

Attachment E

Apprenticeship Evidence-Building Portfolio

**State Apprenticeship Systems Capacity Assessment Semi-Structured Interview
Protocol for Employer Partner Staff**

Apprenticeship Evidence-Building Portfolio State Apprenticeship Systems Capacity Assessment

Employer Partner Staff Discussion Guide

INTRODUCTION

I am/we are researchers with The Urban Institute/Mathematica, private research organizations based in the Washington, DC area that conduct policy-related research on a variety of social welfare and economic issues. This project is being conducted under a contract to the U.S. Department of Labor.

Our interview today is for a study of state apprenticeship systems and partnerships that support Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor. During this interview, we want to better understand how your state apprenticeship system works and learn more about how your company partners with [name of state agency or local lead organization] to support [\[add in topics of focus for this interview/state\]](#). We will also be interviewing state apprenticeship staff and representatives, local organizations, and other employers who are engaged in apprenticeship activities.

Privacy Statement: We expect the interview to take approximately one hour. I/we know that you are busy and we will be as focused as possible and will only ask questions that are relevant to your experience. We have many questions and will be talking to many different people, so please do not feel as though we expect you to be able to answer every question. Your participation in this interview is voluntary and you may choose not to answer some or any of our questions. We will do everything we can to secure the privacy of the information you provide, but the technical limitations with Zoom and other internet platforms mean that we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of what is said. Also, we ask that you consider using headphones or finding a private space to talk so that other people cannot hear or see this conversation. We believe the risks of participating in this study are minimal.

While there may be no direct benefits to you, we believe your participation in this study will benefit DOL and the broader apprenticeship field by providing research insights on how apprenticeship programs can be strengthened to benefit workers and industry.

My colleague and I will be taking notes in order to document what we hear during our discussion, and we may record this discussion. We do not share these notes with anyone outside of our research team, including Department of Labor, and we will destroy these notes after the end of our project. When we compile our reports, the names of individual respondents will not be included. If we choose to quote you, you will only be identified by your title. You will not be quoted directly by name in any of our reports. While it is possible that you might be identified by your title, we will do our best to minimize the chance of that occurring.

Finally, to help us accurately capture the information you share, we would like to record this interview. The recording is just a back-up for our notes and will be kept within our small research team. The interview recording will be deleted once we have developed a full set of notes from the interview.

<p>OMB Burden Statement: According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is XXXX-XXXX. The time required to complete this collection of information is estimated to</p>

average 60 minutes, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed and complete and review the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Chiefevaluationoffice@DOL.gov and reference the OMB Control Number **XXXX-0NEW**.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

[If we decide to record the interview] Are you okay with us recording the interview to improve the accuracy of our notes?

Do I have your permission to begin the interview? [\[BEGIN INTERVIEW IF CONSENT GRANTED\]](#)

I. Respondent/Company Background

1. Information about the respondent(s):
 - a. Name, title, organization, role in apprenticeship activities
 - b. Length of involvement with the company and with apprenticeship
2. Information on the company:
 - a. Industry and size of employer, occupations for apprenticeship
 - b. Local economic context (worker shortages, industry growth or technology changes, characteristics of the local workforce)
 - c. Goal for companies involvement in apprenticeship
 - d. Company's apprenticeship activities
 - e. Company's budget/spending on apprenticeship activities (e.g., wages, supervisors/mentors, time on clock/tuition support for RTI, management/HR time for oversight and reporting)
 - f. Estimate of how many of the company's employees work on apprenticeship (in addition to the apprentices)
 - g. Sponsored apprenticeship programs and number of apprentices (current and past)
 - h. Connections to the local apprenticeship staff/local lead organization

II. State and Local Partnerships to Support Employer's Apprenticeship Activities

1. Description of partnership with local lead organization (goals, role, resources, strategies)
2. Partnerships with other local institutions/organizations (goals, role, resources, strategies)
 - a. Workforce development boards/American Job Centers
 - b. Employer/industry
 - c. Community colleges and other training providers

- d. Non-profit/community organizations
 - e. School districts, career-technical high schools
 - f. Other
3. Partnerships with statewide entities (goals, role, resources, strategies)
 - a. State apprenticeship agencies or regional Office of Apprenticeship
 - b. State workforce agency/workforce development board
 - c. Industry associations
 - d. Unions or other labor organizations
 - e. State higher education agency
 - f. Other
 4. Resources/funding to support partnerships
 5. Outcomes
 6. Successes and challenges of partnerships
 7. Sustainability of partnerships
 8. Added value of partnerships

III. The COVID-19 Pandemic and Apprenticeship

1. Effect of COVID on apprenticeship for your company
 - a. Program operations (shutdowns/layoffs, reduced access to worksite, industry changes, RTI access)
 - b. Recruitment of apprentices
 - c. Outcomes for apprentices (completion, retention in jobs)
 - d. Other
2. Strategies to address challenges in partnership with the local lead organization
 - a. Virtual delivery of on-the-job training and related instruction
 - b. Virtual delivery of supports (e.g., mentoring)
 - c. New/enhanced partnerships
 - d. Changes to resources/funding
 - e. Changes to deployment of resources
 - f. Changes to policy and regulations
 - g. Other
3. Successes and challenges
4. Strategies that will last beyond pandemic

IV. Apprenticeship in Rural Areas and to Combat the Opioid Crisis

1. Rural apprenticeship
 - i. Goals for company's use of apprenticeship in rural locations
 - ii. Apprenticeship program design and strategies

- iii. Partnerships to support rural-based apprenticeships
 - iv. Funding/supports from local partners
 - v. Apprentice recruitment strategies
 - vi. Outcomes for company and apprentices
 - vii. Sustainability and future plans
 - viii. Successes and challenges
 - ix. Added value/return on investment
2. Apprenticeship strategies to combat the opioid crisis in partnership with the local lead organization/partners
 - i. Goals for company's involvement in apprenticeship to combat opioid crisis
 - ii. Funding/supports from local partners
 - iii. Occupations of interest (e.g., counselors, community health workers)
 - iv. Partnerships
 - v. Target populations
 - vi. Outcomes
 - vii. Sustainability and future plans
 - viii. Successes and challenges
 - ix. Added value/return on investment

V. Financial Incentives to Expand Apprenticeship

1. Knowledge of state/local government policies or initiatives that support employer involvement in apprenticeship activities
2. Company's use of financial incentives offered by the state or others to support company's involvement in the apprenticeship
3. Company's use of state and local supports (e.g., registration, apprentice recruitment, related training instruction, technical assistance) for apprenticeship
4. How these financial/other support influenced company's involvement in apprenticeship activities
5. Successes and challenges
6. Added value of incentives/supports

VI. Efforts to Increase Diversity in Apprenticeship

1. Company's goals for increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in workforce/apprenticeship programs (racial, gender, etc.)
2. Targeted populations
3. Resources/funding
4. Partners
5. Strategies for recruitment, placement, and retention

6. Outcomes
7. Successes and challenges
8. Sustainability and future plans
9. Added value/return on investment

VII. Employer Recruitment

1. How company was recruited for apprenticeship
2. Decision to move forward with apprenticeship activities
3. Decision on what occupations were apprenticeable for your company
4. Role of financial incentives
5. Partners
6. Successes in and challenges with recruitment process

VIII. Registration of Apprenticeship Programs [Note: tease out differences between SAA and OA states]

1. Steps in registration process
2. Length of time from start to finish
3. Resources/funding
4. Support received and satisfaction with process
5. Challenges/"pinch" points during process
6. Changes/improvements to process over time
7. Successes
8. Future plans

IX. Company's Data Infrastructure and Performance Measurement for Apprenticeship

1. Reporting apprenticeship activities/data
 - a. RAPIDs or other state and local reporting
 - b. Data collection
 - c. Ease/difficulty of process
 - d. Supports needed/used
 - e. Changes desired
2. Company's own measures for success for company/apprentices
 - a. Outcomes of interest (both measured and not measured)
 - b. Data used to measure/collection and analysis process
 - c. Use of data by company (tracking apprenticeship process, return on investment calculations, decisions about continuing program)