



Washington State Department of
Labor & Industries

Community and Technical College (CTC) Partnerships with Apprenticeship Programs

*A survey of fee structures and contractual elements between
registered apprenticeship programs and CTCs.*

2024 report to the Washington State Legislature

Prepared by the Department of Labor & Industries (L&I)

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Executive Summary

This report describes data collected to assist the Washington State Legislature in better understanding registered apprenticeship funding and how funding is directed to community and technical colleges. Through a 2024 budget proviso, L&I was directed to prepare a report to include survey data gathered from registered apprenticeship programs about the fee structure and contractual elements of partnerships between various apprenticeship programs and the Washington State Community and Technical College (CTC) system.

Registered apprenticeship programs consist of classroom instruction, referred to as related supplemental instruction (RSI), and on-the-job training (OJT). Apprenticeship programs deliver the RSI portion directly or are supported through contractual partnerships with CTCs. These contracts outline which partner will cover the costs associated with RSI delivery: instructors, facilities, equipment, consumable supplies, and apprentice services, such as registration, credit transcription, and support services.

To gather this information, L&I worked collaboratively with registered apprenticeship stakeholders to develop a list of interview questions related to RSI delivery to apprentices. Then L&I staff interviewed registered apprenticeship programs focusing on calendar year 2023 data. Staff also reviewed copies of program contracts with CTCs, representing multiple programs and occupations.

In calendar year 2023, the survey showed that 57% of apprenticeship *programs* did not have a partnership with a CTC; 18% of the programs had a partnership but did not utilize CTC instructors or facilities; and 17% of the programs had a CTC partnership and utilized CTC instructors and/or facilities. Additionally, 76% of *apprentices* receive RSI directly from registered apprenticeship programs using the registered apprenticeship program's facilities and instructors, whether in-house or in a partnership with a CTC. Conversely, CTC's provided facilities and/or instructors for the delivery of RSI to 23% of active apprentices at the cost of tuition and/or other fees. However, apprenticeship programs with contractual relationships (35%) serve almost 84% of Washington's apprentices. A small number, about 8% of the apprenticeship programs did not respond to the survey. Finally, contractual relationships between registered apprenticeship programs and CTCs vary significantly.

For the purposes of this report, "registered apprenticeship program" is identified as each occupation offered by a program sponsor. Overall, there were 230 program sponsors offering training in 435 occupations.

Introduction

In 2024, the Washington State Legislature passed Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 5950, the supplemental operating budget for the 2023-2025 biennium. Under Section 220(50), proviso funding for the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) was provided,

“[...] solely for the department to survey registered apprenticeship programs and assimilate data that documents the fee structure and contractual elements of partnerships between the various registered apprenticeship programs and community and technical college system. This information will be used to inform a report and recommendations to the legislature on registered apprenticeship funding and how this funding is directed to community and technical colleges. The department shall submit a report to the legislature summarizing the survey findings by November 15, 2024.”

With the agreement of advocates of the proviso, the department reads this as having two parts: conduct a survey and summarize the findings in a report and, separately, provide recommendations. This report gathered information through surveys and interviews and does not include recommendations.

Registered Apprenticeship

Registered apprenticeship is a work-based learning career pathway that enables apprentices to develop knowledge, skills, and abilities in a career field while earning a wage and nationally recognized credential. In turn, employers can develop and prepare their future workforce.

A registered apprenticeship combines hands-on, on-the-job training (OJT) with related supplemental instruction (RSI), all under the guidance of a journey-level professional. An “apprenticeable occupation” qualifies if it involves the apprentice gaining manual, mechanical, or technical skills that meet industry standards. These standards typically require at least 2,000 hours of OJT learning and a minimum of 144 hours of RSI each program year. Apprenticeships prepare individuals for well recognized, high-skill careers by offering a structured path of progress skill development. While many jobs may meet some of the criteria, only those that fulfill all requirements qualify as apprenticeable occupations. Upon completing a registered apprenticeship program, apprentices earn a nationally recognized professional credential.

The Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council (WSATC) approves registered apprenticeship programs and apprenticeship preparation programs. Council members are appointed by L&I and include representatives from employer and employee organizations within the business and labor communities, and a member of the public.

Survey Purpose

ESSB 5950 directed L&I to “survey registered apprenticeship programs and assimilate data that documents the fee structure and contractual elements of partnerships between the various registered apprenticeship programs and the community and technical college system.”

Survey Data

Data was gathered from registered apprenticeship programs for calendar year 2023. The apprenticeship section surveyed 401 Registered Apprenticeship Program occupations out of the 435 occupations which were active in calendar year 2023. Only 22 programs did not respond to the survey, while 12 programs had cancelled their status as a Registered Apprenticeship Program prior to the survey taking place. As a result, this data represents 99% of the active Registered Apprentices that received RSI in 2023. The questions were specifically designed to gather insights about the apprenticeship programs during this period. Key highlights of the Washington state registered apprenticeship system for calendar year 2023 include:

- 435 Active Registered Apprenticeship Program Occupations;
- 16,404 Apprentices received RSI¹.

Survey Methodology

In collaboration with L&I’s registered apprenticeship stakeholders, the department developed a comprehensive set of questions focused on delivering RSI to apprentices. These questions were then posed to each registered apprenticeship program in an interview format. After each interview, L&I staff provided the completed survey questionnaire to the respective apprenticeship programs for review and signature, confirming the accuracy of the responses recorded by L&I.

To ensure the reliability of the survey data, L&I cross-verified responses with information from the Apprenticeship Registration and Tracking System (ARTS). This verification process included a comparison of key metrics, such as the total number of apprentices in each program and the total number of RSI hours delivered in 2023.

In addition, L&I requested copies of contracts between registered apprenticeship programs and the CTCs to capture data on fee structures and contractual agreements. As a result, L&I collected 69 separate contracts, many which cover multiple programs or occupations, further enhancing the depth of the survey information.

¹ Apprenticeship Registration and Tracking System data shows 16,404 apprentices attended RSI in calendar year 2023. Apprentices who are registered mid-way through the year, or who are in their final year of their apprenticeship and have completed all required RSI courses may not have been required to attend RSI in calendar year 2023.

CTCs & Registered Apprenticeships

When assessing the relationship between registered apprenticeship program sponsors and CTCs, L&I classified the programs' RSI delivery methods into the following three (3) categories:

1. No CTC partnership;
2. CTC partnership, not utilizing CTC instructors or facilities; and
3. CTC partnership, utilizing CTC facilities and/or instructors; offered at a cost to the apprenticeship program.

The following data shows the breakdown of each type of CTC partnership with registered apprenticeships surveyed. The first chart provides total figures; the second chart provides a percentage breakdown.

Total utilization for each type of CTC relationship

Type of CTC relationship	Registered apprenticeship program occupations	Active registered apprentices receiving RSI within the calendar year	Hours of RSI delivered
1. No CTC partnership	249	2,706	383,839
2. CTC partnership <i>Does not utilize CTC instructors or facilities</i>	77	9,839	1,531,245
3. CTC partnership <i>Utilizes CTC instructors and/or facilities</i>	75	3,695	574,987
4. Program did not respond to survey	34	164	18,728
Total	435	16,404	2,508,800

Percentage of utilization for each type of CTC relationship

Type of CTC relationship	Registered apprenticeship program occupations	Active registered apprentices receiving RSI within the calendar year	Hours of RSI delivered
1. No CTC partnership	57%	16%	15%
2. CTC partnership <i>Does not utilize CTC instructors or facilities</i>	18%	60%	61%
3. CTC partnership <i>Utilizes CTC instructors and/or facilities</i>	17%	23%	23%
Program did not respond to survey	8%	1%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Registered apprenticeship is a workforce-driven education and training model that aligns with industry needs. L&I data shows 76% of apprentices receive RSI directly from their programs, which cover the costs of their own facilities, instructors, equipment, consumable supplies, apprentice services, and curriculum.

It is noteworthy that 57% of registered apprenticeship programs do not have a contractual relationship with a CTC. However, programs without a CTC partnership served a small percentage (16%) of the active apprentices who received RSI in 2023. This suggests that relatively small programs are less likely to have contractual relationships with CTCs, while the 35% of registered apprenticeship programs that have contractual relationships with a CTC serve nearly 85% of Washington's apprentices.

Contractual Elements & Fee Structures

Overview

The contracts that survey respondents provided to L&I detailing CTC and registered apprenticeship program relationships vary significantly in many factors, including:

- specificity regarding the financial elements of the relationship;
- roles and responsibilities of the parties;
- number and type of credits apprentices receive; and
- additional benefits apprentices receive resulting from college enrollment.

Obtaining and providing comprehensive information documenting the financial relationship between registered apprenticeship programs and partner CTCs would require much more time for extensive collaboration with:

- individual CTCs;
- registered apprenticeship programs;
- the Washington State Office of Financial Management; and
- the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC).

CTCs providing facilities and/or instructors

In 2023, some registered apprenticeship programs had a contractual relationship with a CTC. For those that did, the CTC provides facilities and/or instructors at a cost to the apprenticeship program, which may include tuition or other fees. Those accounted for:

- 17% of all registered apprenticeship programs; and
- 23% of all registered apprentices.

The breakout of these relationships is as follows:

CTC Utilization	Programs		Apprentices	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
CTC instructor & facilities utilized	34	8%	925	6%
CTC instructor utilized only (not included above)	4	<1%	8	<1%
CTC facilities utilized only (not included above)	37	9%	2,762	17%
Total	75	17%	3,695	23%

Of the registered apprenticeship programs surveyed that utilize CTC facilities and/or instructors, 87% reported they were satisfied with their CTC partnership(s). Registered apprenticeship programs and/or apprentices are responsible for paying tuition and fees for the instruction apprentices receive. Under a rule adopted by the SBCTC, apprentice tuition is limited to 50% of the amount colleges collect from other college students.

Registered apprenticeship programs and CTCs generally accept that one apprentice receiving 144 hours of RSI is roughly equivalent to one-third of a full-time equivalent (FTE).

CTCs not providing facilities or instructors

In 2023, registered apprenticeship programs with a CTC contractual relationship, but not using CTC facilities or instructors, accounted for:

- 18% of all registered apprenticeship programs; and
- 60% of all registered apprentices.

This relationship provides apprentices with college credit, while typically providing registered apprenticeship programs with a portion of the FTEs' revenue generated through apprentice enrollments. Apprenticeship programs receive these revenues in the form of rent and other services rendered. The program or apprentice pays tuition to the CTC at the 50% waiver rate.

Of the registered apprenticeship programs surveyed that did not utilize CTC facilities or instructors, 61% reported they were satisfied with their CTC relationship.

To explain how this relationship works, the following example demonstrates a common relationship between a registered apprenticeship program and a CTC.

Funding Models for CTCs and Apprenticeship programs

There are multiple factors that influence funding that either the CTC or the apprenticeship program receive. In general, the State Board for Community & Technical Colleges (SBCTC) receives state appropriations to be distributed to individual college districts for operations. Whether enrolling an apprentice or any other student type, the SBCTC allocation model is the same. Once received by the district or college, funding decisions are made at the college level and reflect local needs and priorities of their service district.

In addition to allocations of state funds distributed through the SBCTC, the CTCs also receive tuition from apprenticeship programs or individual apprentices. Tuition is paid, regardless of whether the apprentice receives instruction using the CTC facilities or instructor. By SBCTC rule, however, colleges are required to waive 50% of standard tuition, services and activities fees for apprentices. Payment of tuition provides apprentices with

transcription of college credits earned through the completion of RSI and may include access to college services available to all students. However, some apprentices may not be aware services are available to them as students. This report does not include data regarding access to or use of these services.

As shown in the survey response, the majority of apprentices (76%) receive RSI directly from their programs, using their own facilities, instructors, equipment, and curriculum. In these situations, CTCs recognize the apprenticeship program costs for delivering RSI and pay the apprenticeship program a negotiated rate based on the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollments the apprenticeship program generates to cover expenses such as rent and/or other fees incurred by the apprenticeship program. These amounts are negotiated locally between the colleges and apprenticeship sponsors. SBCTC provides an annual fee guidance contract rate to be considered in this negotiation.

Appendices

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM PERSPECTIVES

During the survey interviews, L&I staff provided sponsors of apprenticeship programs the opportunity to comment and provide feedback on their relationships with CTCs. This section contains a summary of the comments they provided. L&I sorted the comments by the type of CTC relationship the programs have. The number to the left of each statement is the number of registered programs that provided the feedback.

Comments from apprenticeship programs with a CTC partnership utilizing CTC instructors and/or facilities

(24) The program is very happy with the relationship and feels that the CTC is helpful and easy to work with.

(17) The program is happy with the instruction provided.

(4) The program is unhappy with the relationship and feels the CTC is taking advantage of them.

(2) The program thinks the relationship is necessary, but feels it is difficult and that the benefit is low for their effort.

(2) The program believes the CTC retains the majority of the funding without providing many services and wonders what happens to the excess.

(1) The program is generally satisfied but thinks they should be receiving a larger portion of the funding.

(1) The program is generally satisfied but is not without difficulties.

Comments from apprenticeship programs with a CTC partnership not utilizing CTC instructors or facilities

(27) The program is doing the vast majority of the work associated with the relationship, however the CTC receives the majority of the state funding for the delivery of the RSI.

(14) The program is satisfied with the CTC relationship, but feels there is room for improvement.

(12) The CTC has been great to work with.

(7) The program is satisfied with the CTC overall, but would like to see more transparency and for the payment structure to be simpler and more fair.

(7) The program is satisfied with the relationship with their CTC, but they are not satisfied with the payment structure, the CTCs retain the majority of the money without being involved in delivery of RSI, and the credits awarded are not generally useful for the apprentices.

(4) The program is satisfied with the CTC overall, but finds the requirements of the system to be frustrating and doesn't see much involvement from the CTC.

(4) The program is not satisfied with the RSI system and wants to know where the money goes. The CTCs retain the majority of the money without being involved in delivery of RSI or providing meaningful services.

(3) The program is not satisfied overall, wants transparency in the payment structures, and is not satisfied with the usefulness of the credits awarded to apprentices.

Comments from apprenticeship programs without CTC partnership

(37) The program is satisfied with their current RSI delivery method, or does not think a relationship with a CTC is necessary.

(18) The program is open to, or interested in a relationship with a CTC, if the option became available.

(12) The program is located in an area that makes a relationship with a CTC challenging or unlikely, but may otherwise be open to it.

(10) The program experiences barriers that prevent them from partnering with a CTC but would be open to it if the benefits outweighed the complexities and barriers.

(10) The program has had negative previous experiences with a CTC relationship and is disinclined to enter one again without more simplicity, transparency, and/or benefit.

(7) The program is too small to fill classes, or has not had any apprentices recently.

(7) The program has a relationship with an out of state CTC, or a CTC like system, and is happy with the quality of RSI they are receiving.

(6) The program is familiar with the system, thinks it is broken and not worth participating in.

(5) The program had a relationship with a CTC where their funding was decreased significantly, the apprentices did not receive enough support, and the credits were not useful to their apprentices.

CTC PERSPECTIVES

Two college administrators who work extensively with registered apprenticeship programs contacted L&I and requested the opportunity to provide comments as part of the survey process. Their statements on the relationship between the registered apprenticeship system and the community and technical college system in full are below.

Comments from a Spokane Community College Apprenticeship Administrator

Relationship Importance

The collaboration between Community and Technical Colleges (CTCs) and Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) is integral to achieving their shared mission of developing a skilled workforce that drives community growth, both economically and infrastructurally. Together, these institutions play a crucial role in building communities by training and educating a qualified workforce.

Financial Dynamics of CTCs and Registered Apprenticeship Programs

Misconceptions and Realities

One prevalent misconception within the Registered Apprenticeship community is the assumption that dedicated funding for RAPs exists universally. While specific programs like AJAC (Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee) and Career Launch have earmarked funding, this is not the norm for all RAPs. For example, Spokane Community College partners with RAPs that mistakenly believe the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) funding is \$8,000 per FTE, a figure applicable only to enhanced FTE programs like AJAC and Career Launch.

Funding Challenges

Without consistent, dedicated funding, it becomes difficult for colleges to fully support RAPs, especially during times of budgetary constraints. This financial model presents challenges for CTCs, as Registered Apprenticeship partnerships may not be the most fiscally sustainable to support.

Fluctuating Value of FTEs

The variable nature of FTE values, which can change annually, further complicates financial planning for CTCs working with RAPs. This unpredictability makes it challenging for colleges to establish stable, long-term partnerships.

Tuition Waiver Considerations

The 50% tuition waiver for apprentices poses additional structural challenges, particularly for CTCs providing

facilities, equipment, and instructors. For example, Spokane Community College does not charge typical student fees for apprentices, however apprentices still have access to supportive services as typical students (tutoring, student health clinic, free access to fitness center, food pantry, etc.). This leads to potential financial losses when combined with the tuition waiver. While the Spokane Community College administrator does not advocate for a complete removal of the waiver, they stress the need for alternative funding solutions to ensure CTCs can sustainably prioritize RAP partnerships without incurring financial deficits. It remains essential to maintain a financial structure that minimizes barriers for apprentices.

Building Productive Partnerships with Registered Apprenticeship Programs

Innovative Programs

Spokane Community College established the Skilled Trades Preparation (STP) an apprenticeship preparation program in direct response to the needs of the local RAP community. This program, developed in collaboration with RAP partners, aligns closely with industry demands, offering participants a clear pathway into Registered Apprenticeship. The STP program is self-sustaining and requires only a \$25 tuition fee, thanks to the active support and involvement of the RAP community.

Industry Engagement

The strong partnership between Spokane Community College and RAPs is exemplified by industry professionals teaching segments of the STP curriculum. This provides participants with firsthand expertise from subject matter experts while offering RAPs an opportunity to evaluate future candidates.

Program Staffing

The STP program operates with two full-time faculty members and an Instructional Technician, complemented by guest instruction from RAP professionals.

Recognizing Apprentice and Apprenticeship Preparation Participant Credit

High School Completion Credits

Participants in the Skilled Trades Preparation (STP) program can earn High School Plus credit through their participation, assisting individuals working towards their High School Equivalency.

Spokane Community College (SCC) is actively collaborating with its Registered Apprenticeship Program partners to assess and align curriculum components, enabling individuals who have not completed high school or earned an equivalency to gain credits toward their High School Equivalency through their Registered Apprenticeship.

College-Level Credits

SCC is in the process of evaluating Registered Apprenticeship Programs for credit equivalent through their curriculum process so the courses can be recognized for college credit, ensuring registered apprentices receive appropriate academic credit for their training.

Registered Apprenticeship Programs with a curriculum of 90 credits can lead to the attainment of an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree. However, it is important to note that the AAS degree is not designed to be transferable to four-year institutions. This limitation is not unique to Registered Apprenticeship Programs; students enrolled in Professional Technical Education courses encounter the same challenges regarding the transferability of their credits. This structural barrier underscores the need for clearer pathways and greater flexibility in educational and career advancement for individuals in these programs.

A structural challenge arises because instructors for Registered Apprenticeship Programs do not meet the Intercollege Relations Commission (ICRC) requirements for general education credits to be transferable to four-year institutions. Transferable credits must be taught by individuals holding at least a master's degree in the subject matter. This poses limitations on offering credits or degrees that enhance apprentices' future career mobility and advancement. For example, credits earned through Registered Apprenticeship Programs can be applied toward the Multi-Occupational Trades degree, which may be transferable to Washington State four-year institutions and programs that have established articulation agreements. This creates opportunities for apprentices to further their education, although the scope of transferability is limited to those institutions and programs with specific agreements in place.

Comments from a Seattle College District Apprenticeship Administrator

CTC and Registered Apprenticeship Program Collaboration Value & Opportunities

Productive relationships between Registered Apprenticeship Programs and Community and Technical Colleges provide industry experience, education, and training. These partnerships are strengthened by their shared mission of training a strong, qualified workforce. At their best, the collaboration strengthens the common goal of removing barriers for as many people as possible — including many of Washington State's under-represented populations — to education and training for living wage jobs critical for community growth and infrastructure needs.

Colleges and Registered Apprenticeship continue to update and align industry standards with the credits apprentice students receive for work-based learning and Related Supplemental Instruction (RSI). There is an opportunity for strengthening the partnerships between CTCs and Registered Apprenticeship Programs through ensuring college credits that apprentices receive are valuable: transferrable to multiple degree pathways which have employment and career growth, and/or career change value. There is also an opportunity to ensure Professional Technical Credentials are meaningful in terms of future employment outcomes to students who

complete them. This requires a meaningful and robust collaboration between Registered Apprenticeship Programs and the CTC system.

Financial Dynamics of CTCs and Registered Apprenticeship Programs

It is important that the college funding model for Registered Apprenticeship Programs is better understood.

Unless there's a specific amount received through dedicated allocations like Career Launch or Aerospace allocations — which are \$8,000 per Annualized Full Time Equivalent (FTE) — colleges are supporting Registered Apprenticeship programs with funding based on FTE values that fluctuates every year, informed by enrollments (that also change annually) for the entire college.

The 50% tuition waiver is a financial challenge for CTCs in partnering with Registered Apprenticeship Programs, particularly those colleges like Seattle Colleges, who provide facilities, instructors, and equipment. South Seattle College Apprentice students are not charged additional student fees, even though they have access to the services those fees typically fund like tutoring and counseling services — services that are often part of the educational experience helping students succeed. South Seattle College often relies on a variety of other financial resources (e.g., state, federal, or college foundation grants) for student support like the food pantry or offering the ELL for trades courses discussed below.

Seattle Colleges & Registered Apprenticeship Partnerships

The Seattle Community College District provides land, buildings, and classrooms to support Registered Apprenticeship Program instruction. This includes instructional equipment, custodial, facilities services. We work closely with partners, industry and private donor organizations, grant and other state funding opportunities to provide current training equipment. Student apprentices have a range of support including academic and career advising, tutoring, and funding options (to help with tools, equipment, tuition, or other needs that allows them to continue in the program). In addition, we support Registered Apprenticeship program recruitment by hosting multiple on-site tours (high school, community organizations) and representing the programs at job fairs.

Seattle Colleges employ an average of 64 faculty in apprenticeship programs. College on-site training and instruction is provided by apprentice instructors who are college faculty and are members of the faculty union with the same access to faculty support and training as any college faculty. This creates an opportunity for shared learning for both industry and the CTC around instructional content and best practices.

An example of a positive outcome between the CTCs and Registered Apprenticeship Programs is the English Language Learning (ELL) for Applied for the Trades course Seattle Colleges is offering to student apprentices in direct response to a request for English language instruction from multiple apprenticeship partners. Providing English language instruction curriculum designed for trades reduces barriers to succeeding in completing RSI and

in the workplace.

Apprentice and Apprenticeship Preparation RSI/Credentialing

Students can earn their High School Equivalency in one of our pre-apprenticeship partner programs that runs on one of our campuses. Seattle College Registered Apprenticeship Programs award college-level (100 level) credit that can be used towards the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree. Apprentice students have the option of taking transferrable general education credits (e.g. English 101) that that can be used towards a transferrable degree, and/or be transferrable to Bachelor of Applied (BAS) programs throughout the state if completed as part of the 90 credit AAS degree.

In general, the AAS degree is not designed to transfer to four-year institutions offering BA and BS degrees unless an articulation agreement has been established. This is common for many professional education pathways. There is the opportunity for Registered Apprenticeship Programs and Community and Technical Colleges to create and continually update and refine degrees that capture the industry knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the workforce jobs and careers.