

Orientation for Registered Apprenticeship

A Resource for Virginia Department of Labor and Industry Workforce and Education Partners
State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA)



A. Introduction:

This brief orientation will provide valuable guidance to newcomers to the employment training model called Registered Apprenticeship (RA). In 1937, the Fitzgerald Act established the federal law that mandated that a Registered Apprenticeship program exist in each state and territory as detailed in the law. The United States Department of Labor (USDOL) could take up presence in a state for the purpose of running the program, or states had the option to create and fund their own RA program. The Department of Labor and Industry is the designated State Apprenticeship Agency for the Commonwealth of Virginia. More information on the Fitzgerald Act/National Apprenticeship Act can be located on the USDOL website by following this link <https://www.doleta.gov/OA/history.cfm>.

The Regulations were then created to produce minimum standards and a consistent, national voice to accomplish the intent of the Fitzgerald Act. 29CFR29 - Labor Standards for the Registration of Apprenticeship Programs are the regulations that serve as our over-arching guidance for administering the RA program. More information on 29CFR29 can be located by following the below link:

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=e2d1490b9ec2caf3500201ab401bbc87&mc=true&node=pt29.1.29&rgn=div5>

The Registered Apprenticeship Program has been administered by the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) since 1938 following enactment of the Virginia Voluntary Apprenticeship Act under Virginia Code §40.1-117 The Virginia Voluntary Apprenticeship Act can be located by the following this link:

<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/40.1-119>

The Registered Apprenticeship Program serves all types of employers: private companies, and local state and federal governments, not for profit companies, Unions or Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees, sole proprietors, or groups serving as intermediary sponsors.

The Registered Apprenticeship Program serves all types of industries given their occupations meet the requirements of the guidance noted above. The most familiar occupations using RA are the building trades and the personal service trades. Electricians, bricklayers, plumbers, ironworkers, carpenters, HVAC mechanics are some of the building trade occupations. Barber, cosmetologist, nail technician are some of the latter category. Emerging occupations are daycare teachers, Cybersecurity technicians, cooks, water authority technicians, vineyard managers, dairy graziers, and investigators. More occupations adopt the RA model each year.

Apprenticeship can begin at age 16 (under state and federal safety guidelines) with no upper age limit. We serve all abilities based on bona fide qualifications of the job. Registered Apprenticeship remains neutral and steady in serving any employer who registers their apprenticeship program and employs, mentors and trains an apprentice.

To view the listing of Apprenticeship Occupations visit the Department of Labor Employment and Training (DOLETA) website at the following link:

<https://www.doleta.gov/OA/occupations.cfm>

B. The Division of Registered Apprenticeship Organizational Structure:

DOLI has a Headquarters office for the Division of Registered Apprenticeship with a Director, an Assistant Director, two Administrative Assistants and two Apprenticeship Related Instruction Education Specialists. In addition, we have 14 Registered Apprenticeship Consultants and their service areas can be found on our website at the following link:

<https://www.doli.virginia.gov/apprenticeship/apprenticeship-consultants/>

Basic duties of the Registered Apprenticeship Consultant

The main job performance elements of the RA Consultant are twofold. First, they must maintain the existing RA sponsors' program by serving their apprentices and monitoring the employer's participation. This is non-intrusive, but does include some practices required as stated in the overarching regulations governing RA nationwide, 29CFR29. Secondly, the Division conducts outreach through presentations, info-sessions and one-on-one meetings with employers and interested partners. This orientation and other educational materials are to inform citizens of the parameters of RA, and to encourage adoption of the model as appropriate.

It is the responsibility of the RA Consultant and headquarters staff to promote the apprenticeship program to prospective employers, and potential apprentices. We work with the businesses in the initial registration paperwork, the progressive wage decisions and the related technical instruction (RTI) choices. Per 29CFR29:

Related instruction means an organized and systematic form of instruction designed to provide the apprentice with the knowledge of the theoretical and technical subjects related to the apprentice's occupation. Such instruction may be given in a classroom, through occupational or industrial courses, or by correspondence courses of equivalent value, electronic media, or other forms of self-study approved by the Registration Agency.

A more practical way to designate approved RTI is as follows:

- Career and Technical Education – within the public school system
- Vocational or Technical Centers
- 4 year colleges or Universities
- Community College
- On-line/correspondent coursework
- Sponsor delivered – with oversight and approval of an Education Specialist
- Customized/specialized training – as in immersion training such as Police Academies, OSHA Safety Institute, Northwest Lineman training

To view the occupations Virginia is currently serving visit the DOLI website at the following link:
<https://www.doli.virginia.gov/apprenticeship/active-virginia-occupations/>

(NOTE: SOME OCCUPATIONS ARE MILITARY IN NATURE AND MAY OR MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN THE PUBLIC/PRIVATE SECTOR.)

C. Frequently Asked Questions:

Visit DOLI's website for more information on Registered Apprenticeship by following the below link:

<https://www.doli.virginia.gov/apprenticeship/frequently-asked-questions-registered-apprenticeship/>

Here are some bullet points that answer other questions which arise:

- There is no RA program without an employer, an apprenticeable occupation and an apprentice.
- Apprentices must be paid at least Federal minimum wage.
- Safety for the apprentice is of paramount importance.
- The employer and the RA Consultant will work with occupation job descriptions to create or adapt a work process for the apprenticeship. Many work processes already exist for many occupations, and allow for flexibility in design. The work process is the property of the employer and will not be shared unless with express permission by the employer.
- An apprentice or the employer may terminate their relationship at any time.
- An apprentice may transfer into another apprenticeship.
- Prior credit for relevant work experience and related technical instruction may be granted as determined by the employer, the RA Consultant and if necessary the Education Specialist.
- Completing an RA program is recommended so that journeyworker status is achieved.
- The Commissioner of DOLI signs the completion credential.

D. Intersection of Services:

The RA Division works uniquely with each of the Workforce partners. For example, as the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) currently conducts Rapid Response services, there are instances in which they seek references to RA sponsors who might be in recruitment while a lay-off may also be occurring. Recently, when some Richmond area grocery stores shut down, ~~some~~ select employers were introduced to the Rapid Response team through the RA Consultants.

Local Virginia Jobs Investment Program (VJIP) consultants have crafted relationships with RA Consultants, as have grantees with grant awards that require RA to meet the grant award. The Division has a relationship with the Department of Veteran Services as RA is beneficial to utilization of GI bill benefits. The Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services has brought their Business Services team together with our RA Consultants for collaborative work.

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Division, the higher education institutions and the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) are providers of occupation related instruction. As our Division expands, as statewide plans for infrastructure build, the providers will have an opportunity to expand as well. With conventional RA programs, current well established training protocols are sufficient to help the apprentice get through to credentialing.

DOLI is open to collaborative efforts that support the ongoing and expanding utilization of the Registered Apprenticeship model. As our first 80 years has proven, the model stands the test of time and adapts to employer needs. The Division of Registered Apprenticeship looks forward to continuing to serve the Commonwealth in the development of a world class workforce.