



Decoding Apprenticeship: A Quick Guide for Employers

Understand the Language. Build the Future.

About This Guide

Getting started with an apprenticeship can feel like learning a new language. This quick-reference guide breaks down the most common acronyms and terms you'll encounter in the apprenticeship world — from NYSDOL to OJT — helping your company confidently navigate every step of the process.

Apprenticeship Terms and Acronyms

Registered Apprenticeship

A structured, earn-while-you-learn training model approved by the state that combines paid on-the-job learning with classroom instruction. Apprentices are typically full-time employees.

NYSDOL – New York State Department of Labor

The state agency that registers and monitors on-the-job training and related instruction for apprenticeship programs in New York.

RI – Related Instruction

Coursework or training activities completed at a SUNY Community College or another formal training provider that align with the trade outline. Sometimes also called Related Technical Instruction.

Trade Outline

Trade outlines are located on the NYSDOL website and highlight the minimum standard for work processes and related instruction. Appendix A outlines on-the-job work processes, and Appendix B outlines required coursework for related instruction.

USDOL – U.S. Department of Labor

The federal agency overseeing national apprenticeship policy and standards.

DLEA – Designated Lead Educational Agency

The entity responsible for reviewing and determining the apprentice's educational progress.

OJT – On-the-Job Training

Hands-on, paid learning conducted under the supervision of an experienced journeyworker or mentor at the employer's worksite.

Sponsor

The organization that registers and operates an apprenticeship program with the NYSDOL.

Group Joint Sponsor

A group of employers and a labor union that jointly administer an apprenticeship program together. This model is common in unionized industries.

Non-Joint Sponsor

An apprenticeship program operated by an individual employer or organization without union partnership, typically in non-union settings.

Signatory

A company or organization that signs an agreement to participate in a group-sponsored apprenticeship program and agrees to train apprentices under the program's standards.

ABD – Apprenticeship Business Developer

A SUNY employee who works with employers and industry partners to design, launch, and expand registered apprenticeship programs aligned with workforce needs.

ATR – Apprenticeship Training Representative

A representative from NYSDOL who provides technical assistance, approves program standards, and monitors compliance.

Journeyworker

A fully trained worker who has completed a registered apprenticeship and is qualified to perform all duties of the occupation independently.

Registered Apprentice

An employee enrolled in a registered apprenticeship program that combines paid work experience with structured related instruction leading to industry credentials.

SAP – SUNY Apprenticeship Program

A New York State initiative that funds and supports apprenticeship training through the State University of New York system. The program can cover up to \$6,000 for related instruction for a two-year trade and up to \$8,000 for trades lasting three or more years.

Pre-Apprenticeship

A short-term preparatory training program designed to help individuals gain foundational skills needed to enter a Registered Apprenticeship.

Ready to Learn More?

Mohawk Valley Community College – Apprenticeship Office

Email: apprenticeships@mvcc.edu

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