



— WISCONSIN —
APPRENTICESHIP
— SINCE 1911 —

State Apprenticeship Standards
for
Plumbing

Revised April 2023

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Foreword

The State Committees are a very important part of the structure that advises the Bureau on the administration of the apprenticeship program and on communicating with all the partners in the apprenticeship program. They have been an integral part of Wisconsin apprenticeship since shortly after its inception. Just as the Advisory Council reviews and recommends overarching apprenticeship policy, the State Committees recommend policy relating to their trade(s). (*Wisconsin Apprenticeship Manual, Chapter 2.3*)

These standards are consistent with the Wisconsin Apprenticeship Law, Wis. Stats. Chapter 106, Wis. Admin. Code DWD Chapter 295, Wis. Admin. Code DWD 296 and the Wisconsin Apprenticeship Manual.

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Final Section Alignment

Section One: Policies established in the *Wisconsin Apprenticeship Manual*

- I. Membership of a State Committee (*Chapter 2.5*)
- II. State Committee Operations (*Chapter 2.6*)
- III. Program Standards (*Chapter 5*)
- IV. Exhibit A (*Chapter 6.2*)

Section Two: Policies established by BAS and the State Committee

- V. Organizations that Nominate Members
- VI. Minimum Qualifications of Applicants
- VII. Minimum Qualifications of Employers
- VIII. Approved Exhibit A
- IX. Requirements for Supervision
- X. Requirements for Completion
- XI. Requirements Unique to the Occupation(s)

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Section One:

Policies established in the Wisconsin Apprenticeship Manual

I. Membership of a State Committee (*Manual, 2.5*)

A. The membership of a State Committee is comprised of no less than four and no more than 20 members, consisting of an equal number of members representing employer and employee interests. Membership of a State Committee must represent all occupations overseen by that committee, all types of employers active in training apprentices, and a variety of geographic areas of the state. The Bureau may designate consultants to serve as non-voting members, including technical college representatives, apprenticeship coordinators, training instructors, and other interested parties.

B. Employer Members

Employer members will be nominated by professional organizations involved in the training of apprentices in the affiliated occupations. Such organizations must be actively training apprentices, or have done so within the last two years, to nominate a member. This requirement is waived for organizations involved in the development of a new apprenticeship occupation. Where no professional organization exists, the Bureau may identify and appoint members.

In a construction State Committee, the percentages of employer members representing union employers and non-union employers must approximate the percentages of union and non-union apprentices in the occupation(s) statewide. For example, a 10-member State Committee with 60 percent union and 40 percent non-union apprentices would have six union members and four non-union members.

C. Employee Members

Employee members are nominated to the Bureau by employee organizations and sponsor in-house apprenticeship committees. In cases where a sponsor has no in-house apprenticeship committee, nominees will be solicited from employers or professional organizations.

D. Terms

State Committee members will serve terms of three years and may be nominated for additional terms. Memberships will be staggered to maintain continuity. Vacancies may be filled, or members changed during an active term, at the request of the nominating entity.

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The Bureau may remove a person from membership on a State Committee for one or more of the following reasons:

- 1) Failure to attend at least 75 percent of the committee meetings during the membership term, unless excused by the Bureau for good cause;
- 2) Failure to meet the membership requirements outlined in this section, unless a documented exception is granted by the Bureau; and/or
- 3) Violation of any state apprenticeship statute, rule or standard.

II. State Committee Operations (*Manual, 2.6*)

A. Meetings

State Committees meet at least twice per year, or more frequently if requested by the Bureau, in conformity with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law. The committee will elect two co-chairs: one employer member and one employee member. A quorum exists when at least two employer and two employee members are present. Official meeting minutes will be prepared and catalogued by the Bureau.

B. Duties

State Committees are designed to arrive at recommendations based on consensus, meaning that the recommendations they make to the Bureau should reflect the interests of the collective group, rather than a simple majority. Reaching consensus does not assume that every member will be in complete agreement, but that a compromise has been reached.

Primary State Committee functions are to:

- i. Advise the Bureau and educators, such as the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) and private training centers, on curriculum content and delivery of related instruction concerning the State Committee's apprenticeship programs.
- ii. Make recommendations for revisions to the state minimum standards to the State Committee's affiliated occupations every five years, or more frequently as needed.

These minimum standards include:

- a. The provisions of the Exhibit A, with the exclusion of compensation;
- b. Minimum qualifications for apprentices, such as entrance scores;
- c. Minimum qualifications for apprentice sponsors; and
- d. Employer requirements to serve as an apprentice trainer.

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- iii. Advise the Bureau on policies and procedures pertaining to the administration of each apprenticeship occupation associated with the State Committee, including matters related to:
 - a. Apprentice reviews;
 - b. Apprentice selection processes;
 - c. Assessing and awarding credit for previous experience and education;
 - d. Local apprenticeship committee operations and meeting frequency;
 - e. Apprentice layoff and transfer policies and procedures;
 - f. The formation and dissolution of local apprenticeship committees;
 - g. Outreach and expansion strategies.

III. Program Standards (*Manual, Chapter 5*)

A. Term of Apprenticeship

The sponsor must indicate, for each occupation, the basis for tracking apprentice progress: competency, time, or a hybrid. Regardless of the tracking method, an apprenticeship must entail at least one year of work experience and related instruction.

Competency-Based

The occupation must be approved for administration as a competency-based apprenticeship by U.S. DOL. If not, the sponsor must consult the Bureau to determine if it is suitable as a competency-based occupation. The program standards must detail:

- a. The on-the-job learning component of the apprenticeship program;
- b. The required competencies to be mastered during the apprenticeship;
- c. How demonstration of the competencies will be determined, including written and hands-on evaluations that occur in a controlled setting that permit accurate and verifiable results;
- d. The related instruction, which must comply with the apprenticeship statute, regulations, and rules.

Time-Based

The traditional method of apprenticeship delivery, consisting of at least 2,000 hours of on-the-job learning. This approach monitors an apprentice's progress through tasks described in a work process schedule for the occupation.

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Hybrid

Measures skill attainment through a combination of a specified minimum number of hours of on-the-job learning and successful demonstration of competencies as described in Exhibit A to the apprenticeship contract.

B. Work Processes

Standards must contain a schedule of work processes associated with the apprenticeship occupation.⁴¹ The work processes are an outline of supervised work experience that the apprentice will receive through on-the-job learning.

C. Related Instruction

The provision for organized related and supplemental instruction relevant to the occupation must be outlined in the standards and include a minimum of 144 hours of paid related instruction per year for the first two years of the program. Programs which are longer than two years must have at least 400 hours of paid related instruction during the term of the apprenticeship. Instruction may be delivered through the classroom, occupational or industry courses, electronic media, or other instruction approved by the Bureau. Instructors must meet educational and occupational requirements established by the Bureau and WTCS.

D. Numeric Ratio Description

Program standards must identify a numeric ratio of apprentices to journeymen that is consistent with proper supervision, training, safety, and continuity of employment. The ratio language shall be specific as to its application to the job site, workforce, department, or plant—with the employer's workforce being the preferred manner of expressing the ratio for Wisconsin registered apprenticeship programs. The ratio shall not exceed one journeyman per apprentice, except where a collective bargaining agreement applies, then the ratio prescribed in the agreement may be used.

E. Probationary Period

The length of the probationary period for the apprentice, in relation to the full apprenticeship term, must be designated in the program standards. The probationary period cannot exceed 25 percent of the length of the program, or one year, whichever is shorter.

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IV. Exhibit A (*Manual, 6.1*)

A. The apprenticeship contract details the stipulations of the apprenticeship training program and incorporates the program standards by reference. The contract must be agreed to and signed by the sponsor, the director of the Bureau (on behalf of the Department), and the apprentice (or in the case of a minor, the parent or guardian). The contents of each apprentice contract are not valid unless approved by the Bureau. The Bureau generates each contract. The contract face template, created by the Bureau, is in accordance with Wis. Admin. Code Ch. 295.07 (*Manual, Chapter 6, first paragraph*).

B. Each apprenticeship contract will include a document designated as "Exhibit A." An Exhibit A is developed for each occupation associated with a program sponsor and included in the program standards. The Bureau approves the content of the Exhibit A through its authority to set local and state apprenticeship standards.⁷⁰ The Exhibit A contains a synopsis of the following requirements of the apprenticeship, as approved by the Bureau, and in accordance with the program standards and Wis. Admin. Code Ch. 295.07.

C. Term of apprenticeship

The term may be based on competency, time, or a hybrid of the two. If time-based, then the number of hours, months or years necessary to complete the apprenticeship program are stated. If competency based, the Exhibit A includes a description of the skills to be attained and any on-the-job learning component. A hybrid program will state the number of hours to be spent by the apprentice on the job along with a description of the skills to be attained.

D. Probationary period

The period and stipulations of the probationary period, which can either be expressed in hours or months.

E. School attendance

The number of hours of paid related instruction and the related instruction provider.

F. Work process schedule

The basic job tasks of the apprenticeship program. For a time-based program, the approximate time the apprentice will spend on each work process. For a competency-based program, a description of the skill sets to be attained. A hybrid program will contain a combination of both. The schedule must be comprehensive

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enough to reflect the intent to train the apprentice in all primary job tasks of the related occupation. The schedule need not be followed in the sequence outlined in the Exhibit A.74

G. Minimum compensation to be paid

The graduated wage scale, including the skilled wage rate, to be paid to the apprentice.

H. Credit provisions

A description of any advanced standing work or education credit awarded to an apprentice and the wage commensurate with that advanced standing.

I. Special provisions

The special provisions describe additional stipulations or requirements of the apprenticeship program not contained elsewhere in the apprentice contract. For example, this section may detail additional unpaid instructional hours that the apprentice is required to take on their own time, required industry or employer certifications, or training courses mandated by the Bureau.

Section Two: Policies Established by BAS and the State Committee

1. Organizations that Nominate Members to the State Committee

A. Employer representative names will include nominees submitted to the Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards by the following:

i. Associated Builders and Contractors of Wisconsin

ii. Mechanical Contractors Association of Wisconsin

iii. Wisconsin Association of Plumbing, Heating, and Cool Contractors

B. Employee representative names will include nominees submitted to BAS by the Wisconsin Pipe Trades Association.

2. Minimum Qualifications for Applicants

A. All applicants must satisfy the minimum qualifications, including those eligible for direct entry or direct interview.

B. The Bureau affirms that both U.S. citizens and eligible non-citizens, who are authorized to work in the U.S., can participate in a registered apprenticeship so long as they meet the qualifications and requirements for enrollment into a particular program and are not required by law, regulation, or government contract to be a U.S. citizen (*Office of Apprenticeship Bulletin No 2023-42, January 5, 2023*).

C. An apprentice must be 18 years of age to be placed with a contractor.

D. Applicants shall be a high school graduate, from a state accredited or state approved school, or have a GED or High School Equivalency Certificate. High school transcript or proof of equivalency must be provided to the Committee on request.

E. All applicants must take one of the following assessments and satisfy the minimum scores, which are approximately at the 11th grade level. Local committees must accept assessment scores for a maximum of five years from the test date.

Accuplacer Classic	Accuplacer Next Gen	ACT
Arithmetic: 66	Arithmetic: 237	Math: 15
Elem Algebra: 33	QAS: 235	
Reading: 66	Reading: 244	Reading: 16

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F. The applicant must have the ability to get to and from school and work. Individual employers may require a valid driver's license at the time of placement as an apprentice.

G. Apprentices may be required to obtain a doctor's certificate of physical fitness for the trade at the time of placement. If the candidate is not judged to be physically fit by a physician, the apprenticeship will be canceled. If a committee has a physical fitness certificate requirement, it must use the requirement uniformly with all apprentice applicants.

H. Applicants may be required to take a recognized substance abuse test at the time of placement. A positive test result may result in the denial of the apprenticeship. If a committee has a substance abuse test requirement, it must apply the test uniformly with all apprentice applicants.

I. Apprentices may be required to submit to random, reasonable suspicion, and post-accident drug and alcohol testing and before commencing work on a project.

3. Minimum Qualifications of Employers

An employer, to be eligible for an apprentice, must

A. be legally established

B. demonstrate financial responsibility, if requested

C. sufficiently experienced to be able to provide knowledgeable and capable instruction for the apprentice.

D. have at least one year of experience as a plumbing contract, immediately previous to the time of request for the apprentice.

E. employ a full-time journeyworker or masters, or work at the trade full-time so as to ensure safe and quality training at all times and to provide day-to-day supervision and training of apprentices

F. employ a full-time master plumber who is specifically assigned the responsibility for the overall training of the apprentice. Such authority must be in writing.

G. provide evidence of Unemployment Insurance and Worker's Compensation coverage to the local committee

4. Schedule of Work Processes

See the approved Exhibit A.

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5. Requirements for Supervision

A. Apprentices shall be allowed to work under the supervision of a journeyworker plumber on all work normally performed by such journeyworker.

B. During the first three years of apprenticeship, plumbing apprentices shall be given the opportunity to install plumbing material as their skill may permit under the direct supervision of a journeyworker or Master plumber licensed in Wisconsin.

C. Apprentices who have successfully completed the first three years of work and all related instruction may work alone as long as their work is under the general supervision of a journey worker or master plumber; with the exception as stated in XVI C.

D. Service apprentices who have completed one (1) year of training as an apprentice; completed a minimum of 100 hours of paid related instruction; and completed a specified unpaid related instruction program (90 hours) in service/repair is qualified to work under the indirect supervision of a licensed journey worker or master plumber. This means he/she must have immediate access to a supervisor via phone or radio.

To facilitate the ability for apprentices to do service work earlier in their training:

i. Individuals who are interested in working in the service and repair industry will be registered as set forth in the local standards and in the same manner as all apprentices.

ii. Individuals will be required to participate in the paid regular curriculum but will have the option to also participate in a special unpaid service curriculum.

iii. After completion of specified related instruction and corresponding field experience (under direct supervision) the apprentice would qualify to work under the indirect supervision of a licensed journey worker or master plumber. This means he/she must have immediate access to a supervisor via phone or radio.

iv. The apprentice shall successfully complete all requirements and be granted a certificate signed by both employee and employer representatives (or Training Director) of the Local Apprenticeship committee prior to working under indirect supervision.

6. Requirements for Completion

7. Requirements Unique to the Occupation(s)