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Apprentice Population in Tennessee Sees Rapid Rise

The Tennessee Comptroller's Office of Research and Education Accountability (OREA) has completed new research into registered apprenticeships in Tennessee. Registered apprenticeships are a work-based learning model that combines on-the-job training, paid work experience, classroom instruction, and mentorship.

From 2014 through 2023, the number of active registered apprentices in Tennessee grew from 4,300 to 8,423, with much of that growth occurring since 2021.

As of June 30, 2023, Tennessee had 914 total registered apprenticeship programs. The largest industries, by total number of active apprentices, were construction (4,739) and manufacturing (1,201). Public administration, educational services, and utilities apprenticeships rounded out the top five. The occupation with the most apprentices was electrician. Roughly half of apprentices who begin a program complete their apprenticeship.



The growth in the active apprentice population also coincides with the creation of Tennessee's Office of Apprenticeship (TOA) and the Apprenticeship TN initiative. Tennessee established the TOA in July 2019, and the Apprenticeship TN initiative was launched in 2020 to raise awareness of registered apprenticeship opportunities for employers and employees across the state.

Tennessee's Grow Your Own registered teacher apprenticeship has become a model for other states. Registered teacher apprenticeships in the state have grown rapidly since they began in 2022, when Tennessee became the first state to be approved for teacher apprenticeships.

Despite recent growth, OREA research found a general lack of awareness among employers and prospective apprentices exists. Additionally, early up-front costs reduce the ability of small and rural businesses to create registered apprenticeships.

To read the OREA report, please visit the Comptroller's website at: tncot.cc/orea.

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