



# ApprenticeshipUSA

## FACTSHEET

[www.dol.gov/apprenticeship](http://www.dol.gov/apprenticeship)

## Equal Opportunity in Apprenticeship for Apprentices and Job Seekers

Registered Apprenticeship ensures that individuals develop skills and get the credentials for a career and not just a job - and best of all, without college debt that can take years to pay off. Apprenticeships are a ticket to the middle class: the average starting wage is more than \$60,000 and studies show that apprentices who complete their training can earn \$240,000 more, over their work careers, than their peers who didn't participate in apprenticeships.

This update to the Apprenticeship Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) regulations is designed to open more doors to apprenticeship programs for traditionally under-represented groups, including women, minorities, and people with disabilities. The rule will ensure that more Americans from all backgrounds can benefit from this proven training model. It will also help programs reach a larger and more diverse pool of applicants, broadening participation in apprenticeship in line with our national goal to double and diversify apprenticeship opportunities.

The Apprenticeship EEO regulations have long provided that employers cannot discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin and sex, in addition to requiring sponsors to take affirmative action efforts to ensure equal opportunity in apprenticeships. But these rules had not been updated since 1978, and since that time, both the realities of the workforce and the landscape of EEO law have changed substantially. These new rules will help to ensure that workplaces are free from discrimination and that Registered Apprenticeship sponsors take affirmative steps to support hiring diversity and reach a broader pool of applicants.



### Key Provisions of the Final Rule for Apprentices and Job Seekers

#### Provides protections to more people

The rule in effect since 1978 prohibited discrimination in the recruitment, selection, employment and training of apprentices on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, and sex. This final rule adds **disability, age (40 or older), sexual orientation, and genetic information** to protected groups for nondiscrimination purposes.

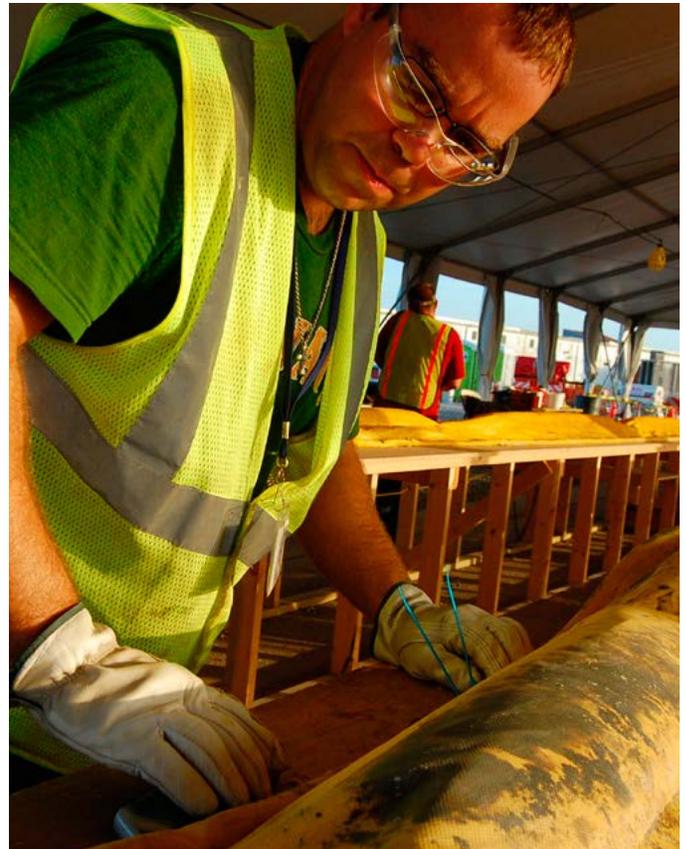
**Opens the doors to apprenticeship for more people:**

To open the doors to apprenticeships to more people, the Final Rule will streamline and improve the effectiveness of Registered Apprenticeship Program sponsors' required affirmative action efforts and of State and Federal Registration Agencies' efforts to enforce and support equal opportunity by:

- Listing specific steps that all sponsors must undertake to ensure equal employment opportunity (EEO), including: dissemination of the EEO policy; outreach and recruitment obligations to reach more diverse communities and thus increase diversity in applications for apprenticeship; keeping the workplace free from harassment, intimidation, and retaliation; and assigning an individual at the sponsor to oversee EEO efforts;
- Expanding the requirements to include affirmative action obligations on the basis of disability, including a 7 percent utilization goal for individuals with disabilities in apprenticeship programs. Establishing a mechanism to request applicants and apprentices to self-identify as having a disability, which will allow sponsors to measure their progress against the 7 percent utilization goal;
- Clarifying the outreach and recruitment obligations that all program sponsors must implement. The final rule will ensure that outreach and recruitment efforts extend to all persons available for apprenticeship with sponsors developing and annually updating a list of current recruitment sources that will generate referrals from all demographic groups. Examples of sources include: the public workforce system's One-Stop Career Centers, community-based organizations, and community colleges. Sponsors must provide recruitment sources advance notice of apprenticeship openings so that the sources can notify and refer candidates.

**Strengthens enforcement of the rules to protect applicants and apprentices**

The final rule clarifies procedures for apprentices to file complaints of discrimination.



The final rule provides protections from discrimination, harassment, and reprisal, and provides apprentices and job seekers with avenues to assert these rights. If you feel you've been harassed during your apprenticeship or discriminated against during the hiring process, the Department has resources for you. Please contact the Office of Apprenticeship or appropriate State Registration Agency. Contact information can be found at [www.doleta.gov/oa/contactlist.cfm](http://www.doleta.gov/oa/contactlist.cfm).