



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) Refrigeration/Pipefitter Apprenticeship Licensure Requirements

The Division of Apprentices Standards (DAS) and the Division of Occupational Licensure's (DOL) Office of Public Safety and Inspections (OPSI) have received a number of questions regarding apprenticeship program registration and licensing requirements for the Pipefitting and Refrigeration professions. We hope this FAQ document will clarify these for you.

1. What are the requirements to obtain a Pipefitter Apprentice or Refrigeration Apprentice License?  
Please see the comprehensive guidelines at: (Link is live)

[https://www.mass.gov/doc/guidelines-re-pipefitting-and-refrigeration-apprenticeships-registration-and-licensing-requirements/download?\\_ga=2.267038343.804940405.1679069544-726576840.1621958587](https://www.mass.gov/doc/guidelines-re-pipefitting-and-refrigeration-apprenticeships-registration-and-licensing-requirements/download?_ga=2.267038343.804940405.1679069544-726576840.1621958587)

2. I want to develop an apprenticeship program. How do I become a Refrigeration and/or Pipefitter Apprentice Sponsor?

The first step is to attend DAS' **Introduction to DAS Registered Apprenticeship Sponsorship** online training session. The schedule is available at:

<https://www.mass.gov/alerts/das-eplace-portal-training-schedule-for-sponsors#1978121>

or you can always email us at [apprenticeship@mass.gov](mailto:apprenticeship@mass.gov) to be connected to a member of the Apprentice Liaison team and/or schedule a training that works for your team. Our team can address any questions you may have and provide additional technical assistance.

3. As an apprentice, why do I need to be both registered with DAS and hold a license with DOL/OPSI?

The Legislature established two agencies that have different roles regarding Apprentices: The Division of Apprentices Standards (DAS) is responsible for registration and oversight of apprentice training programs across the Commonwealth. The Bureau of Pipefitters, Refrigeration Technicians and Sprinkler Fitters (Bureau) licenses individuals who practice each of these occupations, and it is within the Office of Public Safety and Inspections (OPSI) in the Division of Occupational Licensure (DOL). A license issued by the OPSI/DOL is required to perform the work within the trades under the Bureau.

To become a **licensed Journeyman Pipefitter or Refrigeration Technician** in the Commonwealth, an apprentice must both:

- (1) Be registered for and successfully complete an apprenticeship program with DAS *and* (2) hold a concurrent license issued by DOL/OPSI for the entirety of the apprenticeship.

Sprinkler fitter apprentices who will be performing any Prevailing Wage work must:

- (1) register for and successfully complete an apprenticeship program with DAS *and* (2) hold a concurrent license issued by DOL/OPSI. *Note that sprinkler fitter apprentices who do not perform prevailing wage work may not need to dual register—if you have any questions about the registration requirements, you should contact DOL/OPSI and/or DAS PRIOR to registration. If you do perform sprinkler fitter apprentice work on a prevailing wage project without a valid registration with DAS, you may face civil penalties.*

4. Do different programs have different On-the-Job Training (OJT) requirements?

Program Sponsors set program requirements for their Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) in coordination with DAS and based on applicable laws, regulations, and other guidance.

DOL/OPSI approves schools that apprentices must attend to obtain a journeyman level license and denotes the associated OJT hours for each approved school, typically 2,000, 4,000 and/or 6,000 hours while under the direct employment of a duly licensed Master Pipefitter or Master Refrigeration Technician (Refrigeration Contractor). A list of approved schools is available here:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/schools-approved-by-opsi>

Registered Apprentices may apply to take the DOL/OPSI exam after successfully completing the Related Technical Instruction (RTI) hours and the associated OJT hours from an approved school/program.

Apprentice Sponsors can request to complete apprentices with the DAS:

- (1) when the apprentice has met the licensing requirements and passed their licensing exam; to facilitate this, the sponsor should send a copy of the Journeyman level license to [apprenticeship@mass.gov](mailto:apprenticeship@mass.gov)  
OR
- (2) when the apprentice has successfully completed the full-term of the DAS apprenticeship program by fulfilling their RTI and OJT requirements before applying for their Technician exam.

5. Who can a sponsor contact at DOL/OPSI?

Email: [Opsi-info@mass.gov](mailto:Opsi-info@mass.gov)

6. Who can a sponsor contact at DAS?

Email: [apprenticeship@mass.gov](mailto:apprenticeship@mass.gov) or call: 617.626.5442

7. Does the Sponsor or the Apprentice apply for the Refrigeration/Pipefitter Licenses from OPSI?

The individual DAS-registered Apprentice applies for the Refrigeration/Pipefitter Apprentice license through DOL/OPSI. **Program Sponsors must ensure that their apprentices have a valid DOL/OPSI apprentice license before entering a jobsite. Anyone who works without a valid license and/or enables unlicensed work is subject to civil fines through the DOL/OPSI.**

8. Does the Sponsor or the Apprentice apply for the Refrigeration/Pipefitter Identification card from DAS?

The Program Sponsor must register and renew all apprentices annually and maintain the proper apprentice: journeyman ratio. Apprentice identification cards are good for 1 year from the date of registration, which is reflected on the Apprentice ID Card.

9. How many apprentices can we register in our apprenticeship program at DAS? What if license Refrigeration/Pipefitter resigns putting the program out of ratio? What happens to the Apprentices?

The registered apprenticeship program ratio is set at the time of Sponsor Program registration with DAS.

Sponsors are required to inform DAS of any changes to their journeyman level within 30 days. DAS will work with the Sponsors to best determine next steps.

10. What if we do not have a Refrigeration Contractor or a Master Pipefitter on staff? Can we still be a registered Sponsor?

Apprentices must work under a Refrigeration Contractor or a Master Pipefitter to earn hours toward Journeyman level licensure. There are some exceptions for exempt facilities. For more information, see the link to guidelines under question 1. **BUT NOTE: To earn apprenticeship hours toward a Journeyman level license, all apprentices, including those working for exempt facilities, must hold a DOL/OPSI apprentice license AND work under a duly licensed Refrigeration Contractor or Master Pipefitter.**

11. What happens if a Refrigeration/Pipefitter Apprentice does not complete all the requirements to test for their license by the end of their apprentice term?

The Sponsor must submit a just cause request for an extension to DAS via email at [apprenticeship@mass.gov](mailto:apprenticeship@mass.gov). At the discretion of DAS, up to two 6-month extensions may be available. Apprentices licensed under the DOL/OPSI may hold their license for up to 2 renewal cycles. Any additional renewals will require the review and approval of the Bureau on a case-by-case basis.