

# Welcome!

Welcome to Massachusetts Apprenticeship System. You are officially recognized as an apprentice in the State of Massachusetts and have embarked on what will be one of the most rewarding opportunities of your life. During your period of training, you will receive some of the finest training and education available. Once you are registered as an apprentice, you have certain rights under the Apprenticeship Law. However, with those rights come responsibilities. In order for you to fully benefit from your apprenticeship, you must take ownership of your training.

Periodically review your recorded hours in your progress report with the work schedule for your craft to ensure you are being trained in all work processes listed and attend all classroom training required as part of your apprenticeship.

The purpose of this handbook is to inform you of your rights and responsibilities as an apprentice. It is not intended to be a legal document. Please read it and use it for future reference when questions surface.

## Background

Apprenticeship is a Massachusetts tradition that combines supervised structured on-the-job training with classroom instruction. The purpose of the program is to provide you with a comprehensive knowledge of your selected occupation. Apprenticeship is a formal training program registered with the State of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Apprentice Standards.

Apprenticeship in Massachusetts began in the 1600's when the idea of indentured servitude came to the colonies from Europe. The oldest apprentice agreement in America is believed to have been signed in Boston on July 23, 1771. Many famous Americans, such as Benjamin Franklin and Paul Revere, started their careers as apprentices in Boston.

In the beginning, apprenticeship was primarily for specialized trades such as blacksmith and silversmith. As the world changes and evolves, so do the trades that are apprenticeable. Today we are expanding into new occupations such as biotech, medical, childcare, and security, as well as maintaining a strong presence in the construction industry.

Apprenticeship has come a long way since the days where apprentices were bound body and soul to their masters. Many laws have been passed since those days to ensure that apprentices have safe working conditions, fair wages, and proper training. For example, in 1937, President Roosevelt signed into law the Fitzgerald Act, also known as the National Apprenticeship Act, which established labor standards for apprentices and enlarged the Federal Committee on Apprenticeship. Under the Fitzgerald Act, national apprenticeship standards were created and have been periodically amended for various trades, and, to this day, those standards continue to contribute to the welfare of apprentices.

As an apprentice, you will learn on-the-job under the supervision of a journeyman, while working for an approved sponsor (sole employer or joint labor/management organization). You will also attend related instruction classes at an approved training site.

You will be paid according to a progressive schedule for wage increases over the term of your apprenticeship as listed on your Apprenticeship Agreement.

## Apprenticeship 101

### 1. Apprenticeship Basics

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development is the state agency that has the responsibility for the development, implementation and monitoring of apprenticeship programs in Massachusetts. Specific responsibility for administering apprenticeship program standards is housed in the Division of Apprentice Standards.

The Division of Apprentice Standards Compliance Officers is assigned a specific geographic workload in the state for purposes of program implementation, oversight and administration. These representatives are listed on our website at [www.mass.gov/das](http://www.mass.gov/das). They are a point of contact when you have questions or concerns with your apprenticeship training, state policies or if your sponsor is unable to provide a proper response.

Although the Division of Apprentice Standards has responsibility for oversight of the apprenticeship program, both your sponsor and you, the apprentice, have responsibilities.

### **Apprentice Responsibilities**

1. Work safely.
2. Avoid absenteeism and tardiness at work and at school.
3. Attend and participate in related instruction and maintain the highest possible grades.
4. Be involved and show dedication to your training (both on the job and in the classroom).
5. Keep track of your training hours, (either in the form of work records or logbook) and advise your supervisor of any deficiencies in your apprenticeship training.
6. Show dedication and interest in learning the occupation.
7. Show respect to the skilled journeypersons training and supervising you.
8. Comply with the provisions of the Apprentice Agreement.
9. Follow your sponsor's written work rules and policies.
10. You must be accompanied by a journeyperson while on the job site.

### **Sponsor Responsibilities**

1. Provide a safe working and learning environment.
2. Provide supervision and training by a journeyperson on the job site at all times.
3. Provide proper ratios at all times.
4. Provide well-rounded training so the apprentice has learned all aspects of the occupation by the completion of the training program as listed in the Work Schedule
5. Monitor the apprentice's on-the-job progress and provide feedback on performance.
6. Comply with the provisions of the Apprentice Standards and Apprenticeship Agreement.

### **Division of Apprentice Standards Responsibilities**

1. Develop, register and monitor programs to ensure conformity to state statutes, regulations, standards and policies.
2. Assist apprentices and employers with questions or concerns.
3. Provide technical assistance (i.e., complaints, work changes, and problem solving).
4. Confer with the providers of related instruction to assure quality classroom training.
5. Maintain Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Compliance.

## **2. The Apprentice Registration Agreement**

The Apprentice Registration Agreement is a legal, binding document between you, your sponsor, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The terms and conditions of your training are contained in the Agreement including the start date of the apprenticeship. Pay raises are determined by the start date along with accumulation of work hours.

Your apprenticeship is valid only for the number of years/hours that is listed on your registration agreement. Failure to complete the required on-the-job training hours and related classroom instruction in this time frame will result in your **termination or cancellation** from the program.

Please take time to review your copy of the Agreement. It should be thoroughly understood. Your sponsor will receive two copies of the Agreement by mail along with your apprentice ID card. One copy of the Agreement is for their records, and one copy is for your records. This is your record of registration and lists important information such as your wage progression, occupation registration category, and any credit for previous registered experience (**unregistered work hours are not counted toward the completion of the program**). The ID card must be in your possession at all times while working. If you have any questions about the Agreement or ID card, call your Apprenticeship Compliance Officer listed on our website.

The Agreement contains the following sections that are important for you to read and understand:

- **Occupation and Credit Hours-Extent of Period of Apprenticeship (Term).** This section describes the length of the apprenticeship program. The term is stated as a total number of hours and months.
- **Occupation and Credit Hours-OJT Credit Hours.** Credit for previously registered apprenticeship hours are listed in this section

- **Wage Progression Chart-Minimum Compensation to be Paid.**

A progressive wage schedule is stated as a percentage of the journeyperson wage rate. The sponsor must pay the apprentice the minimum stated amount. The sponsor may also pay the apprentice more than the skilled wage rate. When the apprentice's wage is governed by a collective bargaining agreement, that agreement governs and supercedes the Apprentice Registration Agreement. Apprentices assigned to prevailing wage project jobs must be paid their percentage of the sponsor's minimum completion wage rate or the project journeyperson's rate (prevailing wage), whichever is higher, plus 100% of the fringe benefits listed in the wage determination for their occupational classification.

### **3. Probationary Period**

A Probationary Period is required in each apprenticeship. It provides an opportunity for both the sponsor and the apprentice to adjust to each other and to the program. Should either you or your sponsor wish to cancel the Agreement during the Probationary Period, either party can do so by notifying the Division of Apprentice Standards in writing of this decision. Unless otherwise stated, the length of the Probationary Period is the first wage progression period.

### **4. Related Instruction and the Importance of School Attendance**

Apprenticeship training combines several aspects as part of an overall strategy to train a skilled worker. This strategy combines supervised, structured on-the-job training and related instruction.

The importance of related instruction is twofold: the industry has uniformity of instruction; and you, as an individual apprentice, are given the theoretical knowledge of your occupation. This is what adds value to you as an individual, to your career, and to your industry. The related instruction is the academic portion of the apprenticeship, merit shop association school, union JATC School, or an approved proprietary school, approved correspondence facility, or approved Community College.

Related instruction is an integral part of every apprenticeship and is required by Massachusetts apprenticeship regulations. Every sponsor has the responsibility to arrange for the apprentice to attend related instruction. It is not mandatory for your sponsor to pay for your books, or tuition expenses.

It is your employer's responsibility to release you from work to attend the required school. Work is not a valid reason for missing school. Failure to attend is a violation of Massachusetts apprenticeship regulations. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness from school may lead to termination or cancellation of your apprenticeship. It is your responsibility to follow your school's attendance notification procedure.

### **5. Work Records**

It is highly recommended that you and your sponsor maintain a record of your progress. Because the training and schooling extends over several years, a record is required to assure that all parts of the program have been covered. Also, if discrepancies occur concerning the training, there is an accurate record of hours worked. Your official work records should be signed and dated monthly by you and your employer. The Apprentice Progress Record is included as part of this handbook.

### **6. Layoffs, Cancellations**

If a reduction in workforce becomes necessary, the suspension and reinstatement of apprentices shall be done in relation to retention of the most advanced apprentice.

- The sponsor must notify the department in writing of any change in the status of an apprentice whether laid off or cancelled.

## 7. Discipline

You may be subject to disciplinary procedures when failing to make satisfactory progress or failing to meet your responsibilities in the apprenticeship program.

Behaviors that could lead to disciplinary action including termination of your apprenticeship, include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to abide by safety procedures and drug policies;
- Failure to follow work rules and procedures established by the sponsor;
- Disruptive behavior on-the-job or in related instruction;
- Failure to follow the directions of your sponsor;
- Failure to submit on-the-job training records as required;
- Failure to fulfill all related instruction requirements;
- Unsatisfactory grades for related instruction courses;
- Unsatisfactory attendance (including tardiness) for related instruction courses;
- Unsatisfactory attendance (including tardiness) at the job site; or
- Failure to register for related instruction.

## 8. Harassment

You have the right to a harassment free workplace and school setting. We find that apprentices for the most part act professionally in the classroom and on the job site. We have also found though, that when harassment\* does occur, it is most often between apprentices.

Therefore, we want to enlist your help to eliminate harassment and to support respect. You can do the following to ensure you and your coapprentices all receive the respect you deserve.

- Consider all apprentices your equal, personally and professionally.
- Respect other apprentices' opinions and beliefs about work, study, and personal goals.
- Acknowledge that each apprentice comes from a different background socially, economically, and ethnically, and each brings new knowledge to your classroom, worksite and the industry.
- Understand that it is awkward for most people to tell another person that certain behavior and activities offend them.
- Act on your instincts; if you feel you are taking a chance of offending someone with your words or actions, you probably are.
- Offer support to your classmates and co-workers if they are being harassed.
- Discuss any harassment you witness or experience with a person in authority.

Harassment, whether committed by students, co-workers, supervisors, or instructors needs to be addressed immediately. If harassment does occur in your classroom or on the jobsite, you have the right to seek assistance confidentially and without penalty or retribution. Policies will be in place in your employer's Human Resource office or at your union office that describe a procedure to address harassment. The best course of action is to follow the procedures. If you are unsure or uncomfortable about following the stated procedures, discuss the issue with your sponsor or union representative or contact your DAS Compliance Officer. While procedures used to address harassing behaviors might vary, the common goal for partners in apprenticeship training is the same - *to provide a supportive and respectful learning and working environment for apprentices.*

*\* The term harassment includes slurs, jokes, and other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, gender, religion, national origin, citizenship, age, handicap or disability, marital status or sexual orientation. Harassment also includes sexual advances, request for sexual favors, unwelcome or offensive touching, or other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct of a sexual or gender based nature.*

## 9. Discrimination

Discrimination by sponsors, unions, and educational institutions is illegal when it is directed at an individual who is a member of a "protected class". It is unfair and unproductive when it is directed at an individual, exclusive of others at the worksite or in the classroom. Discrimination might take place prior to employment, but can also take place during employment. It stems from categorizing individuals based on stereotypes, and training or interacting with an individual based on the stereotype and without consideration of the individual's ability, skill, experience, or motivation. Supervisors and instructors are charged with providing equal training to all apprentices. Since there are not always policies that cover discrimination during training or employment, it is important that you discuss situations that you think might be discriminatory with a supervisor. These discussions should be held or kept confidential, and, like raising a harassment issue, should not result in penalty or retribution. You can also discuss a discrimination concern with your Field Representative or Compliance Officer.

*\* Protected classes include race, color, sex (gender), religion, national origin, age, arrest/conviction record, sexual orientation, marital status, ancestry, Vietnam-veteran status, and non-job related physical or mental handicap.*

## 10. Complaint Procedure

A complaint is a question or request for assistance to solve a problem, or alleged problem, regarding any part of the apprenticeship program. If you have a concern/complaint related to your apprenticeship training, discuss it with your sponsor.

If you would like to pursue the complaint further, the complaint must be made in writing and submitted to:

Division of Apprentice Standards 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 19 Staniford Street, Boston, MA 02114

The Division of Apprentice Standards personnel will then conduct an investigation and attempt to seek resolution. The Division of Apprentice Standards normally has ninety (90) days to issue a decision.

## 11. Veterans Benefits

Some military veterans enter Massachusetts apprenticeship programs after their discharge from the military or while serving as an active military reservist. If you are a military veteran who is eligible to collect Veterans Educational Benefits (GI Bill), you may do so while serving your apprenticeship.

This benefit is an entitlement paid directly to you as the veteran apprentice, not money to the sponsor to offset the cost of training. The benefit rate is at its highest level during the first six-month period when apprenticeship wages are at their lowest. You are paid at a reduced rate during the second six-month period and reduced again to a fixed amount for the remainder of the program.

The Division of Apprentice Standards assists in completion of the Sponsor's VA benefit paperwork to ensure that it is completed and submitted properly. Additional information can be obtained from the Department of Veteran's Affairs' web address at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov).

## 12. Military Active Duty

If you are called to active duty during your apprenticeship, your Apprentice Agreement is put on hold. Have your sponsor contact your Field Representative or Compliance Officer so your file can reflect your current status. When you return from active duty, you can resume your apprenticeship. By law, your former sponsor is obligated to employ you when you return, if work is available and if you apply to your sponsor within the required period of time.

## 13. Completion Procedures

### What is required?

The Apprentice Agreement specifies the length of time that is required in order to graduate as a journeyperson within your occupation.

The completion of an Apprentice Agreement is based on satisfactory performance and accomplishment of these required objectives:

- Complete the "**Term**" [extent of period of apprenticeship] in year(s), hours, or a combination of both years and hours, depending on your specific occupation. A letter or completion certificate request needs to be provided by your sponsor indicating the term and work processes that have been completed and the date they were completed.
- Completion of "**Related Instruction**", the required hours of related classroom instruction as listed in the Work Schedule for your occupation from an instructional program. A letter/diploma must be submitted to the Compliance Officer indicating completion of related instruction from the approved teaching facility.
- In unlicensed occupations, once the Division of Apprentice Standards receives notification from your sponsor and school, the Division will then issue an Apprentice Completion Certificate.

## ***Apprenticeship Standards***

1. The apprentice must be employed and trained in an apprenticeable occupation as defined in 454 CMR 26.00
2. The apprentice will be provided no less than 2,000 hours per year of employment in the relevant occupation.
  - 2A. The first 1000 hours or six months of employment for the apprentice shall be a probationary period. During this probationary time the agreement may be canceled by either party to the agreement by notifying the other. The Division shall be notified of all such cancellations within 30 days.
  - 2B. The employer intends and expects to give the apprentice continuous employment and will use its best efforts to keep the apprentice employed during the full term of apprenticeship. If any apprentice is temporarily released due to business conditions, that apprentice shall be given the opportunity to be reinstated before any additional apprentice is employed in the same trade.
3. The apprentice shall be provided with a description of the work process in which he or she will work and an approximation of the portion of the time to be spent in each major process.
  - 3A. To permit the flexibility necessary to normal shop production hours, the work experiences need not be in the precise order as listed, nor do the scheduled hours on any operation need to be continuous.
4. The apprentice sponsor shall ensure that the apprentice receives approximately 150 hours per year of related instruction in all subjects related to the trade. Such instruction may be given in a classroom or through correspondence courses or other forms of self study, but must be approved by the Director of the Division of Apprentice Standards. The sponsor will not necessarily be responsible for the cost of the related instruction or any books, other written materials, or supplies necessary for such instruction. If, however, the apprentice is to be responsible for all or any portion of such costs, the apprentice agreement must contain an explicit statement to that effect; otherwise, the employer is responsible.
5. The sponsor must ensure that the apprentice will be paid no less than the amount specified in a predetermined schedule of wage rates. Such wage rates will be expressed as a percentage and in six month intervals of the established journeyman rate and shall progressively increase consistent with the level of skill acquired by the apprentice for the duration of time that the apprentice participates in the apprentice program. The apprentice's scale of wages shall average not less than 50% of the Journeyman rate over the term of the apprenticeship. If a sponsor has a program with an occupation that is identified on the Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards prevailing wage sheets as one that would require certified payrolls on a public project as described in Chapter 149, then the wage progression percentages will mirror that like occupation. The sponsor may adjust the apprentice payroll amount for private jobs by setting the company private journeyman rate and maintaining the same wage progression rate.
6. The journeyman's rate used for establishing the apprentices wage schedule shall be stated in dollars and cents and shall be reviewed annually and, if appropriate, re-adjusted.
7. The entry apprentice wage rate shall be not less than the minimum wage prescribed by applicable state or federal law.

8. The apprentice will be under the general supervision of the journeyperson with whom the apprentice will work and the direct supervision of the employer or Master Supervisor whose duty it shall be to see that the apprentice receives the work experience outlined in these Standards.

9. The apprentice sponsor may preclude an apprentice from obtaining the next step in the apprenticeship or extend the apprenticeship when the apprentice does not achieve the level of competency necessary for advancing or completing the program. In such a case, however, the apprentice's periodic evaluation shall describe the reasons for such action and the apprentice shall be notified of the evaluation. The evaluation (initialed by the apprentice) shall be forwarded to the Division with a request for an extension of the apprentice's agreement. In no event shall the term of the apprenticeship be extended more than two six months periods over the term of the apprenticeship except on a case by case basis.

10. The ratio of apprentices to journeypersons indentured by the apprentice program sponsor shall not exceed the ratios as determined by the Division of Apprenticeship Standards and as posted on the prevailing wage sheets by the Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards.

11. The apprentice shall be trained in safe and healthful work practices and shall work only in environments that comply with all applicable Massachusetts and Federal occupational safety and health standards;

12. The apprentice shall not be less than 16 years of age. The employment of apprentices between the ages of 16 and 18 shall comply with all Massachusetts and Federal child labor laws.

13. The apprentice training sponsor may, at its discretion, grant credit or advanced standing to an apprentice for hands-on training or related instruction which the apprentice may have obtained while previously participating in other apprentice programs or while employed by previous employers. However, such previous training or experience must be documented and comply M.G.L. c 23, §§ 11E through 11W and 454 CMR 26.00. Step increases in pay shall be commensurate with the credit given to the apprentice. The granting or denial of credit or advanced standing to any particular apprentice must conform to the apprentice program sponsor's stated policy on this issue as described in the apprentice application materials and in the apprentice agreement. However, no more than one-half the program will be accepted based on previous experience or training.

14. Upon successful completion of the apprentice's program, the apprentice program sponsor shall recommend to Division that a State Certification be awarded.

15. The apprentice program sponsor shall establish a procedure to receive, investigate, and resolve complaints and concerns raised by the apprentices relative to the apprentice program. To the extent possible, confidentiality of the information provided to the apprentice program sponsor concerning matters raised by apprentices shall be maintained.

16. The records of the apprentice's work experience and related training instruction shall be kept by the employer and will be available for examination by Field Representatives or Compliance Officers of the Division.

17. For employers with five or more apprentices, affirmative action information will be kept by the employer and available for review yearly by a Compliance Officer from the Division.

18. These standards shall be submitted to the Massachusetts Division of Apprentice Standards for approval and will become effective upon the date of approval.

20. These standards of Apprenticeship may be amended by the employer provided such amendments are approved by the Massachusetts Division of Apprentice Standards. A copy of all changes shall be furnished to each apprentice.

21. Within 30 calendar days of an apprentice's cancellation or completion of the apprentice training program, the apprentice program sponsor must send written notification thereof to the Division.

22. Every apprentice agreement entered into under these Standards of Apprenticeship shall contain a clause making the standards a part of the agreement with the same effect as if expressly written therein. For this reason, every applicant (and the parent or guardian, if the applicant is a minor) shall be given a copy of the Standards of Apprenticeship and an opportunity to read them before any signature is affixed thereof.

23. \_\_\_\_\_ understands that there is a one year probationary period for this program during which time the Division will monitor this program to determine compliance with the policies and regulations of the Division.

The probationary period may be extended if the Director determines there is just cause. Additionally no sponsor verifications will be processed until the probation period is ended.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Apprentice should also maintain copies of: Apprentice Agreement, ID card, and completion certificate request**

## **Apprentice Record Book**

### **To the Apprentice:**

This monthly journal is for the purpose of keeping a daily record of your shop and your related classroom instruction. It is to be used in conjunction with your work schedule.

- At the close of each day's work you should enter under the operation columns the number of hours worked on each operation.
- At the end of each month your supervisor should grade your progress and have it recorded on a permanent record.
- This journal is for a period of one month.

Please contact the Massachusetts Division of Apprentice Standards, if you have any questions.

Phone: (617) 626-5409  
Email: [www.mass.gov/das](http://www.mass.gov/das)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

Full term of apprenticeship (hours): \_\_\_\_\_

Hours awarded for previous experience: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>PREVIOUS ON-THE JOB RECORD</b>			
Employer	From	To	Hours

  

<b>PREVIOUS TECHNICAL TRAINING RECORD</b>			
Name of School	From	To	Hours

Apprenticeship started on: \_\_\_\_\_

Related classroom instruction started on: \_\_\_\_\_



OCCUPATION:

CODE:	Obtained From Work Training Schedule
	Work Schedule Titles
A	
B	
C	
D	
E	
F	
G	
H	
I	
J	
K	
L	
M	
N	
O	
P	
Q	
R	

S	
T	
U	







Grade Code: *E = Excellent* *G = Good* *F = Fair* *U = Unsatisfactory*  
OJT Grade This Month \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_