

WAC 296-05-015 Apprenticeship program standards. Apprenticeship program standards govern apprenticeship agreements between a program sponsor and an individual apprentice and define the term of the apprenticeship. The WSATC develops, administers, and enforces apprenticeship program standards, which are incorporated into apprenticeship agreements. Proposed standards must be reasonably consistent with existing standards in the trade or occupation. Proposed standards are reasonably consistent with existing standards when standards meet or exceed the minimum number of hours approved by the United States Department of Labor in the trade or occupation, if approval has been made. If not, the WSATC may use its discretion to determine whether standards are reasonably consistent with existing standards.

All apprenticeship agreements must comply with the approved program standards, chapter 49.04 RCW, and these rules. The standards of apprenticeship agreements must include the following:

(1) A statement of the occupation to be taught and the required hours for completion of apprenticeship which must not be less than 2,000 hours of reasonably continuous employment.

(2) A statement identifying the program sponsor, establishing the apprenticeship committee and enumerating the sponsor's and committee's duties and responsibilities. This statement must include provisions to:

(a) Elect a chair and a secretary from employer and employee representatives of the committee;

Exception: This provision is not necessary for a plant program.

(b) Convene at least three annual regular meetings of the program sponsor and apprenticeship committee. The meetings shall be attended by a quorum of committee members (as defined in the approved program standards), be documented with minutes which must be periodically submitted to the department and made available to the WSATC upon request. Disciplinary action may only be taken at a face-to-face meeting;

(c) Explain the program sponsor's request for apprentices in the area covered by the apprenticeship standards established under these rules and a plan to include reasonable continuous employment;

(d) Establish minimum standards of education and skilled occupational experience required of apprentices;

(e) Rotate apprentices in the various processes of the skilled occupation to assure a well-rounded, competent worker;

(f) Determine the adequacy of an employer to furnish proper on-the-job training in accordance with the provisions of the approved standards;

Exception: This does not apply to plant programs.

(g) Recommend competent instructors as defined in WAC 296-05-003 and related/supplemental instruction in accordance with state board for community and technical college requirements;

(h) Coordinate related/supplemental instruction with on-the-job work experience;

(i) Hear and adjust all complaints of violations of apprenticeship agreements;

(j) Adopt, as necessary, program rules to administer the apprenticeship program in compliance with its standards, chapter 49.04 RCW, and these rules;

(k) Periodically review and evaluate apprentices before advancement to the apprentice's next wage progression period;

(1) Maintain apprenticeship records and records of the administrative program as may be required by the WSATC, chapter 49.04 RCW, and these rules (see WAC 296-05-100).

(3) The following Equal Employment Opportunity Pledge:

"The recruitment, selection, employment and training of apprentices during their apprenticeship shall be without discrimination because of race, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), sexual orientation, color, religion, national origin, age, genetic information, disability or as otherwise specified by law. The sponsor shall take positive action to provide equal opportunity in apprenticeship and will operate the apprenticeship program as required by the rules of the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council and Title 29, Part 30 of the Code of Federal Regulations."

(4) When applicable, an equal employment opportunity plan and selection procedures.

(5) A numeric ratio of apprentices to journey-level workers may not exceed one apprentice per journey-level worker. It must be consistent with proper supervision, training, safety, continuity of employment, and applicable provisions in a collective bargaining agreement, if any. The ratio must be described in the program standards and shall be specific and clear as to application in terms of job site, work group, department, or plant. An exception to this requirement may be granted by the WSATC.

(6) A statement of the related/supplemental instruction including content, format, and hours of study per year. Related/supplemental instruction shall not be less than 144 hours per year and shall be defined in the standards per:

- (a) Twelve-month period from date of registration; or
- (b) Defined 12-month school year; or
- (c) Two thousand hours of on-the-job training.

If a sponsor does not prescribe hours of study, the WSATC shall adopt (a) of this subsection for compliance purposes.

(7) An attendance policy which includes the following provisions:

(a) If the apprentice fails to fulfill the related/supplemental instruction obligations, the sponsor may withhold the apprentice's periodic wage advancement, suspend or cancel the apprenticeship agreement.

(b) That time spent in related/supplemental instruction classes shall not be considered as hours of work and the apprentice is not required to be paid for the classroom time.

(c) That all hours of actual attendance by the apprentice in related/supplemental instruction classes must be reported to the department on a quarterly basis.

(d) That the hours reported to the department will clearly identify unpaid, supervised related/supplemental instruction time versus paid or unsupervised time for industrial insurance purposes.

(8) A provision to ensure that the sponsor provides for instruction of the apprentice during the apprentice's related/supplemental instruction in safe and healthful work practices in compliance with the Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act, and applicable federal and state regulations.

(9) A provision for a formal agreement between the apprentice and the sponsor and for registering that agreement with the supervisor.

(10) A provision for the timely notice to the department of all requests for disposition or modification of apprenticeship agreements

including: Certificate of completion; additional credit; suspension; military service; reinstatement; cancellation; and corrections.

(11) A provision for granting of advanced standing or credit for demonstrated competency, acquired experience, training, education, or skills in or related to the occupation and:

(a) In licensed trades regulated by electrical, plumbing, and elevator programs at the department, apprenticeship sponsors may give advanced credit or grant hours to apprentices only up to the hours that have been approved by the appropriate licensing entity prior to the sponsor granting credit to the registered apprentice. Except when required by statute, programs are not required to use all hours granted by the regulatory section of the department.

(b) All apprenticeship programs need to ensure that a fair and equitable process is applied to apprentices seeking advanced standing or credit.

(12) A provision for the transfer of an apprentice from one training agent to another training agent of the sponsor in order to provide to the extent possible, continuous employment and diversity of training experiences for apprentices.

(13) A provision for the amendment of the standards or deregistration of the program. This provision must comply with chapter 49.04 RCW, these rules, and WSATC policies and procedures.

(14) An apprenticeship appeal procedure in compliance with chapters 49.04 and 34.05 RCW, and these rules.

(15) A statement of the processes within the occupation in which the apprentice is to be taught and the approximate amount of time to be spent at each process.

(16) A statement of the number of hours to be spent by the apprentice in work and the number of hours to be spent in related/supplemental instruction. For competency based and hybrid models, the program standards must address how on-the-job learning will be integrated into the program, describe competencies, and identify an appropriate means of testing and evaluation for such competencies.

(17) A statement of the minimum qualifications for persons entering the apprenticeship program including the age of the apprentice which may not be less than 16 years of age.

Note: Seventeen years is the minimum age allowed for applicants registering in building and construction trade occupations. All exceptions to minimum qualifications, if any, must be clearly stated and applied in a nondiscriminatory manner.

(18) Provision that the services of the supervisor and the WSATC may be utilized for consultation regarding the settlement of differences arising out of the apprenticeship agreement where such differences cannot be adjusted locally or as required by the established apprenticeship standards procedure.

(19) Provision that if an individual training agent is unable to fulfill its obligation under the apprenticeship agreement, it will transfer the obligation to the program sponsor.

(20) Such additional standards as may be prescribed in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

(21) Disciplinary procedures and criteria for apprentices. The procedures may include a committee-imposed disciplinary probation during which the committee may according to expressed criteria:

- (a) Withhold periodic wage advancements;
- (b) Suspend or cancel the apprenticeship agreement;
- (c) Take further disciplinary action; or

(d) The disciplinary procedures must include a notice to the apprentice that the apprentice has the right to file an appeal of the committee's action to the WSATC.

(22) A provision for an initial probation period. The initial probationary period must be expressed in hours of employment. During the initial probationary period, the apprenticeship agreement may be terminated by the sponsor or the apprentice without a hearing or stated cause.

(23) Provisions prohibiting discrimination on the race, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), sexual orientation, color, religion, national origin, age, genetic information, disability or as otherwise specified by law during all phases of apprenticeship.

(24) Provisions to ensure that local committee rules and regulations be consistent with these rules and the applicable apprenticeship agreement.

(25) Provisions to ensure any proposed standards for apprenticeship are reasonably consistent with any standards for apprenticeship already approved by the WSATC for the industry occupation in question. The goal is to achieve general statewide uniformity of standards in each industry occupation. Proposed standards for a new program shall be considered consistent if they are equal to or exceed the minimum number of hours approved by the United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Apprenticeship for a given occupation. If the United States Department of Labor has not established a minimum number of hours for an occupation, the WSATC may utilize its discretion to determine the minimum number of hours that must be achieved. In addition, the course content and delivery method must be designed to achieve reasonably consistent skills as existing standards within the state for that industry occupation.

(26) A provision to ensure progressively increasing wage scales based on specified percentages of journey-level wage. Sponsors must submit the journey-level wage at least annually or whenever changed to the department. Wage reports may be submitted on a form provided by the department.

(27) A sample apprenticeship agreement and a standard form for program standards are available from the supervisor.

(28) An apprenticeship term may be:

(a) Time-based: Measured by skill acquisition. The apprentice must complete at least 2,000 hours of on-the-job learning as described in a work process schedule; or

(b) Competency-based: The apprentice successfully demonstrates acquired skills and knowledge, as verified by the program sponsor. Programs utilizing this approach must still require apprentices to complete an on-the-job learning component of registered apprenticeship. The program standards must address how on-the-job learning will be integrated into the program, describe competencies, and identify an appropriate means of testing and evaluation for such competencies; or

(c) Hybrid: The apprentice acquires skills through a combination of specified minimum number of hours of on-the-job learning and the successful demonstration of competency as described in a work process schedule.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 49.04 RCW. WSR 23-09-055, § 296-05-015, filed 4/18/23, effective 5/19/23. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.04.010 and 19.285.040. WSR 18-17-149, § 296-05-015, filed 8/21/18, effective 10/10/18. Statutory Authority: Chapter 49.04 RCW, RCW 19.285.040, and 2009 c 197. WSR 11-23-138, § 296-05-015, filed 11/22/11, effective 12/31/11.]