

START TODAY REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP FINANCIAL SERVICES

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Start Today program is to provide funding, support, guidance, and advice to business partners seeking to expand, create, or revise Registered Apprenticeship programs in accordance with State and Federal policies and statutes. Likewise, the program endeavors to guide and support individuals seeking apprenticeships with various resources available. Any funding awarded is intended to increase apprenticeship enrollment. The purpose of this policy is to guide financial services to support this vision and the development of new Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP), the expansion of existing RAP, mentorship, training, and related services for apprentices. This policy outlines Department of Labor and Regulation's (DLR) financial services available through the Start Today SD Apprenticeship Program.

This guidance includes ***Apprenticeship Grant Policy Supplements*** for applicable apprenticeship grants allowing financial services. Each service is outlined below, however, as each apprenticeship grant is unique, please refer to the appropriate [Apprenticeship Grant Supplement](#) for specifics regarding the type of services supported through that specific grant.

All financial services begin with an application. Applicants will meet with a Start Today team member to discuss additional documentation and information. The application process for each service is outlined below.

It is encouraged for apprenticeship funding to be supplemented and braided with financial resources from other workforce programs, such as WIOA Title I, as appropriate. Receiving WIOA Title I services will not disqualify an individual from receiving registered apprenticeship grant-funded services below. Participation in a registered apprenticeship does not constitute entitlement to any financial service through RAP grants. Funding is based on availability of RAP funds. To be eligible for services below, the Registered Apprentice must be registered in Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Management Data System (RAPIDS) and DLR within six (6) months of seeking funding. Businesses and Apprentices must reside in South Dakota to be eligible for funding.

REIMBURSEMENT FOR ON-THE-JOB LEARNING (OJL) AND JOURNEY-LEVEL WORKER

Employer Reimbursement

OJL is a primary component of every Registered Apprenticeship Program. It represents the apprentice's paid and supervised training which occurs while working on-the-job. A journey-level worker shares their knowledge and expertise with the apprentice during this OJL. The OJL reimbursement is to support the extraordinary costs of providing the on-the-job learning and is provided to the employer hiring the apprentice(s) (OJL Provider). This financial service is requested through the Registered Apprenticeship Financial Services Application Form 53. If approved, employers may be reimbursed up to \$5000 for apprentice and journey-level worker wages: \$2500 for the apprentice's wages and up to \$2500 for a journey-level worker's wages for 500 hours of non-overtime training to off-set the cost of on-the-job learning. DLR may establish alternative terms for reimbursement for high school apprenticeship programs.

By signing the Financial Services Application each OJL Provider agrees to the following terms and assurances:

- The OJL Provider certifies the company is financially solvent on the date of the application and will remain financially able to support wages to the apprentices throughout the apprenticeship training period.
- Wages will be reimbursed to OJL Provider at an amount not to exceed \$5000 for the apprentice and journey-level worker. OJL Provider agrees to a training period of no less than 500 non-overtime hours and agrees to pay the apprentice no less than South Dakota [minimum wage](#). The reimbursed amount will not exceed 50% of the wages for the apprentice and journey-level worker. Wages will not be reimbursed until verifying documentation is received by the DLR Start Today team as identified in the payment methods and documentation section below:
- OJL training will follow the training plan as outlined in the Appendix A-Work Process Schedule.

- OJL provider is either the RAP sponsor or has an executed Employer Acceptance Agreement with the RAP sponsor and must meet all requirements of the agreement, follow all federal and state laws and ordinances for employment.
- The OJL provider agrees to designate a journey-level worker to the apprentice to ensure quality training and adequate supervision throughout the apprenticeship. The OJL provider provides this designation in the Financial Services Application.
- The OJL training reimbursement period will begin on the date of signature of Financial Services Application and end no later than 12 months from signature date.
- The signatory on Financial Services Application is the person responsible for verifying the apprentice has completed their OJL training as outlined above.

Payment methods and documentation

Step 1: Complete Financial Services Application [Form 53](#) and agree to terms of OJL as outlined above

Step 2: Apprentice completes enrollment into SDWORKS

Step 3: Submit the following for payment: apprentice's detailed proof of total wages after 500 hours, Proof of journey-level mentor employment – i.e. letter of employment, job verification letter, proof of employment letter, or paystub.

RELATED INSTRUCTION (RI)

RI is a primary component of every RAP which represents the theory portion of learning. RI may or may not occur in a classroom however the classroom setting. Upon completion of the Registered Apprenticeship Financial Services Application [Form 53](#), RI that is provided by a training provider, separate from the OJL provider, is eligible for reimbursement up to \$6,500 annually. Related Instruction must align with Appendix A Training Plan.

Payment methods and documentation

Step 1: Complete Financial Services Application [Form 53](#)

Step 2: Submit Itemized receipt for Related Instruction costs to starttoday@state.sd.us

Step 3: Submit a copy of the Registered Apprenticeship Program Appendix A to starttoday@state.sd.us

Step 4: Payment is made to:

1. The Related Instruction Provider
 - Registered Apprenticeship Provider Packet [Form 55](#)
2. The Employer or Sponsor
 - Registered Apprenticeship Provider Packet [Form 55](#)
3. The apprentice as a reimbursement
 - Participant Payment Consent [Form 71](#)

JOURNEY-LEVEL MENTOR AND APPRENTICE INCENTIVE

A Journey-Level Mentor is fully trained in the registered apprenticeship occupations and provides coaching, guidance, and support to the apprentice throughout the period of training. Although an apprentice might be trained by multiple experienced workers, this financial reimbursement is intended to support a quality mentoring relationship between a single journey-level mentor and apprentice.

Apprentice Incentives are available as a financial reimbursement to the sponsor or OJL provider as a way for the OJL provider to reduce the financial burden on an apprentice beginning their apprenticeship program, encourage the apprentice to participate in quality mentorship, and to increase retention in the apprenticeship program.

A journey-level mentor incentive is a one-time financial reimbursement to the sponsor or OJL provider as outlined below.

Apprentice incentives are separate from supportive services. Apprentice incentives are available as a one-time financial reimbursement to sponsor or OJL providers providing an incentive to first-time apprentices.

If the apprentice exits the program prior to an eligible funding time period identified in the [Apprenticeship Grant Supplement](#), the mentor and apprentice are not eligible for the incentive.

Employer Reimbursement

Reimbursement may be made available at no more than \$1000 per apprentice and \$1000 per journey-level mentor as outlined below. A mentor and apprentice may receive this incentive one-time during the training program. Payment must occur within 12 months from the signature date of the Financial Services Application [Form 53](#).

Payment methods and documentation

Step 1: Complete Financial Services Application [Form 53](#)

Step 2: Journey-Level Mentor/Apprentice completes the Mentor Training: [Lessons for Mentors/Lessons for Mentees](#)

Step 3: Journey-level Mentor/Apprentice Complete Workplace Mentor Training Verification [Form 58](#)

Step 4: Employer submits for reimbursement once both mentor and apprentice mentee have completed at least 6 months and no more than 12 months of apprentice training from the submission signature date of Form 53.

- Employer provides verification of current employment for both mentor and apprentice (i.e. paystubs, Davis Bacon, letter on company letterhead etc.)

APPRENTICE SUPPORT SERVICES

Supportive Services offer financial supports to individuals participating in education and training activities provided through the grant when such services are necessary to enable individuals to participate in education and training activities under the grant. To receive support services, the registered apprentice must:

1. Be already receiving a grant-funded service either through Apprenticeship grants or WIOA-funded program,
2. Identify their need for the service with their Apprenticeship Coordinator,
3. Provide documentation identifying the support service is on behalf of the apprentice, if applicable, *and*
4. Provide an itemized receipt.

Support service activities may include, but are not limited to transportation assistance, childcare assistance, and assistance with purchasing tools, uniforms, textbooks, and other program specific supplies.

Enrollment in other workforce programs is encouraged to increase resources and opportunities for success. For those registered apprentices who are also enrolled in WIOA Title I, supportive services will be financed with registered apprenticeship grant resources. If apprenticeship grant resources for support services have been exhausted (e.g., grant spending cap has been met), then WIOA Title I funding may be utilized consistent with policy and guidance for that program. See Support Services [Policy 5.34](#) for allowable supports, examples of supportive services, and payment procedures for WIOA Title I Supportive Services.

Documentation for Supportive Services

When approving Support Service payments, the Apprenticeship Coordinator considers and documents the following:

- How does this help the participant complete their RAP successfully?
- How was the obligation amount determined?
- How long will Registered Apprenticeship Support Services assist the apprentice with this expense?
- How will the apprentice cover this cost after temporary funding?

All payments require adequate supporting documentation to justify the payment. Required documentation will be identified or requested by the Start Today Team.

Payment methods and documentation

1. **To the provider/ vendor** – In partnership with Start Today team, provider completes Support Service Authorization for Purchase [Form 24](#) provider section and returns an invoice for the service. An invoice with the apprentices' name is required.

2. **To the sponsor/employer** - If the sponsor or employer is paying for the supportive service up front, the sponsor/employer will submit an invoice/receipt for the apprentice.
3. **Reimbursement to the apprentice** – Apprentice must show documentation payment was made with the apprentice's name on the receipt and the name of the provider.

NEW APPRENTICE INCENTIVE

DLR is offering a one-time incentive to registered apprenticeship On-the-Job Learning (OJL) providers who add new apprentices to their existing programs. A total of \$500,000 has been allocated for this incentive, which will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are exhausted or the incentive time period ends, whichever occurs first. Funding is not guaranteed.

Eligibility

- OJL providers are eligible to receive this incentive for apprentices who:
 - Begin their apprenticeship between January 1, 2025, and December 31, 2025, inclusive.
 - Are registered in the RAPIDS system for at least 90 days.
 - Have not received other services including OJL or RI reimbursement as described above.

Incentive Amount and Limitations

- The New Apprentice Incentive is a one-time payment per eligible apprentice.
- Each OJL provider may receive up to \$50,000 total through this incentive.
- Payment amounts are based on apprentice work hours in the most recent 90 days of RAPIDS registration:
 - \$2,500 if the apprentice worked 350 hours or fewer
 - \$5,000 if the apprentice worked more than 350 hours
- Apprentices who receive this incentive are not eligible for other "Start Today" funding services, including:
 - On-the-Job Learning reimbursement
 - Related Instruction reimbursement
 - Mentor Wage reimbursement
 - Apprentice Incentive
 - Mentor Incentive
- Incentive funds awarded through this incentive will *not* count towards the annual funding cap (described below) for other "Start Today" funded services.

Payment methods and documentation

Step 1: Complete New Apprentice Incentive Application [Form 52](#) once the apprentice has been registered in RAPIDS for 90 days.

Step 2: Submit required documentation with the application:

- ETA-671
- Verification of employment and hours for the apprentice for the most recent 90 days following their RAPIDS start date. Acceptable documentation for employment verification includes pay stubs or payment summaries covering the 90-day period. The Start Today program may verify the apprentice's current RAPIDS enrollment upon receipt of a completed application or request verification from the OJL provider.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION INCENTIVES

Incentives may be available for current and prospective Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors to support the expansion of Registered Apprenticeship programs within the State of South Dakota.

DLR provides incentives that support new Registered Apprenticeship program development, the expansion of existing Registered Apprenticeship programs by adding new approved apprenticeable occupations. DLR reserves the right to prioritize funding for industries and occupations that are in high demand with a long-term employment outlook or that are otherwise targeted by the apprenticeship grant.

Program Development and Expansion Incentive Funding is provided through the Program and Expansion Application [Form 54](#). Current and potential sponsors are encouraged to apply, but funding is not entitled or guaranteed and must be reviewed for consideration. Each application will be scored using a scoring rubric (see attachment C). The following scores will determine funding approval or next steps for the applicant.

- 15-25 points – Acceptance
- 10-15 points– Request applicant to provide clarifying information
- 5-10 points – Applicant may apply again with suggestions for their narrative
- 0-5 points- Application is declined- Apprenticeship is not appropriate at this time

DLR will follow the State of South Dakota procurement process for the award of funding.

FUNDING CAPS

A business may receive no more than \$75,000 annually, during a program year July 1-June 30. The funding cap includes financial services that support the sponsors /business including: OJL reimbursements for both apprentice and journey-level mentor, related instruction, journey level mentor incentive, apprentice incentive, and program development & expansion incentives.

OVERPAYMENT

A registered apprentice, business, or sponsor may be liable to reimburse DLR the amount paid, if the apprentice did not complete the services intended for the payment. An overpayment may include non-tangible items such as a refund, rebate, tuition assistance, etc. and the purchase of tangible goods such as tools, equipment, clothing, bus pass or tokens, etc. DLR will not accept the tangible good as reimbursement.

Reasons for Overpayment

Unless a justification is provided, an overpayment can be sought in the following situations such as:

- Failing Grades
- Dropped out of training/expulsion from training
- False representation of grades, progress reports, or information regarding training or services received
- Failing to communication with Employment Specialist
- Any type of fraud

If fraud is determined as the reason for overpayment, the offending party will NOT be eligible for financial services through apprenticeship grants, WIOA Title I, or TAA programs.

For more information regarding Overpayment, please reference the Overpayment of Training and Support Services [Policy 5.95](#).

GRIEVANCES

To share concerns regarding the decision of a Start Today staff member, which is not discriminatory in nature, an individual will contact the Apprenticeship Program Manager via [email](#) within 15 days of the decision. The manager will then provide a solution or explanation within 15 calendar days. If the individual wants to rebuke the decision or finds it difficult to discuss the problem with the manager, they may proceed directly to the Director of Workforce Development, as discussed in the next paragraph.

To rebuke the manager's decision, written justification and any supporting documentation should be provided to the Director of Workforce Development within 15 days from the Apprenticeship Program Manager's response. If a written

appeal is not received by the Director of Workforce Development within 15 calendar days of the manager's decision, the manager's decision is final. Mail to:

Director of Workforce Development
Department of Labor and Regulation
123 W. Missouri Ave., Pierre, SD 57501

The Director of Workforce Development will make a final determination in writing within 15 days of receipt of the letter. If additional time is required for the manager or Director of Workforce Development to provide a meaningful response, the individual will be notified of the anticipated response date.

ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment A – Apprenticeship Grant Policy Supplement – ABA Grant](#)

[Attachment B- Apprenticeship Grant Policy Supplement - Start Today](#)

[Attachment C- Program Development and Expansion Scoring Rubric](#)

[Attachment D – Apprenticeship Grant Policy Supplement – ASE Grant \(CLOSED\)](#)

[Attachment E – Apprenticeship Grant Policy Supplement – SAE Grant \(CLOSED\)](#)

20 CFR 29.29
FOA 22-06
TEGL 15-19
TEGL 17-18

ATTACHMENT A

Apprenticeship Grant Policy Supplement

Grant: ABA (Apprenticeship Building America)

Basic Grant Information

Funding Vehicle: FOA ETA 22-06

https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/grants/pdfs/ABA_FOA-ETA-22-06.pdf

Funding Amount: \$3,124,059.00

Period of Performance: 7/01/2022 – 6/30/2026

Performance Expectations:

170 individuals enrolled in a Registered Apprenticeship program (grant participant)

9 new Registered Apprenticeship programs created

5 Registered Apprenticeship programs expanded

Reimbursement For On-The-Job Learning (OJL) & Related Instruction (RI):

Maximum of \$2,500 per registered apprentice (grant participant) for OJL and \$5000 for RI.

Supportive Services:

Supportive Service cap of \$1,000 per registered apprentice (grant participant) for the life of the grant period of performance. Supportive Services will be evaluated based on individual need.

Apprentice Incentive

Cap of \$1000 per apprentice mentee for the life of the grant period of performance.

- The payment is available as a reimbursement to Sponsors or OJL Providers for mentees who have been registered in Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Management Data System (RAPIDS) the last 90 days and have registered with DLR. This payment will be after completion of mentee training and verification of apprentice completing 6 months and no more than 12 months of employment after date of signature of Form 53.

Program Expansion Incentive:

Maximum of \$10,000 per awarded sponsor through a competitive application process for the development of a new or expanded Registered Apprenticeship Programs

Pathway Partnership: Maximum of \$35,500 awarded through competitive application process for the development of new High School Registered Apprenticeship Programs. [Four recipients](#) were selected in 2022.

Industry Focus:

- Computer Technology (15-0000)
- Community & Social Service (21-0000)
- Education (25-0000)
- Healthcare Practitioners (29-0000)
- Healthcare Supports/Assistants (31-0000)
- Food Preparation and Service (35-0000)
- Sales (41-0000)
- Office Administration (43-0000)
- Agriculture (45-0000)
- Construction (47-0000)
- Installation/Maintenance/Repair (49-0000)
- Production (51-0000)
- Transportation (53-0000)

Contact the Start Today Apprenticeship Team at StartToday@state.sd.us for additional information.

ATTACHMENT B

APPRENTICESHIP GRANT POLICY SUPPLEMENT

Start Today Apprenticeship Grant Funding

Basic Grant Information

Funding Vehicle: Start Today Funding

Funding Amount: \$13,940,211

Period of Performance: 4/2023 – 6/30/2028

Performance Expectations:

Increase to 2,550 active apprentices

Employer Reimbursement for Journey-level Mentor Wages

Businesses may receive support up to \$2,500 per mentor journey-level mentor

Journey-level Mentor Incentive

Maximum of \$1000 per mentor for the life of the grant period of performance.

Employer Reimbursement for On-The-Job Learning (OJL):

Maximum of \$2,500 per registered apprentice (grant participant)

Reimbursement For Related Instruction (RI)

Maximum of \$6,500 per registered apprentice annually while apprentice is actively participating in a Registered Apprenticeship Program (grant participant)

Sponsor Incentives

Development of New Programs: Maximum of \$15,000 per awarded sponsor

Expansion of Existing Program: Maximum of \$10,000 per awarded sponsor

New Apprentice Incentive

DLR is reserving \$500,000 to be distributed on a first come, first serve basis until the funding is exhausted or the timeline has expired. Maximum of \$50,000 per business.

Intermediary Sponsors

Funding awarded through a request for proposal to Intermediary Sponsors for the development and ongoing support of Registered Apprenticeship programs and identified business partners.

Contact the Start Today Apprenticeship Team at StartToday@state.sd.us for additional information.

ATTACHMENT C

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION SCORING RUBRIC

	5 points	3 points	1 point	0 Points
Business	Business thoroughly identified benefits of a registered apprenticeship program identified the apprentice's occupation title.	Business partially identified benefits of a registered apprenticeship program and identified the apprentice's occupation title.	Business does not clearly identify benefits of a registered apprenticeship program and is unclear of the apprentice's occupation title.	Business did not identify benefits of a registered apprenticeship program or identify the apprentice's occupation title
Vision/ Needs	Business thoroughly explains how their apprenticeship program vision aligns/will align with the components of Registered Apprenticeships.	Business partially explains how their apprenticeship program vision aligns/will align with the components of Registered Apprenticeships.	Business does not clearly explain how their apprenticeship program vision aligns/will align with the components of Registered Apprenticeships.	Business does not explain how their apprenticeship program vision aligns/will align with the components of Registered Apprenticeships.
Community Impact	Narrative thoroughly identifies under-represented populations for their field and includes individuals that have barriers to finding work.	Narrative partially identifies under-represented populations for their field and includes individuals that have barriers to finding work.	Narrative does not clearly identify under-represented populations for their field and includes individuals that have barriers to finding work.	Narrative does not identify under-represented populations for their field and includes individuals that have barriers to finding work.
Partnerships	Business thoroughly describes partners or potential partners in their area for recruiting/training apprentices, including the DLR Job Services office. Business has expressed a commitment to working with Start Today.	Business partially describes partners or potential partners in their area for recruiting/training apprentices, including the DLR Job Services office. Business has expressed a commitment to working with Start Today.	Business does not clearly describe partners or potential partners in their area for recruiting/training apprentices, including the DLR Job Services office. Business has expressed a commitment to working with Start Today.	Business does not describe partners or potential partners in their area for recruiting/training apprentices, including the DLR Job Services office. Business has expressed a commitment to working with Start Today.
Sustainability	Business thoroughly developed a plan including organization, recruiting, and training strategies. Business identified key players, including on the job training mentors and theoretical instruction plans. Business attested financial support of apprentice wages is sustainable after state funds are exhausted.	Business partially developed a plan including organization, recruiting, and training strategies. Business identified key players, including on the job training mentors and theoretical instruction plans. Business attested financial support of apprentice wages is sustainable after state funds are exhausted.	Business did not develop a clear plan including organization, recruiting, and training strategies. Business identified key players, including on the job training mentors and theoretical instruction plans. Business attested financial support of apprentice wages is sustainable after state funds are exhausted.	Business did not develop a plan including organization, recruiting, and training strategies. Business identified key players, including on the job training mentors and theoretical instruction plans. Business attested financial support of apprentice wages is sustainable after state funds are exhausted.

Total for Business: _____ out of 25

ATTACHMENT D

APPRENTICESHIP GRANT POLICY SUPPLEMENT

Grant: ASE (Apprenticeship State Expansion) CLOSED

Basic Grant Information

Funding Vehicle: TEGL 17-18

https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/advisories/TEGL/2019/TEGL_17-18.pdf

Funding Amount: \$1,236,294.21

Period of Performance: 7/01/2019 – 6/30/2023 (now CLOSED)

Performance Expectations:

314 individuals enrolled in a Registered Apprenticeship program

Reimbursement For On-The-Job Learning (OJL)

Maximum of \$1,000 per registered apprentice

Sponsors or businesses of approved U.S. DOL Registered Apprenticeship programs may be eligible to receive funding through the ASE grant to support on-the-job learning of new apprentices. The funding is available from January 1, 2021, through June 30, 2023, unless the funds are depleted sooner.

A sponsor or employer may receive a \$1,000 investment for each new apprentice who has been in their program for at least 90 days (prior to June 30, 2023). To be eligible, the new apprentice must be registered in RAPIDS and DLR within the first 90 days of beginning their Registered Apprenticeship.

Please visit starttoday.sd.com for detailed instructions.

Program Expansion Incentives

2019 (Awarded)

Maximum of \$20,000 to be awarded for the development of a new or expanded Registered Apprenticeship Programs in high industries. Awarded through [competitive application process](#).

2022 (Awarded)

Maximum of \$10,000 to be awarded for the development of a new or expanded Registered Apprenticeship Programs in high industries. Awarded through [competitive application process](#).

Pathway Partnership (Awarded):

Maximum of \$50,000 awarded through competitive application process for the development of new [High School Registered Apprenticeship Programs](#).

ATTACHMENT E

APPRENTICESHIP GRANT POLICY SUPPLEMENT

Grant: SAE (State Apprenticeship Expansion) CLOSED

Basic Grant Information

Funding Vehicle: TEGL 15-19

https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/advisories/TEGL/2020/TEGL_15-19.pdf

Funding Amount: \$450,000.00

Period of Performance: 7/01/2020 – 6/30/2023 (now CLOSED)

Performance Expectations:

3 individuals enrolled in a Registered Apprenticeship program

1 new Registered Apprenticeship program created

1 newly Registered Apprenticeship program in a new industry

Sponsor Incentives (Awarded):

Maximum of \$45,000 to be awarded for the development of a new or expanded Registered Apprenticeship Programs in high demand STEM occupations. Funds were awarded to build STEM healthcare pathways in partnership with Governor's Emergency Education Release (GEER) funds in 2021 to an industry organization in partnership with a technical college.