

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 650
Economic Matters

(Delegate Boafo)

Finance

Maryland Department of Labor - Report on Apprenticeship Mentoring Ratios

This bill requires the Maryland Department of Labor (MDL) to submit a report to the General Assembly by October 1, 2024, that analyzes the apprenticeship mentoring ratios for all nontraditional apprenticeable occupations in the State. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. MDL can complete the report with existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The report must include:

- the total number of apprentices and the number of apprentices by employer that participated in nontraditional apprenticeships, which are apprenticeship occupations outside of the building trades, in the immediately preceding fiscal year;
- an analysis of, including identification of, all nontraditional apprenticeship occupations that could operate with a higher than one-to-one mentorship ratio without posing a risk to the safety of workers in the workplace;
- list of all apprenticeship ratio waiver requests received by the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council (MATC) in the immediately preceding

five calendar years, the respective outcomes for the requests, and the reasons for a denied waiver request; and

- recommended strategies to streamline the expansion of apprenticeship ratios for all newly registered nontraditional apprenticeship occupations for the purpose of meeting the goals of the Apprenticeship 2030 Commission.

Current Law: The **Appendix – Apprenticeship** provides an overview of apprenticeship programs in Maryland, including an overview of the Apprenticeship 2030 Commission.

State regulations establish that each registered apprenticeship program must have a minimum ratio of one journey person regularly employed for one apprentice consistent with proper supervision, training, and continuity of employment and applicable provisions in collective bargaining agreements. Deviation from the minimum ratio, including for bargaining agreements, is not permitted unless first submitted to MATC in writing for its approval.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: SB 511 (Senator A. Washington) - Finance.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Labor; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 19, 2024
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Analysis by: Michael E. Sousane

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510

Appendix – Apprenticeship

Generally, apprenticeship is a voluntary, industry-sponsored system that prepares individuals for occupations typically requiring high-level skills and related technical knowledge. Apprenticeships are sponsored by one or more employers or jointly by a labor-management committee. An apprentice receives supervised, structured, on-the-job training under the direction of a skilled journeyman and related technical instruction in a specific occupation. Apprenticeships are designed to meet the workforce needs of the program sponsor. Many industry sponsors use apprenticeship as a method to train employees in the knowledge necessary to become a skilled worker. This also means the number of apprenticeships available is dependent on the current workforce needs of the industry and the capacity and willingness of employers or employer groups to supervise them.

Apprenticeships are available to individuals age 16 and older; an employer, however, may set a higher entry age. By law, individuals must be age 18 to apprentice in hazardous occupations, although there are some exemptions available to minors who are registered as apprentices. Time-based apprenticeships last from one to six years and involve a minimum of 144 hours of related technical instruction and at least 2,000 hours per year of on-the-job training.

A national apprenticeship and training program was established in federal law in 1937 with the passage of the National Apprenticeship Act, also known as the Fitzgerald Act. The purpose of the Act was to promote national standards of apprenticeship and to safeguard the welfare of apprentice workers.

Along with [more than half of other states and the District of Columbia](#), Maryland has chosen to operate its own apprenticeship programs under the federal law. The Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL) within the Maryland Department of Labor is responsible for the daily oversight of State apprenticeship programs. More specifically, DWDAL approves new apprenticeship programs as well as changes to current programs and ensures compliance with State and federal requirements. The approval process involves assessing the appropriateness of an apprenticeship program in a proposed industry, the education that will be provided to the apprentice, the current staffing level of the entity proposing the program to determine whether adequate supervision can be provided, recruitment and retention efforts, and the overall operations of the entity. The Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council serves in an advisory role for legislation and regulations, recommending changes to update apprenticeship laws.

As of November 28, 2023, there were 11,530 apprentices registered in 125 different occupations, with more than 400 approved registered apprenticeship programs and more than 3,800 employers. There were 1,825 Certificates of Completion for apprentices processed between January 1, 2023, and November 28, 2023. The State added 38 new apprenticeship programs in 2023. The diversity of Maryland's apprenticeship system has also increased since the transfer of the program to DWDAL in 2016. The percentage of minority apprentices increased from 36% in November 2016 to 44% in November 2023. Likewise, the percentage of female apprentices increased from 3.7% in November 2016 to 7.7% in November 2023.

Chapter 168 (Senate Bill 104) of 2023 established the Apprenticeship 2030 Commission. The purpose of the commission is to examine and make recommendations to reduce skill shortages in high-demand occupations and provide affordable training for career pathways for young people by:

- expanding registered apprenticeships in industry sectors with skill shortages;
- growing the number of registered apprentices to at least 60,000 by 2030; and
- reaching the Blueprint for Maryland's Future goal for 45% of high school graduates completing the high school level of a registered apprenticeship.

The Apprenticeship 2030 Commission met four times in 2023 and published the [Interim Report of the Apprenticeship 2030 Commission](#).