

# Maryland Apprenticeship Program – Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. What is the apprenticeship program?

- a. The apprenticeship program is a training system based on a list of competencies (i.e. skills and knowledge) that apprentices must achieve and/or demonstrate.
- b. It's an employer-driven training model that combines on-the-job training with job-related instruction.

## 2. What's in it for employers?

- a. *Well-trained Staff* – having a good training system in place helps employers to ensure their staff is learning everything they need to be successful. This builds confidence and helps to reduce turnover.
- b. *Financial Incentives* – there are tax credits and other financial incentives available depending on the track and age of the apprentices. Grant money provided to the employers can be used to support related training costs, credential and certification costs or wrap around services for the apprentice such as childcare or transportation. This funding CANNOT be used for wages or bonuses. **Specific information can be provided during an Employer Accelerator Meeting or One-on-One with NRAEF.**
- c. *More Job Applicants* – employer-partners can get referrals from local pre-apprenticeship training programs. Individuals who complete these programs may come with some of their competencies already met so they could be further along in the program.
- d. *Opportunities for Current Employees* – Employers can enroll their current employees in the apprenticeship program. Many current employees may already have many competencies met and can start out further along in the apprenticeship program. Financial incentives are provided to employers for enrolling new OR current employees.

## 3. What apprenticeship tracks are available?

- a. *Line Cook Apprenticeship*
  - i. 2000 hours of On-the-Job Learning (OJL) including food safety and storage, mise en place, and preparing meals.
  - ii. 144 hours of Related Instruction (RI), which can be delivered either in-person or virtually. This related instruction will support and enhance the on-the-job training and includes the completion of 5 required credentials:
    1. ServSafe Food Handler
    2. ServSafe Allergens
    3. Certified Kitchen Cook (AHLEI)
    4. Guest Service Gold (AHLEI)
    5. ServSafe Sexual Harassment
  - iii. Typically takes about one year to complete. If a candidate starts with some of the competencies already met (ex: current employee or hired from a pre-apprenticeship program) it may not take them that long.

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- iv. The candidate must be AT LEAST 17 years old at the time of entry into the program and they must earn a high school diploma or GED by the end of the program.
- b. *Restaurant Manager Apprenticeship*
  - i. Up to 4000 hours of On-the-Job Learning (OJL) including financial management, staffing supervision, marketing, and outreach.
  - ii. 225 hours of Related Instruction (RI), which can be delivered either in-person or virtually.
  - iii. Typically takes about two years to complete. If a candidate starts with some of the competencies already met (ex: current employee or hired from a pre-apprenticeship program) it may not take them that long.
  - iv. The candidate must be AT LEAST 18 years old and have a high school diploma or GED at the time of entry into the program.
- c. *Kitchen Manager Apprenticeship* – COMING SOON! (Summer 2021, according to NRAEF)

### 4. Common Questions

- a. *What is required of employers?*
  - i. Train apprentices using the program and competencies.
  - ii. Use the provided database to report apprentice progress.
  - iii. Agree to the parameters of the grant that coincides with the track and age group they choose to engage. Generally, this relates to age of apprentice and other minimum qualifications.
- b. *Do employers have to adopt a brand-new training program?*
  - i. **NO.** If the employer already has a training program in place, they can continue to use that. NRAEF will do a “crosswalk” of their training program which is just a process that compares the current program with the competencies required for apprenticeship and identifies any gaps. NRAEF will help the employer find ways to enhance their program to address those gaps so that all the competencies can be met by apprentices.
  - ii. If an employer does NOT have a training program in place the NRAEF has a training program they can use.
- c. *Are employers required to hire any specific candidates?*
  - i. **NO.** Employers can continue to hire whoever they want. RAMEF can help to connect them to pre-apprenticeship programs where they can find potential applicants, but the employer is never required to hire anyone from those programs.

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- d. *Are employers required to offer a specific schedule or pay rate?*
- i. Schedule – **No**. Apprentices can be scheduled the same as any other employee.
  - ii. Pay rate – Apprentices are employees and must be paid. There are various grants that support different tracks and age ranges. The pay rate should increase as they achieve different competency groups.
    1. Line Cook Apprentices must start at no less than \$11/hour and have two pay raises through the course of the program. \$15/hr is the target for program completers.
    2. Restaurant Management Apprentices must have at least one pay raise through the course of the program and must start at no less than \$14/hour.
- e. *How many trainers must an employer have?*
- i. The apprentice ratio in Maryland is 1:1. Every apprentice must have a dedicated supervisor.
    1. Best Practice - enroll current employees as apprentices because they would likely not take as long to complete. Once complete, they would be good candidates to supervise the next apprentices.
- f. *Is RAMEF going to send me candidates to fill all my staff vacancies?*
- i. **NO**. RAMEF can provide connections to pre-apprenticeship programs who have individuals looking for apprenticeship positions, but we do not guarantee any specific number of candidates. This process does help to ensure the candidates you are interviewing are interested in working in foodservice and have some level of training at the time of hire.
- g. *How long does it take to become an employer partner and what are the steps?*
- i. The employer partner onboarding process typically takes about 30 days.
  - ii. Steps to become an employer partner:
    1. Show Interest! Let us know you want more information.
    2. Attend an Employer Accelerator Meeting
      - a. This step can be skipped if the employer is certain they want to participate.
    3. One-on-one meeting to discuss the specific employer's interest including tracks they want to offer, financial incentives available, and next steps.
    4. Sign Partnership Agreements
      - a. The exact agreements will depend on the apprentice track(s) and age of apprentices the employer wants to engage.
    5. Crosswalk current training program and train on employer database.
    6. Enroll apprentices.

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## 5. Pre-Apprenticeship Programs

- a. *What are pre-apprenticeship programs?*
  - i. There are different types of organizations offering pre-apprenticeship options, but the goal of all these programs is to help prospective apprentices complete some of the program competencies, including Related Instruction hours.
  - ii. Individuals in these programs have demonstrated interest in working in the industry and leave these programs with basic workplace training and credentials.
  
- b. *What are the different types of pre-apprenticeship programs?*
  - i. Pre-apprenticeship Programs may be offered by the following types of organizations:
    1. ProStart Schools
    2. Restaurant Ready Partners at Community-based Organizations (CBO)
    3. Job Corps Programs
    4. YouthBuild Programs
  
- c. *Do all pre-apprenticeship programs offer the same thing?*
  - i. **NO.** Each program may be different. They are all designed to offer Related Instruction hours, but some may offer some hands-on competencies training and others will not.
  
- d. *How are pre-apprenticeship programs and employers connected?*
  - i. The goal is to transition pre-apprenticeship completers into an apprenticeship program with an employer-partner.
  - ii. Once candidates complete a program, RAMEF will try to match them up with an employer-partner in their area for an interview.
  - iii. This process is still in development and will change as the number of pre-apprenticeship completers and employer-partners grows.