

HOW TO BECOME AN APPRENTICE

1 Get Ready!

Apprenticeships can follow graduation, or you can opt for a 2-year college program that leads directly to an apprenticeship. If you are a junior or younger, prepare for this pathway by taking the following actions:

- Ask about career exploration activities and skill-building opportunities.
- Be sure to take courses (usually in STEM fields) that prepare you.
- Join a program that allows you to earn college credit during high school, like Running Start or Career & Technical Education Dual Credit.
- Visit and research apprenticeship opportunities like any 2- or 4-year college or university. Be sure to pursue multiple options and create a backup plan, as programs are usually competitive.
- You may also be able to take part in a pre-apprenticeship program during or after high school. These programs can help you improve basic skills and learn about different careers.

2 Find a Program!

In some cases, you apply directly to an apprenticeship program; in other cases, you join an apprenticeship program through a community or technical college or an employer. To participate, you must be at least 18 years old, pass a drug test (including testing negative for marijuana, even if legal in Washington), and be physically able to perform the work.

- Each program and its application are different. Decide whether you want to apply directly for an apprenticeship before or after high school graduation or enroll in a 2-year college program that leads directly to an apprenticeship.
- Find out when the program is accepting applications. Be sure to ask if you are required to attend in person; travel may be necessary.
- You will most likely be required to submit a transcript and resume.
- You may need to take a test at a community or technical college, as many programs have prerequisites in math and reading comprehension.
- A committee typically conducts interviews with most applicants. You should prepare for an interview.
- Review individual program information through the WA State Department of Labor & Industries (L&I). See the programs in your area that are accepting applications through the Apprenticeship Registration and Tracking System (ARTS) on the L&I website at: Apprenticeship.Lni.wa.gov.

3 Apply!

Most programs accept applications regularly. To determine whether a program accepts applications, please contact them directly. To find Active Apprenticeship Programs:

- Go to the online Apprentice Registration and Tracking System (ARTS) and run a “Programs by County” report for the county where you live or work to view all the programs in that county, sorted by occupation.
- Review the entire list and select the appropriate program(s), which will provide you with the contact information for that program.
- Contact the program directly to inquire about their application acceptance status. If the program is accepting applications, follow their directions for applying.

Once you have applied and are accepted, the program will register you with Labor & Industries as a registered apprentice.

NOTE: You must obtain the appropriate license or trainee card if you are accepted into an occupation that requires licensing or certification in Washington State.

