

Equal Employment Opportunity in Registered Apprenticeship

The U.S. Department of Labor's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) regulations outline procedures that all Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) sponsors must follow to ensure their programs are free from unlawful discrimination and harassment. This guide helps Rhode Island RAP sponsors understand and meet their obligations under the law.



When RAP sponsors extend outreach, recruitment, and retention efforts to all qualified individuals and operate programs free from harassment, RAPs increase the skilled workforce and provide outstanding career opportunities for Rhode Islanders.

Inside this guide:

- Unlawful Discrimination
- RAP Sponsors' Equal Opportunity Pledge
- Responsibilities of RAP Sponsors
- Plan for Compliance

Registered Apprenticeship is a powerful tool for economic growth and a proven method to help employers build diverse and inclusive workplaces. EEO regulations ensure RAP sponsors reach candidates from communities underrepresented in the occupation.



Building Futures' Apprenticeship Rhode Island initiative is a partnership with RI Department of Labor and Training to maximize the use of quality Registered Apprenticeships. Registered Apprenticeship is a proven strategy for employers to recruit, train, and retain a skilled workforce and for Rhode Islanders to launch family-sustaining careers. We provide no-cost technical assistance to design, register, and implement Registered Apprenticeship Programs in new industries and occupations.

Visit www.bfri.org/ari-eeo to access the other guides in this series.

Promoting Equality of Opportunity in Registered Apprenticeship Programs

U.S. DOL Federal Regulations and Rhode Island law establish equal opportunity employment standards for registered apprenticeship programs.

It is unlawful for any Rhode Island RAP sponsor to discriminate against any applicant or apprentice on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age (40 or older), genetic information and disability with regard to:

- Recruitment, outreach, and selection procedures;
- Hiring and/or placement, upgrading, periodic advancement, promotion, demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, right of return from layoff, and rehiring;
- Rotation among work processes;
- Imposition of penalties or other disciplinary action;
- Rates of pay or any other form of compensation and changes in compensation;
- Conditions of work;
- Hours of work and hours of training provided;
- Job assignments;
- Leaves of absence, sick leave, or any other leave; and
- Any other benefit, term, condition, or privilege associated with apprenticeship.



The Equal Opportunity Pledge

RAP sponsors must include this pledge in the Apprenticeship Program Standards and announcements about apprenticeship opportunities:

[INSERT NAME OF SPONSOR] will not discriminate against apprenticeship applicants or apprentices based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and gender expression), sexual orientation, genetic information, or because they are an individual with a disability or a person 40 years old or older. [INSERT NAME OF SPONSOR] will take affirmative action to provide equal opportunity in apprenticeship and will operate the apprenticeship program as required under Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations, part 30.

Responsibilities of Sponsors

1

Assign an appropriate employee to oversee your commitment to equal opportunity in apprenticeship. This commitment includes:

- Monitoring RAP activities to ensure compliance with your program's nondiscrimination and affirmative action obligations; and
- Developing an Affirmative Action Program and Plan when the RAP has 5 or more apprentices.

2

Share your organization's equal opportunity policy with applicants, apprentices, and everyone involved in the administration of your RAP.

- Post your organization's equal opportunity pledge in electronic and physical locations accessible to all employees, especially apprentices, and visible to all applicants.
- Inform everyone involved in the operation of your RAP – including apprentices and non-apprentice employees – on your equal employment opportunity policy and nondiscrimination practices.

3

Make your Universal Outreach and Recruitment Plan.

- Develop and update a list of recruitment sources to extend recruitment to all persons locally available to become applicants.
- Recruitment sources can include American Job Centers, local workforce development boards, community-based organizations, colleges, secondary career and technical schools, pre-apprenticeship programs, and workforce development programs.

4

Maintain apprenticeship programs free from harassment, intimidation and retaliation.

- Provide anti-harassment training to everyone connected to your RAP, including apprentices and journeymen, that outlines your organization's anti-harassment policy and procedures.
- Establish procedures for handling and resolving complaints about harassment and intimidation.

5

Comply with Federal and State equal employment opportunity laws.

- Protected groups in RI Equal Opportunity laws are listed in this guide.
- For further information, visit RI DLT's website:
dlt.ri.gov/about-us/equal-opportunity-law

For step-by-step information on meeting your responsibilities as an RAP sponsor visit www.bfri.org/ari-EEO. You'll find additional guides and resources in making Affirmative Action and Universal Outreach Plans and maintaining a harassment free RAP.

Plan for Compliance

- Failure to comply with EEO laws may result in the deregistration of your Registered Apprenticeship Program.
- Don't risk your organization's strategy to build a productive and highly-skilled workforce.
- Technical assistance is available to support compliance and best practice. RAP sponsors can contact Building Futures' Apprenticeship Rhode Island initiative at 401-919-5919, info@bfri.org, or www.bfri.org/ari.



Understand regulations and sponsor responsibilities. Take advantage of the resources available at bfri.org/ari, dlt.ri.gov, and apprenticeship.gov.



Ensure your organization maintains records necessary to demonstrate compliance with data, outreach, and training regulations.



Build strong relationships and regularly share opportunities with recruitment partners that serve underrepresented communities.



Communicate your commitment to equal opportunity and a harassment-free workplace regularly with everyone involved in your RAP.

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