

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<sup>4</sup> [FAQs – Apprentices Building America2 | DOL.gov](#)