



# PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT

A practical guide for workforce boards to share with prospective pre-apprenticeship providers

**Federal status at a glance.** Pre-apprenticeship programs are not Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP). The U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship does not directly oversee or regulate pre-apprenticeship programs in the same way it registers and oversees RAPs. DOL provides a federal definition in WIOA regulations for certain WIOA purposes and issues recommended quality/effectiveness frameworks. State law, grant terms, local policy, contracts, funding requirements, or other authorities may impose additional requirements.

**Updated September 2026 by ATR Nicole Field**  
**Based primarily on U.S. DOL TEN 05-26, Framework for Effective Pre-Apprenticeships**

# How to Use This Toolkit

This toolkit is designed for a local or regional workforce board to brand, adapt, and distribute to community-based organizations, education and training providers, employers, unions, Registered Apprenticeship sponsors, and other partners exploring a pre-apprenticeship pathway.

**Important.** This is a program-development and quality-assurance toolkit, not a federal registration application. A workforce board may use the tools to determine whether it will fund, refer participants to, recognize, list, contract with, or otherwise support a program. That local determination should not be described as U.S. DOL registration or approval.

## Recommended local terminology

| Use                                                           | Avoid unless legally accurate             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| “Workforce Board Reviewed Pre-Apprenticeship”                 | “DOL-Approved Pre-Apprenticeship”         |
| “Meets the Board’s Quality Criteria”                          | “Federally Registered Pre-Apprenticeship” |
| “Aligned with one or more Registered Apprenticeship Programs” | “Registered Pre-Apprenticeship”           |
| “Board-funded / Board-supported”                              | “DOL-certified”                           |

## Toolkit contents:

1. Pre-Apprenticeship 101 and federal framework
2. Provider readiness assessment
3. Partnership and governance tools
4. Registered Apprenticeship alignment verification
5. Program design worksheet
6. Curriculum alignment worksheet
7. Hands-on learning / work-based learning plan
8. Industry-recognized credential plan
9. Recruitment, eligibility, and participant flow
10. Career counseling and supportive services plan
11. Facilitated entry / transition-to-RAP agreement
12. Data, outcomes, and continuous improvement
13. Funding and sustainability planning
14. Workforce board quality review rubric
15. Implementation plan and launch checklist
16. Federal guidance and resource library

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 1. Pre-Apprenticeship 101 and Federal Framework

### What is pre-apprenticeship?

At the federal level, pre-apprenticeship is a program or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP). DOL's September 8, 2026 TEN 05-26 presents a current framework for effective pre-apprenticeships, reaffirms the connection to RAPs, and explains how pre-apprenticeship can be delivered across federally funded workforce and education programs.

[U.S. DOL TEN 05-26 - Framework for Effective Pre-Apprenticeships](#)

**Pre-apprenticeships are not federally regulated like RAPs.** Registered Apprenticeship Programs are registered and overseen by the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship or a recognized State Apprenticeship Agency. Pre-apprenticeship programs, by contrast, are not directly overseen or regulated by DOL OA in that manner. DOL's prior TEN 23-23 stated this expressly, and DOL research has likewise described pre-apprenticeships as not regulated. TEN 05-26 now replaces TEN 23-23 as the current federal framework.

### Regulation, guidance, and local requirements - do not confuse them

| Concept                              | What it means for this toolkit                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Registered Apprenticeship regulation | RAPs operate within the National Apprenticeship System and are registered/overseen by OA or a recognized SAA.                                                                             |
| WIOA regulatory definition           | 20 CFR 681.480 defines pre-apprenticeship for WIOA youth purposes and identifies program elements. This does not convert pre-apprenticeship into a federally registered program category. |
| DOL guidance/framework               | TEN 05-26 provides DOL's current framework for effective pre-apprenticeships. Guidance should inform local quality criteria.                                                              |
| Local/state/funder requirements      | A state, workforce board, grant, contract, or other funding source may impose additional conditions. Providers must verify applicable requirements before launch.                         |

### Core design principle

**Start with the destination.** A pre-apprenticeship should be designed backward from one or more real Registered Apprenticeship opportunities. Identify the RAP partner, occupation, entry requirements, skill expectations, anticipated openings, and transition mechanism before finalizing recruitment or curriculum.

## Pre-apprenticeship vs. Registered Apprenticeship

| Feature              | Pre-Apprenticeship                                                                 | Registered Apprenticeship                                    |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Primary purpose      | Prepare participants to enter and succeed in a RAP                                 | Train employed apprentices in a structured career pathway    |
| Federal registration | No federal pre-apprenticeship registration category comparable to RAP registration | Registered by OA or recognized SAA                           |
| Paid employment      | May or may not include paid work; depends on design and applicable law/funding     | Paid job is a core RAP feature                               |
| Progressive wages    | Not inherently required as a pre-apprenticeship feature                            | Core RAP feature                                             |
| OJL/mentorship       | May include hands-on/simulated/work-based learning                                 | Structured on-the-job learning and mentorship                |
| Credential           | Should plan for recognized credentials where appropriate/required                  | RAP completion results in a nationally recognized credential |
| RAP connection       | Essential to the pathway                                                           | Is the destination program                                   |

## 2. Provider Readiness Assessment

Prospective providers should complete this assessment before requesting workforce board funding, referrals, endorsement, or inclusion in a local pre-apprenticeship portfolio.

| Item                                                                                                                                | Yes                      | No                       | Needs Development        | Evidence / Notes |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| We have identified at least one target occupation and industry.                                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| We have identified at least one active RAP partner serving the target occupation.                                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| The RAP partner has reviewed or will review our curriculum for alignment.                                                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| We understand the RAP's minimum qualifications and selection process.                                                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| We can document how completers will receive facilitated entry, consideration, referral, or another meaningful transition mechanism. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| We have employer/industry input on skill needs.                                                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| We have qualified instructional staff and appropriate facilities/equipment.                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| We have a plan for meaningful hands-on learning that complies with wage-and-hour, safety, child labor, and other applicable laws.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| We have identified at least one relevant credential where appropriate.                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| We have a participant recruitment and eligibility process.                                                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |

| Item                                                                                            | Yes                      | No                       | Needs Development        | Evidence / Notes |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| We can provide or refer participants to career counseling and supportive services.              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| We have a budget and at least a 12-month sustainability strategy.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| We can collect participant, completion, credential, transition, employment, and retention data. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| We can protect participant data and obtain required releases/consents.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| We understand that workforce board review does not equal federal registration or DOL approval.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |

## Readiness decision

| Score / finding                         | Suggested action                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mostly Yes                              | Proceed to detailed program design and board review.                                                     |
| Several Needs Development               | Create a corrective action / development plan before recruitment.                                        |
| No RAP partner or no meaningful pathway | Do not market as a quality/effective pre-apprenticeship until the apprenticeship pathway is established. |
| Safety, legal, or funding uncertainty   | Obtain appropriate legal/programmatic guidance before launch.                                            |

# 3. Partnership and Governance Tools

Effective pre-apprenticeship is partnership-driven. The provider should define who owns each function and how decisions will be made.

| Partner                         | Recommended role                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pre-apprenticeship provider     | Program management, instruction, participant services, data, compliance with contracts/funding terms.                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| RAP sponsor                     | Validate occupational alignment; communicate entry requirements; support transition/facilitated entry; provide feedback on completion readiness. Make sure the RAP sponsor communicates this new partnership with the regulation agency that oversees their RAP so any previous credit is granted. |
| Employers                       | Define skill demand; provide exposure, work-based learning, interviews, or hiring opportunities where appropriate.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Workforce board/AJC             | Labor market information, participant recruitment/referral, WIOA eligibility/services as applicable, supportive services, funding, quality review, outcome tracking.                                                                                                                               |
| Education/CTE/community college | Instruction, credentials, credit articulation, facilities, academic support.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Union/labor partner             | Industry expertise, RAP sponsorship or linkage, worker voice, mentoring, occupational standards.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Community-based organization    | Outreach, case management, barrier reduction, trusted participant support.                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

## Partnership documentation checklist

| Item                                              | Yes                      | No                       | Needs Development        | Evidence / Notes |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Named RAP sponsor and point of contact            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Target occupation(s)                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Curriculum review/approval process by RAP partner | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Participant referral and selection process        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Facilitated entry or transition mechanism         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Data-sharing expectations and participant consent | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Employer/worksites responsibilities               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Supportive services responsibilities              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Safety and supervision responsibilities           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Communication cadence                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Term, amendment, and termination provisions       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |

## 4. Registered Apprenticeship Alignment Verification Form

**Required evidence.** The workforce board should verify the RAP relationship rather than relying only on the prospective provider's statement that a pathway exists.

| Field                                                           | Provider / RAP response                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pre-apprenticeship provider                                     |                                                                                                                 |
| RAP sponsor legal/program name                                  |                                                                                                                 |
| RAP registration agency                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. DOL Office of Apprenticeship <input type="checkbox"/> State Apprenticeship Agency |
| RAP registration/identifier (if available)                      |                                                                                                                 |
| Target occupation(s)                                            |                                                                                                                 |
| RAP geographic service area                                     |                                                                                                                 |
| RAP minimum age / education / other entry requirements          |                                                                                                                 |
| Required testing, license, credential, or physical requirements |                                                                                                                 |
| RAP starting wage / wage progression source                     |                                                                                                                 |
| Anticipated apprenticeship openings in next 12 months           |                                                                                                                 |
| Curriculum alignment confirmed by                               |                                                                                                                 |
| Facilitated entry / transition method                           |                                                                                                                 |
| Credit or advanced standing, if any                             |                                                                                                                 |
| RAP sponsor signature / date                                    |                                                                                                                 |
| Provider signature / date                                       |                                                                                                                 |

## Facilitated entry examples

- Direct entry when permitted by the RAP's standards and selection procedures.
- Guaranteed interview or priority consideration consistent with the RAP's lawful selection process.
- Reserved referral pathway or expedited application process.
- Recognition of specified pre-apprenticeship training, credentials, or competencies when permitted by the RAP.
- Joint transition event with applications, interviews, testing, or onboarding.

**Do not overpromise.** A pathway agreement should state exactly what a completer receives. "Connection to apprenticeship" is too vague for quality review. Do not promise direct entry unless the RAP can lawfully and operationally provide it.

## 5. Program Design Worksheet

| Design element                           | Program response                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Program name                             |                                                                                                    |
| Target population                        |                                                                                                    |
| Target occupation / industry             |                                                                                                    |
| RAP partner(s)                           |                                                                                                    |
| Cohort size                              |                                                                                                    |
| Program length (weeks/months)            |                                                                                                    |
| Total instructional hours                |                                                                                                    |
| Hands-on / work-based learning hours     |                                                                                                    |
| Delivery format                          | <input type="checkbox"/> In person <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| Schedule                                 |                                                                                                    |
| Entry prerequisites                      |                                                                                                    |
| Core occupational competencies           |                                                                                                    |
| Foundational / employability skills      |                                                                                                    |
| Credential(s)                            |                                                                                                    |
| Supportive services                      |                                                                                                    |
| Participant compensation/stipend, if any |                                                                                                    |
| Completion requirements                  |                                                                                                    |
| RAP transition milestone                 |                                                                                                    |
| Primary outcome targets                  |                                                                                                    |

## Design quality prompts

- Is the program long enough to build readiness but not so long that it delays entry into paid apprenticeship?
- Does every major training component map to a RAP entry requirement or occupational skill need?
- Are barriers addressed early enough to prevent attrition?
- Are participants told clearly that pre-apprenticeship completion does not itself make them a registered apprentice?
- Does the program have a concrete next step for every completer?

## 6. Curriculum Alignment Worksheet

Use one row per module or competency. Attach detailed syllabi, lesson plans, and credential standards as appropriate.

| Module / competency | Hours | RAP / employer skill need | Method | Assessment | RAP reviewer initials |
|---------------------|-------|---------------------------|--------|------------|-----------------------|
|                     |       |                           |        |            |                       |
|                     |       |                           |        |            |                       |
|                     |       |                           |        |            |                       |
|                     |       |                           |        |            |                       |
|                     |       |                           |        |            |                       |
|                     |       |                           |        |            |                       |
|                     |       |                           |        |            |                       |
|                     |       |                           |        |            |                       |

### Recommended curriculum categories

- Industry and occupation orientation
- Safety and hazard awareness
- Foundational math, reading, digital, or technical literacy as needed
- Tool/equipment identification and safe use
- Job-specific introductory competencies
- Employability skills: attendance, communication, teamwork, problem solving
- Worker rights and workplace expectations
- Financial literacy and benefits navigation, where useful
- RAP application, interview, testing, and onboarding preparation

## 7. Hands-On Learning / Work-Based Learning Plan

**Legal review point.** Hands-on learning must be designed carefully. The label “pre-apprenticeship” does not waive federal or state wage-and-hour, child labor, occupational safety, workers’ compensation, discrimination, or other applicable requirements. Programs should obtain appropriate guidance for their specific model.

| Activity | Location | Hours | Supervisor | Learning objective | Paid / unpaid basis & authority | Safety controls |
|----------|----------|-------|------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
|          |          |       |            |                    |                                 |                 |
|          |          |       |            |                    |                                 |                 |
|          |          |       |            |                    |                                 |                 |
|          |          |       |            |                    |                                 |                 |

| Item                                                                   | Yes                      | No                       | Needs Development        | Evidence / Notes |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Activities are educational and tied to documented learning objectives. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Activities do not improperly displace paid employees.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |

| Item                                                                         | Yes                      | No                       | Needs Development        | Evidence / Notes |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Appropriate supervision is identified.                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Safety orientation and PPE are provided where needed.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Emergency procedures are documented.                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Any youth participation complies with applicable child labor restrictions.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Compensation/stipend arrangements have been reviewed under applicable rules. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Worksite agreements and insurance requirements are complete.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |

## 8. Industry-Recognized Credential Plan

| Credential | Issuer | Why relevant | Prerequisites | Cost | Pass target | Who pays |
|------------|--------|--------------|---------------|------|-------------|----------|
|            |        |              |               |      |             |          |
|            |        |              |               |      |             |          |
|            |        |              |               |      |             |          |

### Credential selection test

| Item                                                          | Yes                      | No                       | Needs Development        | Evidence / Notes |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Credential is recognized by employers or the target industry. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Credential supports entry or success in the RAP/occupation.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Credential can reasonably be earned within the program.       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Testing/accommodation needs are addressed.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Retesting policy and cost are defined.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| The program will track attempted and earned credentials.      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |

## 9. Recruitment, Eligibility, and Participant Flow

### Participant flow

Outreach → Information Session → Eligibility/Readiness → Assessment → Enrollment → Training → Hands-On Learning → Credential → RAP Application/Transition → Placement → Retention Follow-Up

## Recruitment plan

| Question                                                                                                    | Program response |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Who is the priority population?                                                                             |                  |
| What outreach partners/channels will be used?                                                               |                  |
| What are minimum eligibility requirements?                                                                  |                  |
| What screening is truly necessary for the target RAP?                                                       |                  |
| How will applicants receive clear information about wages, schedules, job conditions, and RAP requirements? |                  |
| How will reasonable accommodations/access needs be addressed?                                               |                  |
| How will applicants who are not selected be referred to alternatives?                                       |                  |

**Participant communication.** Marketing should distinguish pre-apprenticeship from Registered Apprenticeship. Avoid statements implying that participants are registered apprentices, guaranteed a job, or guaranteed RAP admission unless those statements are factually and legally supported.

## 10. Career Counseling and Supportive Services Plan

Supportive services should be connected to documented participant needs and applicable funding rules. Build the referral network before recruitment begins.

| Potential need                    | Available directly? | Referral partner | Eligibility / limit | How accessed |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Transportation                    |                     |                  |                     |              |
| Childcare/dependent care          |                     |                  |                     |              |
| Tools/PPE/work clothing           |                     |                  |                     |              |
| Testing/licensing/credential fees |                     |                  |                     |              |
| Housing instability               |                     |                  |                     |              |
| Food/basic needs                  |                     |                  |                     |              |
| Digital access/device             |                     |                  |                     |              |
| Academic/tutoring support         |                     |                  |                     |              |
| Case management/career counseling |                     |                  |                     |              |
| Legal/documentation referral      |                     |                  |                     |              |
| Disability/accessibility supports |                     |                  |                     |              |
| Other                             |                     |                  |                     |              |

## Participant needs assessment - sample prompts

| Item                                                                   | Yes                      | No                       | Needs Development        | Evidence / Notes |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Reliable transportation to training/worksites                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Child/dependent care coverage                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Required identification/work authorization documentation as applicable | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Work clothing/PPE/tools                                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Reliable phone/internet/device                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Academic support                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Credential/testing fees                                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Schedule conflicts                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Housing/food stability                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Other barrier that could affect attendance or transition               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |

# 11. Facilitated Entry / Transition-to-RAP Agreement Template

Use this section as a term-sheet template. Local counsel or contracting staff may convert it into an MOU or agreement as appropriate.

| Term                                               | Agreed provision                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Parties                                            | Pre-Apprenticeship Provider: _____<br>RAP Sponsor: _____ |
| Occupation(s)                                      |                                                          |
| Eligible completer definition                      |                                                          |
| RAP application process                            |                                                          |
| Facilitated entry mechanism                        |                                                          |
| Interview/testing process                          |                                                          |
| Credit/advanced standing, if any                   |                                                          |
| Expected timing from completion to RAP opportunity |                                                          |
| Information/data exchange                          |                                                          |
| Point of contact - Provider                        |                                                          |
| Point of contact - RAP Sponsor                     |                                                          |
| Term of agreement                                  |                                                          |
| Review/renewal date                                |                                                          |

**Required clarity.** The agreement should not imply that the pre-apprenticeship itself is registered by DOL. It should identify the registered RAP as the destination and state the actual transition benefit available to qualified completers.

# 12. Data, Outcomes, and Continuous Improvement

## Recommended performance dashboard

| Measure                        | Definition / suggested calculation                                             | Local target |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Enrollment                     | Participants formally enrolled                                                 |              |
| Completion rate                | Completers ÷ enrolled participants                                             |              |
| Credential attainment          | Participants earning planned credential(s) ÷ participants expected to attempt  |              |
| RAP application rate           | Completers applying to aligned RAP(s) ÷ completers                             |              |
| RAP transition rate            | Completers entering a RAP ÷ completers                                         |              |
| Employment rate                | Completers entering employment, tracked separately from RAP entry where useful |              |
| 30/90/180-day retention        | Participants retained in RAP/employment at follow-up points                    |              |
| Supportive service utilization | Participants receiving support ÷ enrolled participants                         |              |
| Time to transition             | Median days from completion to RAP entry                                       |              |
| Employer/RAP satisfaction      | Structured feedback from RAP sponsors/employers                                |              |

## Minimum participant record

- Enrollment and exit dates
- Demographics/eligibility fields required by applicable funding sources
- Attendance and training hours
- Assessments and competencies
- Credentials attempted/earned
- Supportive services
- RAP applications/referrals
- RAP entry date and sponsor/occupation
- Employment outcomes as applicable
- Follow-up status
- Consent/release and data-sharing documentation

## Quarterly continuous-improvement questions

17. Where are participants dropping out and why?
18. Which barriers are most associated with non-completion?
19. Are completers actually reaching the RAP partner?
20. Does the RAP sponsor report that completers are prepared?
21. Are there enough RAP openings for cohort size?
22. Should curriculum, recruitment, supports, or transition agreements change?

# 13. Funding and Sustainability Planning

**Funding caution.** Eligibility of a specific cost depends on the funding source, participant eligibility, grant/contract terms, state/local policy, and applicable federal cost principles. This toolkit does not determine cost allowability.

| Cost category                | Year 1 estimate | Potential source | Confirmed? | Notes |
|------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------|-------|
| Instructional staff          |                 |                  |            |       |
| Curriculum/materials         |                 |                  |            |       |
| Facility/equipment           |                 |                  |            |       |
| PPE/tools                    |                 |                  |            |       |
| Credentials/testing          |                 |                  |            |       |
| Participant supports         |                 |                  |            |       |
| Stipends/wages if applicable |                 |                  |            |       |
| Case management              |                 |                  |            |       |
| Data/reporting               |                 |                  |            |       |
| Administration/indirect      |                 |                  |            |       |

## Potential braided resources to explore

- WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth resources where eligibility and service rules permit
- State/local workforce funds
- State Apprenticeship Expansion resources where permitted by the award
- Education/CTE/community college resources
- Employer contributions
- Philanthropic/community funding
- Other federal/state grants with explicit pre-apprenticeship authority or allowable activities

## Sustainability test

| Item                                                                                     | Yes                      | No                       | Needs Development        | Evidence / Notes |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Program has a cost per participant estimate.                                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| At least two potential funding streams are identified.                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Employer/RAP partners contribute meaningful in-kind or financial support where feasible. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Credential and supportive-service costs are budgeted.                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Data/reporting costs are budgeted.                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Program can continue if a single short-term grant ends.                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |

# 14. Workforce Board Quality Review Rubric

Suggested scoring: 0 = Not demonstrated; 1 = Needs development; 2 = Meets expectation; 3 = Strong evidence. A board may establish local minimums and non-negotiable criteria.

| Criterion                    | Evidence standard                                                                                                           | Score 0-3 | Reviewer notes |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| RAP partnership              | Named active RAP partner; documented relationship; occupation alignment; sponsor verification.                              |           |                |
| Facilitated entry            | Specific, credible transition mechanism for qualified completers.                                                           |           |                |
| Curriculum alignment         | Curriculum maps to RAP/employer skill needs and has RAP input.                                                              |           |                |
| Hands-on learning            | Meaningful, supervised, safe, legally appropriate learning experience.                                                      |           |                |
| Credentials                  | Relevant credential strategy where appropriate/required.                                                                    |           |                |
| Career/supportive services   | Defined counseling, barrier assessment, supports/referrals.                                                                 |           |                |
| Recruitment/access           | Clear, job-relevant eligibility and transparent participant communication.                                                  |           |                |
| Employer/industry engagement | Demand is demonstrated; employers contribute to design/transition.                                                          |           |                |
| Data/outcomes                | Measures completion, credentials, RAP transition, employment/retention as applicable.                                       |           |                |
| Capacity/sustainability      | Qualified staff, facilities, budget, partnerships, and continuity plan.                                                     |           |                |
| Participant protections      | Safety, privacy, accessibility, and applicable legal/funding requirements addressed.                                        |           |                |
| Accurate representation      | Materials clearly distinguish pre-apprenticeship from Registered Apprenticeship and do not claim DOL registration/approval. |           |                |

## Suggested decision rules

| Decision                    | Suggested standard                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ready for Board Support     | No critical deficiency; strong RAP pathway; local minimum score met.                                    |
| Conditional / Developmental | Correctable gaps with written action plan and deadline.                                                 |
| Not Ready                   | No verified RAP pathway, misleading marketing, unresolved safety/legal issue, or insufficient capacity. |

## 15. 30/60/90-Day Implementation Plan

| Timing      | Priority actions                                                                                                                 | Owner | Due date | Status |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------|--------|
| Days 1-30   | Confirm target occupation and RAP partner; document demand; map RAP entry requirements; establish project team.                  |       |          |        |
| Days 31-60  | Finalize curriculum; hands-on plan; credentials; supportive services; recruitment; data plan; transition agreement.              |       |          |        |
| Days 61-90  | Complete quality review; staff training; participant materials; worksite/safety checks; launch recruitment; establish dashboard. |       |          |        |
| Post-launch | Monthly partner review; participant case review; quarterly outcome review; annual program revalidation.                          |       |          |        |

### Pre-launch checklist

| Item                                               | Yes                      | No                       | Needs Development        | Evidence / Notes |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| RAP verification complete                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Transition agreement executed                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Curriculum approved/reviewed by RAP partner        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Instructor qualifications documented               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Facilities/equipment ready                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Hands-on/worksite agreements complete              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Safety/PPE plan complete                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Credential testing arrangements complete           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Supportive-service referral network active         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Recruitment materials reviewed for accurate claims | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Participant handbook/orientation ready             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Data system and consent forms ready                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Funding/cost allowability reviewed                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Board quality review completed                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Launch approval documented under local policy      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |

## 16. U.S. Department of Labor Guidance and Resource Library

The following ten resources are recommended for a workforce board's reference library. They include the current pre-apprenticeship framework, current apprenticeship/WIOA resources, implementation examples, and one superseded document retained only for historical context. Always check the source page for updates before relying on a document.

| # / Resource                                                          | Date              | Status                                | Use                                                                                                                        | Official source      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. TEN 05-26 - Framework for Effective Pre-Apprenticeships            | September 8, 2026 | <b>CURRENT / PRIMARY</b>              | Current DOL framework; expressly replaces TEN 23-23. Use as the toolkit's principal federal guidance.                      | <a href="#">Open</a> |
| 2. Explore Pre-Apprenticeship - Apprenticeship.gov                    | Current webpage   | <b>CURRENT</b>                        | Plain-language description of pre-apprenticeship and quality elements for employers/providers.                             | <a href="#">Open</a> |
| 3. Fact Sheet on Quality Pre-Apprenticeship for Registration Agencies | January 17, 2025  | <b>REFERENCE - predates TEN 05-26</b> | Useful implementation concepts; references TEN 23-23, so read through the lens of current TEN 05-26.                       | <a href="#">Open</a> |
| 4. Registered Apprenticeship Program - Apprenticeship.gov             | Current webpage   | <b>CURRENT</b>                        | Defines the RAP destination and core RAP features; useful for explaining the distinction from pre-apprenticeship.          | <a href="#">Open</a> |
| 5. Apprenticeship System - Apprenticeship.gov                         | Current webpage   | <b>CURRENT</b>                        | Explains OA and State Apprenticeship Agency roles in registering and overseeing RAPs.                                      | <a href="#">Open</a> |
| 6. TEGL 08-25 - State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula Round 4        | April 10, 2026    | <b>CURRENT</b>                        | State apprenticeship expansion funding/program guidance; useful when aligning local strategy with state investments.       | <a href="#">Open</a> |
| 7. TEGL 07-25 - WIOA State Plan Modification Requirements             | January 26, 2026  | <b>CURRENT</b>                        | Connects workforce board planning to PY 2026-27 WIOA state planning priorities and requirements.                           | <a href="#">Open</a> |
| 8. YouthBuild - U.S. DOL ETA                                          | Current webpage   | <b>CURRENT</b>                        | Federal example of a community-based pre-apprenticeship model with training, education, supports, and transition pathways. | <a href="#">Open</a> |
| 9. Apprenticeship.gov Resource Hub                                    | Current webpage   | <b>CURRENT / UPDATE CHECK</b>         | Central DOL resource library for factsheets, guides, videos, and new apprenticeship materials.                             | <a href="#">Open</a> |

| # / Resource                                        | Date          | Status           | Use                                                                                                                                                                            | Official source      |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 10. TEN 23-23 - Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Programs | March 5, 2024 | <b>RESCINDED</b> | Historical only. DOL states TEN 05-26 rescinds and replaces it. Useful for historical language explicitly stating OA does not directly oversee or regulate pre-apprenticeship. | <a href="#">Open</a> |

**Resource status note.** The January 2025 registration-agency fact sheet predates TEN 05-26 and cites TEN 23-23. It remains useful as a technical-assistance resource, but any conflict should be resolved in favor of current law, regulation, grant terms, and TEN 05-26.

## 17. Recommended Workforce Board Local Policy Framework

A workforce board can use a local policy to establish transparent quality expectations without implying that it is acting as the federal Registration Agency for pre-apprenticeship.

### Suggested policy components

23. Purpose and scope: define when board review is required (funding, referrals, listing, contracting, etc.).
24. Definitions: distinguish pre-apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship, RAP sponsor, and Registration Agency.
25. Federal status statement: pre-apprenticeship is not registered/regulated by DOL OA like RAPs; TEN 05-26 is the current DOL framework.
26. Minimum quality criteria: RAP linkage, curriculum alignment, hands-on learning, supports, credentials, transition, data, capacity, and accurate marketing.
27. Application/evidence requirements: use the forms in this toolkit.
28. Review process: staff review, technical assistance, scoring, decision, corrective action.
29. Recognition terminology: use local terms such as “Board Reviewed” or “Meets Local Quality Criteria.”
30. Duration/revalidation: e.g., annual or biennial review plus material-change reporting.
31. Monitoring: outcomes, participant feedback, RAP sponsor feedback, safety/issues, corrective action.
32. Withdrawal/suspension: define circumstances for removal from board-supported status.
33. Appeal/reconsideration process, if desired.
34. Record retention, privacy, and data-sharing requirements.

### Sample of a local status statement

**Suggested language.** “A determination by [Workforce Board] that a program meets local pre-apprenticeship quality criteria is a local workforce-system determination only. It does not constitute registration, certification, approval, or endorsement by the U.S. Department of Labor or a State Apprenticeship Agency. The Registered Apprenticeship Program identified as the pathway partner remains separately registered and overseen by the applicable Registration Agency.”

## 18. Sample Provider Application

| Application field       | Response |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Legal organization name |          |

| Application field                 | Response                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Program name                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Primary contact                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Organization type                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Employer <input type="checkbox"/> Union <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> CBO <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce entity <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| Target occupation(s)              |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Target population                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Service area                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| RAP partner(s)                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Cohort size / annual participants |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Program length / hours            |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Credentials                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Hands-on learning model           |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Supportive services               |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Facilitated entry method          |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Funding requested / source        |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Launch date                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

## Required attachments

| Item                                              | Yes                      | No                       | Needs Development        | Evidence / Notes |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| RAP verification / transition agreement           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Curriculum and competency map                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Hands-on learning/worksites plan                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Credential plan                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Recruitment and participant materials             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Supportive services plan                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Budget and sustainability plan                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Data/outcome plan                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Staff qualifications                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Safety plan and applicable worksite documentation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |

## Provider certification

By signing below, the provider certifies that the information submitted is accurate; it will promptly report material changes; it understands that local workforce board review is not U.S. DOL registration or approval; and it will comply with applicable laws, funding terms, contracts, and local policies.

| Authorized representative | Title | Signature | Date |
|---------------------------|-------|-----------|------|
|                           |       |           |      |

# 19. Annual Revalidation and Monitoring

| Item                                                                                            | Yes                      | No                       | Needs Development        | Evidence / Notes |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| RAP partner remains active and confirms continued relationship.                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Target occupation and employer demand remain current.                                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Transition mechanism remains operational.                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Curriculum changes have been reviewed for alignment.                                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Credential requirements remain current.                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Worksites and safety plans remain current.                                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Supportive-service network remains available.                                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Marketing accurately distinguishes pre-apprenticeship from RAP.                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Prior-year completion, credential, RAP transition, employment, and retention outcomes reviewed. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Participant complaints/incidents/corrective actions reviewed.                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Funding and staffing remain sufficient.                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Material changes documented and approved under local policy.                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |

## Annual performance summary

| Metric                   | Prior year | Current year | Target | Action needed |
|--------------------------|------------|--------------|--------|---------------|
| Enrollment               |            |              |        |               |
| Completion rate          |            |              |        |               |
| Credential attainment    |            |              |        |               |
| RAP transition rate      |            |              |        |               |
| 90-day retention         |            |              |        |               |
| 180-day retention        |            |              |        |               |
| RAP sponsor satisfaction |            |              |        |               |

# Appendix A. Federal Status and Legal Disclaimer

This toolkit is a workforce-development planning resource. It is not legal advice and does not replace federal or state statutes, regulations, official grant terms, contract requirements, wage-and-hour rules, safety rules, child labor requirements, civil rights requirements, or local policies.

The toolkit intentionally distinguishes pre-apprenticeship from Registered Apprenticeship. U.S. DOL materials establish that Registered Apprenticeship Programs are registered and overseen by the Office of Apprenticeship or recognized State Apprenticeship Agencies. DOL's prior TEN 23-23 expressly stated that OA does not directly oversee or regulate pre-apprenticeship programs; TEN 05-26 rescinded and replaced TEN 23-23 on September 8, 2026 and is the

current DOL framework for effective pre-apprenticeships. The existence of federal definitions or recommended framework elements does not mean that a pre-apprenticeship is federally registered in the same manner as a RAP.

A state, locality, workforce board, funder, grantee, educational institution, or other authority may establish requirements for programs it funds, recognizes, contracts with, refers to, or operates. Providers should confirm all requirements applicable to their program and participants.

## Appendix B. Quick Reference - What the Board Should Require Before Referrals

| Item                                                                         | Yes                      | No                       | Needs Development        | Evidence / Notes |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Verified RAP destination                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Documented transition/facilitated entry mechanism                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Aligned curriculum                                                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Meaningful and safe hands-on learning                                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Relevant credential strategy                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Career counseling/supportive services                                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Transparent recruitment and participant communication                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Qualified staff and adequate facilities                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Data/outcome tracking                                                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Funding and sustainability                                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |
| Accurate statement that pre-apprenticeship is not a federally registered RAP | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |

## Appendix C. Sources and Update Log

Primary official sources consulted for this September 2026 edition:

- [U.S. DOL ETA, TEN 05-26 - Framework for Effective Pre-Apprenticeships \(issued Sept. 8, 2026\)](#)
- [Apprenticeship.gov, Explore Pre-Apprenticeship](#)
- [Apprenticeship.gov, Registered Apprenticeship Program](#)
- [Apprenticeship.gov, Apprenticeship System](#)
- [U.S. DOL ETA, TEN 23-23 - Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Programs \(rescinded by TEN 05-26\)](#)
- [Apprenticeship.gov, Fact Sheet on Quality Pre-Apprenticeship for Registration Agencies](#)
- [U.S. DOL ETA, TEGL 08-25 - State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula Round 4](#)
- [U.S. DOL ETA, TEGL 07-25 - WIOA State Plan Modification Requirements](#)
- [U.S. DOL ETA, YouthBuild](#)
- [Apprenticeship.gov Resource Hub](#)
- [U.S. DOL ETA, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#)