

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP DATA FAQs



What is a Registered Apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship combines on-the-job training and related instruction, enabling participants to earn money while they learn a particular set of skills. Registered Apprenticeships meet certain national criteria and allow participants to earn nationally recognized certificates of completion certifying occupational proficiency. There are about 448,000 Registered Apprentices nationwide. In addition, some employers sponsor non-registered apprenticeship programs, but there are no reliable estimates of the number of these programs or the number of apprentices they serve.

What is the Governance Structure of the Registered Apprenticeship Program?

Administration of Registered Apprenticeships is somewhat fragmented. In 25 states, the Office of Apprenticeship (OA) at the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) directly registers and oversees apprenticeship programs. In the other 25 states, and the District of Columbia, OA delegates administrative duties to select state agencies, referred to as State Apprenticeship Agencies (SAA's).

Where is Data from the Registered Apprenticeship Program Maintained?

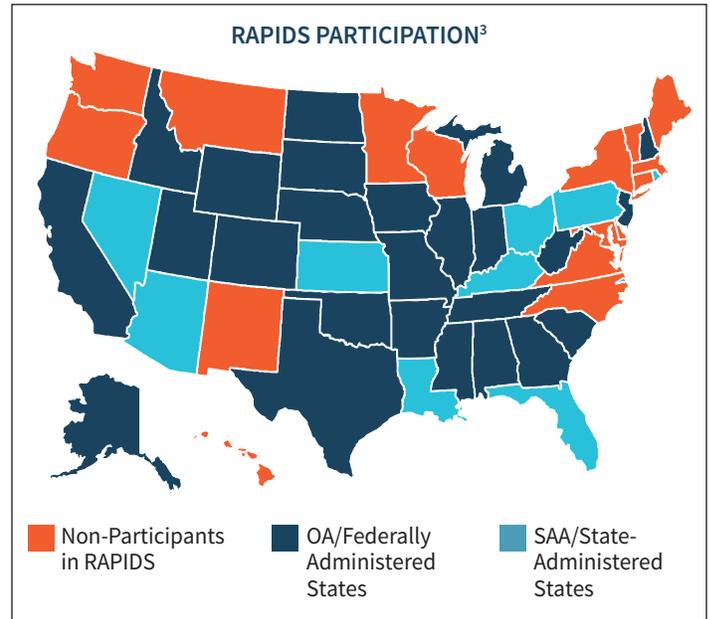
RAPIDS: There is no single repository of data from all Registered Apprenticeship programs, but data from the majority of programs is maintained in the Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Data System (RAPIDS). RAPIDS contains individual-level data from the 25 state programs administered by OA, as well as nine state programs administered by SAA's. Non-participating SAA's report aggregate data to OA on a quarterly basis.¹

State Longitudinal Data Systems: Additionally, a handful of state longitudinal data systems include data from the Registered Apprenticeship program.² While neither federal grant program for longitudinal data systems requires states to include apprenticeship data in their systems, Workforce Data Quality Initiative Grants (which are provided by DOL to enhance state workforce longitudinal databases) do encourage it.

What Data is Collected?

RAPIDS Participants: RAPIDS contains information about apprentices and Registered Apprenticeship programs.

- **Apprentice Data:** Data on apprentices includes demographic information (age, race, etc.), education level, contact



information, and current enrollment status in an apprenticeship program (incomplete registration, registered, completed).

- **Program Data:** Data on Registered Apprenticeships includes the duration of on-the-job instruction, the related instruction provider, the employer identification number of the entity employing the apprentice, apprentice wage rates, and the type of program (single or multiple employer, covered or not covered by a collective bargaining agreement).

RAPIDS Non-Participants: SAA's that don't participate in RAPIDS submit aggregate data about apprentices and programs to DOL quarterly.

- **Apprentice Data:** Apprentice data includes the total number of apprentices served during the reporting quarter, the number of completion certificates issued, average beginning and ending wages, and demographic information.
- **Program Data:** Program data includes the total number of active programs, the number of employers served, and the number of programs using various approaches to apprenticeship training (competency-based, etc.).

Non-Registered Apprenticeship Programs: At the federal and state levels, no data is collected about non-registered apprenticeship programs.



What are the Shortfalls of Registered Apprenticeship Data?

No Comprehensive Centralized Database: As described above, 16 states and the District of Columbia do not contribute data to RAPIDS. This makes standardized analysis of Registered Apprenticeship programs difficult.

Lack of Publically Accessible Information: RAPIDS data is not accessible to the public, and OA's website posts only limited apprenticeship data.⁴ A consumer friendly public facing tool would be useful to potential apprentices, employers, program sponsors, and researchers.

Non-Uniformity of Skills Underlying Certificates: Each apprentice who completes a Registered Apprenticeship program earns a nationally recognized credential from DOL. However, standards for some programs are approved by OA, while others are approved by SAA's. Accordingly, programs may vary across states, so two certificate holders may not have the same training and competencies. (This issue impacts many types of credentials, including degrees awarded by different colleges.)

What Performance Metrics Could Demonstrate a Successful Registered Apprenticeship Program?

Outcomes which may be useful for Registered Apprenticeship programs include:

Credential Attainment: Everyone who completes a Registered Apprenticeship program is entitled to a certificate of completion from OA. Counting the number of certificates issued would show growth in the program over time, and measuring the proportion of apprentices receiving certificates would reveal whether apprentices are successfully completing their programs. In addition, a metric aligned with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act could measure whether participants earn other types of credentials up to a year after finishing their apprenticeships. Credentials like certifications, licenses, diplomas, or degrees strengthen signaling to employers that apprentices have particular competencies.



Employment Outcomes: Data about whether or not apprentices are employed after completion, and in which industries or occupations they are employed, would show whether apprentices are gaining market-relevant skills. It is also important to track whether apprentices retain employment over time with the employer who sponsored their apprenticeship. Because employers in the Registered Apprenticeship program invest in training apprentices to find well-qualified workers, often for a particular hiring need, continued employment allows employers to recoup their investment in training and hiring the apprentice.

Wages: Data about wages during the apprenticeship would show whether apprentices are being paid a fair wage during their training. Data about wages after completion would show whether graduates are earning family sustaining incomes. Median wage outcomes at various time intervals would show whether apprenticeship graduates keep or increase those wages throughout their careers.

Outcomes by Demographic: Registered Apprenticeship programs should be equitable. Accordingly, employment and wage outcomes, as well as certificate attainment, should be calculated for various underrepresented demographics. This would help to ensure that all participants achieve similar results.

Employer Return on Investment: Although there are currently studies underway about the value of apprenticeships to employers, a successful apprenticeship program may be as valuable to the employer as it is for the apprentice. Because employers can pay apprentices less than already-trained workers, they may be able to save enough money on wages to recoup program costs.⁷ Additionally, apprenticeship programs may save money for employers by reducing employee turnover and the associated costs of frequent hiring (advertising, recruitment), as well as increasing employee productivity.⁸ Combined, these benefits can increase an employer's bottom line. Cost/benefit analysis would show whether employers are getting a positive return on their investments in Registered Apprenticeship programs.

- 1 These states are Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin.
- 2 These states include: Nebraska, North Carolina, Texas, and Washington.
- 3 "A Descriptive Analysis of the U.S. Department of Labor's Long-Term Care Registered Apprenticeship Programs," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, accessed March 18, 2016, <https://aspe.hhs.gov/report/descriptive-analysis-us-department-labors-long-term-care-registered-apprenticeship-programs>
- 4 Ben Olinky and Sara Ayres, Training for Success: A Policy to Expand Apprenticeships in the United States (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress) available at https://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/apprenticeship_report2.pdf.
- 5 Because all completers are entitled to a certificate from OA, the number of certificate holders per year is likely identical, or very similar to these numbers.
- 6 "Data and Statistics," United States Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration, accessed March 18, 2016, https://www.doleta.gov/oa/data_statistics.cfm.
- 7 Christina Breitbeil, "The Advantages of Apprenticeships," Real Clear Policy, accessed March 7, 2016, http://www.realclearpolicy.com/blog/2014/06/24/the_advantages_of_apprenticeships_987.html.
- 8 "Benefits for Worker & Employer," Washington State Department of Labor and Industries, accessed February 29, 2016, <http://www.lni.wa.gov/TradesLicensing/Apprenticeship/About/Benefits/>.