



SNAPSHOT

AN OVERVIEW OF REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIPS IN TENNESSEE

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Matthew Veach | *Research Analyst* | Matthew.Veach@cot.tn.gov

In recent years, states, including Tennessee, have explored many strategies to address labor market challenges. Apprenticeships are one of those strategies and have become a popular policy topic. This OREA report provides an overview of registered apprenticeships in Tennessee – what they are, how they work, and how many individuals participate in them.

Registered apprenticeships are a work-based learning model (certified by the U.S. Department of Labor) that combines supervised on-the-job training, paid work experience, classroom instruction, and mentorship. This model allows apprentices to obtain formal training in a desired occupation while receiving work experience and pay from an employer. The Tennessee Office of Apprenticeship (TOA), part of the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, oversees and assists apprenticeship programs in the state. TOA is a part of Apprenticeship TN, a marketing initiative launched in 2020 to raise awareness of registered apprenticeship opportunities for employers and workers in every area of Tennessee.

Funding for registered apprenticeships in Tennessee comes from a variety of sources. The federal government supports apprenticeships through grants. The state government provides financial support in a variety of ways, including through the TOA, state grants, and the budgets of state agencies for agency-specific apprenticeship initiatives.

Conclusions

- Total active registered apprentices have almost doubled since 2014. The total grew especially rapidly from federal fiscal year 2021 through federal fiscal year 2023 when the number of active apprentices grew by a total of 2,076.
- The growth in Tennessee's active apprentice population has been greater than projected since the creation of the Office of Apprenticeship and the Apprenticeship TN initiative.
- Wages have grown consistently since 2014.
- Tennessee's Grow Your Own registered teacher apprenticeship initiative is a model for other states.
- Roughly half of apprentices who begin a program complete their apprenticeships.
- Despite recent growth among Tennessee's registered apprentice population, various limitations remain including a general lack of awareness and early up-front costs that reduce the ability of small and rural businesses to create registered apprenticeships.
- Apprenticeships in Tennessee are concentrated in a few industries and occupations.
- There are opportunities to develop other calculations of apprenticeship program performance, collect additional data, and evaluate outcomes.

Policy option

OREA included one policy consideration in the report. The Tennessee Office of Apprenticeship could develop other calculations of apprenticeship program performance, collect additional data, and enhance the evaluation of apprenticeship programs.

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