

Everything you need to know about
starting and completing your
apprenticeship

Apprentice Toolkit



Welcome to your Apprentice Toolkit

Apprenticeship is a proven pathway to building a rewarding career in skilled trades. It is a formal agreement between you, as someone who wants to learn a trade, and an employer who can provide hands-on skills training in the workplace.

As industries continue to evolve and adapt to new technologies, the demand for qualified skilled trades professionals remains strong. Employers across a wide range of sectors rely on highly skilled people to do important work safely, efficiently, and to a high standard. These skills are developed through a combination of practical on-the-job experience and in-school training. Apprenticeship helps you gain this experience while learning the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in your chosen trade.

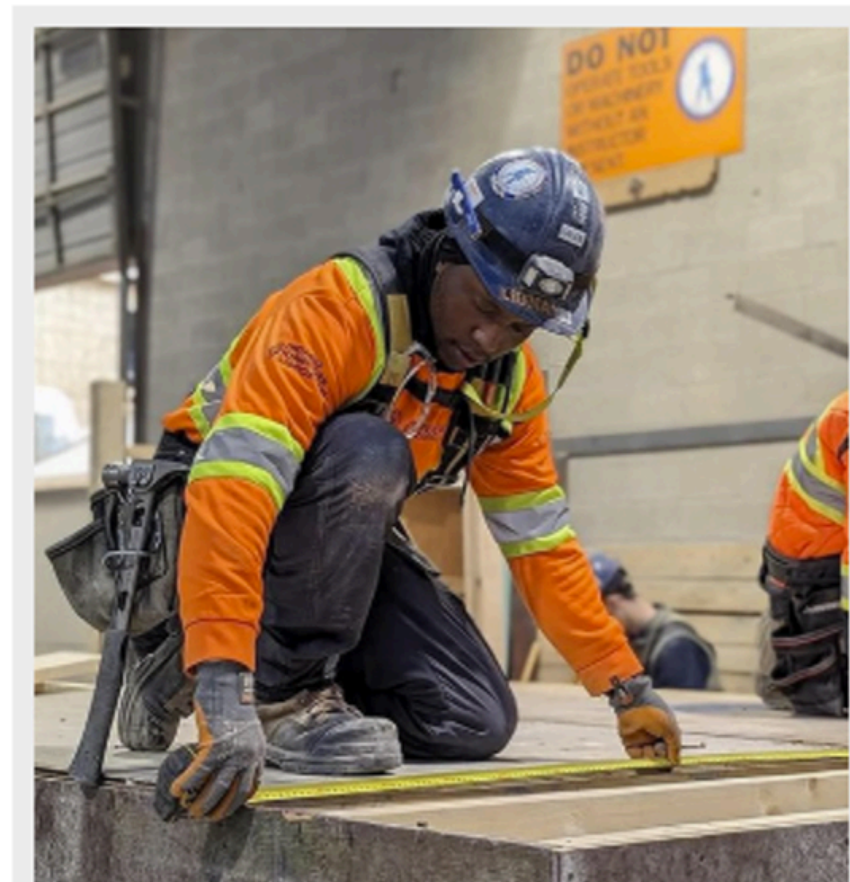
This toolkit has been designed to support you throughout every stage of your apprenticeship journey. Whether you are exploring apprenticeship opportunities, registering as an apprentice, progressing through your training, or preparing for certification, you will find practical information and resources to help you succeed.

In it, you'll learn how to get started and stay on track during your apprenticeship, maintain training records, start in-school training, and gain information about financial support. This toolkit will help you understand what to expect, where to find important resources, and how to confidently navigate your apprenticeship.

This guide is also available virtually.

[Visit skilledtradesontario.ca](https://skilledtradesontario.ca)

For more information about apprenticeship, please contact Skilled Trades Ontario by email at apprenticeship@skilledtradesontario.ca



THE APPRENTICESHIP JOURNEY

Provincial supports are available for apprentices. Find out if you qualify!

EXPLORE THE TRADES

- Research programs and opportunities to help you get ready. Some programs include:
- **Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program:** Explore a skilled trade while earning high school credits through hands-on workplace learning
- **Pre-Apprenticeship Training:** Build foundational trade skills and gain practical experience before starting an apprenticeship
- **Dual Credit Programs:** High school students can take apprenticeship training that counts towards high school graduation

LEARN ON THE JOB

- Start on-the-job training and track it in your Training Standard Logbook

The **Tool Grant** is available to help pay for trade-related tools and equipment

COMPLETE APPRENTICESHIP

- Finish required training and confirm program completion with Skilled Trades Ontario to obtain your Certificate of Apprenticeship

The **Apprentice Completion Bonus** is available to those who have completed their training in a non-Red Seal trade



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BECOME AN APPRENTICE

- Find a sponsor and check eligibility with Skilled Trades Ontario
- Apply for an apprenticeship program with Skilled Trades Ontario and sign a Registered Training Agreement with your sponsor

LEARN IN CLASS

- Ensure your schooling preferences are identified in the portal to receive a schooling offer (approximately 12-18 months after registration)

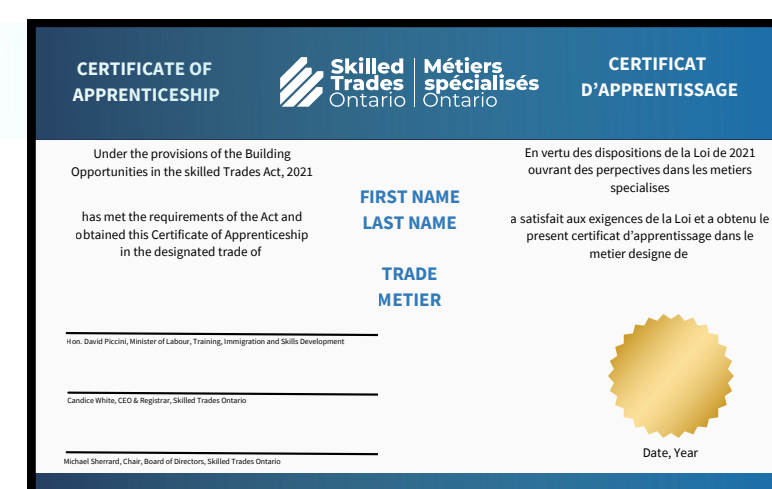
The **Apprentice Development Benefit** provides financial assistance for apprentices while they attend in-class training

Eligible costs can include:

- basic living expenses
- dependent care
- commuting and travel
- expenses for living away from home
- special assistance with disabilities

CERTIFICATION

- Some trades have a certifying exam you need to pass (70% or higher) to obtain a Certificate of Qualification
- For compulsory trades, you must renew your Certificate of Qualification annually to keep working



How to Start your Apprenticeship Journey

Starting an apprenticeship may seem like a big step, but understanding the process can make it much easier to navigate. From confirming that you meet the eligibility requirements to finding the right sponsor and completing your registration, each stage plays an important role in setting you up for success.

This section outlines the key steps involved in becoming a registered apprentice in Ontario. It also highlights resources and supports available to help you explore career options, connect with potential sponsors, and move confidently through the registration process. Whether you're entering the skilled trades directly from school or making a career change, these steps will help you get started on the right path.

Step 1: Make Sure you Qualify

To register as an apprentice in Ontario, you must:

- Be **at least 16 years old**,
- Have **legal permission to work** in Canada
- Meet the **education requirements** for your chosen trade, and
- Have a qualified **sponsor in Ontario**.



Step 2: Find a Qualified Sponsor

Once you've decided on a trade and are sure you meet the rest of the qualifications, the next step is finding an employer who is willing to train you. A sponsor plays a key role in your apprenticeship journey by providing hands-on training, mentorship, and opportunities to develop your skills in a real work environment. Your sponsor may be:

- An employer
- A union
- A group sponsor

Finding a sponsor can feel difficult. The good news is that there are many resources available to help you connect with employers who are looking for apprentices. You can find a sponsor by:

- Speaking with your school guidance counsellor about programs such as OYAP, Specialist High Skills Major, or Dual Credit,
- Connecting with your college career centre,
- Searching online job boards for apprenticeship opportunities, or
- Contacting an Employment Ontario office for support with finding a sponsor.

Keep in mind, your sponsor must be registered with Skilled Trades Ontario. If you have found a sponsor who is not yet registered with Skilled Trades Ontario, the sponsor can find more information on how to register here: [Sponsor an Apprentice - Skilled Trades Ontario](#)

Alternatively, if you would like to try a trade before committing to a sponsor, there are [programs available to you](#).



Step 3: Register Your Apprenticeship

Once you've found a qualified sponsor, you can apply to register your apprenticeship with Skilled Trades Ontario. After your application is approved, you'll officially become an active apprentice with a Registered Training Agreement (RTA) and can begin your apprenticeship journey.

If you're **18+**, apply to register your apprenticeship online by creating an account through the **Skilled Trades Ontario Portal** for faster processing. Scan the QR code to visit the Portal.

If you're **16-17 years old**, or **unable to apply online**, you can download an Application for Apprenticeship Training to apply to register your apprenticeship.

Then:

- Complete and sign the form (a parent/guardian must sign for anyone under 18).
- Have your sponsor sign the form.
- Submit the completed form to Skilled Trades Ontario by:
 - **Email:** Please email us at apprenticeship@skilledtradesontario.ca
 - **Mail:** Skilled Trades Ontario, PO Box 2354 RPO SQ1 Shoppers, Mississauga, ON L5B 3C8



Step 4: Start Learning

As an apprentice, you'll earn a wage while gaining valuable hands-on experience from skilled mentors. Throughout your apprenticeship, you'll alternate between paid on-the-job training and classroom learning, building the knowledge and skills you need to work safely and confidently in your trade. More details on classroom learning can be found in the sections below.

Need Help Getting Started?

[Visit the Skilled Trades Ontario website for additional resources, eligibility requirements and information on registering your apprenticeship.](#)



Stay on Track Throughout your Apprenticeship

As a registered apprentice, it's important to keep your contact information up to date with Skilled Trades Ontario. Update your mailing address, email address, and phone number through the Skilled Trades Ontario Portal or contact us by phone or email. We recommend not using school-related email addresses since you will want to have access to your emails beyond your school years.

In this section you'll find information on:

- Maintaining your records, including your Registered Training Agreement (RTA), Apprentice Wallet Card, and Training Standard Logbook
- Registering for in-school training, including what to do after you've received a schooling offer
- Changing your sponsor
- Financial supports, grants and Employment Insurance

Registered Training Agreement

Your Registered Training Agreement (RTA) is an important legal document that confirms your apprenticeship and outlines the responsibilities of both you and your sponsor. Be sure to keep it in a safe place, as you may need it later when applying for grants or enrolling in training.



Apprentice Wallet Card

As a registered apprentice, you will receive an Apprentice Wallet Card in the mail from Skilled Trades Ontario. You must carry your wallet card while you work in your trade, which includes your Skilled Trades Ontario ID number.

When you contact Skilled Trades Ontario about your account, you will be asked for your Skilled Trades Ontario ID number. So, please keep a copy of your Apprentice Wallet Card in a safe place for your records. If you're in a compulsory trade, your name will also appear on the Public Register.



Maintain your Apprenticeship Training Standard Logbook

The Training Standard Logbook is one of the most important documents you'll use throughout your apprenticeship. It tracks the skills and tasks you are expected to learn on the job and provides a record of your progress as you work toward certification.

A digital version of the Training Standard Logbook is available on the Skilled Trades Ontario website. This logbook outlines the skill sets and competencies you are expected to learn on the job during your apprenticeship. Use it with your sponsor to record and verify the skills you have learned to perform safely and competently. Each completed skill set must be signed off by both you and your sponsor.

Keeping your logbook up to date helps ensure your training is properly documented and allows you to track how far you've progressed in your apprenticeship. **The skills in the Training Standard Logbook form the basis of the final exam.** The more you have been trained to perform on the job, the better equipped you will be at final exam time.

The Training Standard Logbook belongs to you. Think of it as your personal training record. If you change sponsors, update your logbook and take it with you to your new sponsor. More information about changing sponsors can be found later in this toolkit.

At the end of your apprenticeship, your logbook may be used to confirm that you have completed the required training and learned the skills needed for your trade. You may be asked to submit it through the Skilled Trades Ontario Portal as part of the completion process.



Register for In-School Training

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development coordinates in-school training for apprentices. Invitations to attend training are based on the schooling preferences you select in the Skilled Trades Ontario Portal. To give yourself more options, choose two preferred training locations and keep your preferences up to date throughout your apprenticeship. This will help ensure you remain eligible for in-school training opportunities.

Here are a few things to know about the invitation process:

- **Most apprentices receive their first training invitation 12 to 18 months after registering in their trade.** Invitations for the next level of training are typically issued 12 to 18 months after completing the previous level.
- **Invitations are sent approximately 105 days before the start of training** by email or mail. When you receive an invitation, let your sponsor or employer know as soon as possible so they can plan for your time away from work.
- **Training invitations are based on the preferences you select in the Skilled Trades Ontario Portal.** As mentioned, to improve your chances of receiving an invitation to a preferred location, select two training preferences and keep them up to date.
- **Preferred training locations cannot be guaranteed.** If space is not available at your preferred Training Delivery Agent (TDA), you may be offered a seat at another location or asked to wait for a future class. If you would like to check availability at a specific TDA, contact them directly.
- **Additional seats may become available closer to the start date.** Beginning 45 days before a scheduled class, you can request a manual invitation if spaces are available.
- **Refer to the 2026–2027 In-School Training Schedule** for specific training dates and timelines.
- **If you move, you can continue your apprenticeship.** As an apprentice, you can transfer your training and continue progressing toward certification whether you move within Ontario or elsewhere in Canada.

Receiving an In-School Training Offer:

Once you've received your in-school training offer, it's time to prepare for the next stage of your apprenticeship. Follow these steps to confirm your seat and continue progressing toward certification.

1. **Receive the offer:** Both you and your employer will receive the offer via email or mail. You will want to discuss your plans before completing the next steps and confirming your in-school training attendance.
2. **Reply to the offer:** Be sure to have the discussion with your employer as soon as possible so you can reply to your offer right away. Your offer will serve as your only notice for in-school training. If you don't respond, your seat may be given to another apprentice, and you may have to wait until the next round of invitations.
3. **Contact the TDA:** Follow the instructions in your offer letter and contact the TDA.
4. **Pay your fees:** To confirm your seat, you must pay your classroom fees (if applicable). Seats are always first-come, first-served, and only secured after payment. If you delay payment, your seat may be given to another apprentice.



Changing your Sponsor

Sometimes apprentices change employers during their apprenticeship. This could happen because you find a new job, are laid off, or your employment ends for another reason. If you plan to continue your apprenticeship with a new employer, you'll need to update your sponsor information with Skilled Trades Ontario as soon as possible.

To change your sponsor:

1. **Confirm your new sponsor is registered with Skilled Trades Ontario.**

Your new employer must be registered as a sponsor with Skilled Trades Ontario. If they have never sponsored an apprentice before, they will need to register first. More information is available on the Sponsor an Apprentice page.

2. **End your current Registered Training Agreement (RTA).**

Log in to the Skilled Trades Ontario Portal and submit an Application to Terminate your Registered Training Agreement. Your current RTA must be ended before a new sponsor can be added.

3. **Submit your sponsor change request.**

Once your new sponsor is registered, log in to the Skilled Trades Ontario Portal and submit a sponsor change request. You will need your new sponsor's Sponsor ID to complete the request.

Taking these steps promptly can help ensure your apprenticeship remains on track.



Financial Support for Apprentices






There are several financial support programs available to help apprentices throughout their training.

If you attend in-school training, you may be eligible for **Employment Insurance (EI)** benefits while you are away from work. After you confirm your seat with your Training Delivery Agent (TDA), you will receive a **Confirmation of Classroom Training Letter**. This letter includes your unique EI Reference Code, which you will need when applying for EI benefits. Be sure to keep the letter and reference code in a safe place, and do not share your code with anyone else.

You may also be eligible for grants, loans, and other financial support to help cover eligible training, tools, and living costs during your apprenticeship. Information about available programs and eligibility requirements can be found through the Government of Ontario.



If you are attending full-time apprenticeship in-class training, you may be eligible for funding through the Apprentice Development Benefit (ADB). Funding is tailored based on your situation to help with the following costs:

	DESCRIPTION	BENEFIT AMOUNT
 BASIC LIVING ALLOWANCE	<p>If you do not qualify for Employment Insurance (EI) or if your EI rate is below \$500 per week, you may be eligible for a basic living allowance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to \$500 per week
 DEPENDENT CARE	<p>You can get reimbursed for child care costs or for the care of other dependents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on actual costs • Receipts are required for costs over \$1000 per month/dependent
 COMMUTING	<p>Get funding for the cost of daily commuting to and from training if you live more than 24 km away from the Training Delivery Agent (TDA).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$0.59 per km (Travel) • Up to \$151 per week (Standard Maximum) • Up to \$240 per week (Rural Maximum)
 TRAVEL AND OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATION	<p>If you need to relocate to attend training, ADB can help with transportation costs between your home and the TDA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$0.59 per km (Travel) • \$100 per night (Overnight Accommodation)
 LIVING-AWAY-FROM-HOME	<p>Funding is available if you need to maintain a primary and temporary second residence during your training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$240 per week
 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES	<p>Support can be provided for costs necessary for in-class training that are not already provided by your training delivery agent. (e.g. assistive devices, accessible transportation costs).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on actual costs • Receipts required for costs incurred

Have questions? Contact the Employment Ontario Contact Centre at 1 800-387-5656 or visit [Ontario.ca/apprenticeship](https://www.ontario.ca/apprenticeship)

Staying on Track

An apprenticeship is a journey that takes time, commitment, and hard work, but you don't have to navigate it alone. There are many resources, programs, and supports available to help you succeed at every stage.

Keep track of your training, stay informed about your apprenticeship requirements, and don't hesitate to reach out to your sponsor, training provider, or Skilled Trades Ontario if you have questions.

Skilled Trades Ontario has apprenticeship advisors across Ontario who can provide guidance and support throughout your apprenticeship. No matter where you are in the province, the Skilled Trades Ontario Call Centre (647-847-3000 or Toll-free (Ontario only) at 1-855-299-0028) can connect you with an advisor for your region.

By staying organized and actively managing your apprenticeship, you'll be well prepared to complete your training and take the next step in your skilled trades career.

