

Our workgroup is tasked with helping to determine the role of Intermediaries in expanding apprenticeship. I want to thank the members of our workgroup: Erin Roth, Emily Dow, Kirkland Murray, Grant Shmelzer, Walter Simmons, and Brendan Johnson. We appreciate the input from Katie Adams and Alan Dodkowitz from Safal Partners, Danielle Copeland from HCAP, and Lateefah Durant from CityWorksDC. We met several times; we discussed defining what an intermediary is and does and met with national intermediaries to help understand the services they provide and how Maryland might be able to use intermediary services to reach our goals. While we have only scratched the service, and there is more work to get details ironed out, I am prepared to deliver an initial report of our work.

From the USDOL website Office of Apprenticeship: Registered Apprenticeship Industry Intermediaries offer expertise to help employers and labor organizations launch, promote, and expand Registered Apprenticeship programs in growing industries. These partners are uniquely positioned to convene employers within a specific industry or subsector to increase awareness of the Registered Apprenticeship model and assist in creating programs.

WHAT ROLES DO INDUSTRY INTERMEDIARIES PLAY IN EXPANDING REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP?

- Rapid Registered Program Development and Implementation Support
 - Outreach to employers, unions, and others to promote the benefits of Registered Apprenticeship and provide technical assistance to launch and sustain Registered Apprenticeship programs.
 - Implement industry-driven strategies to expand Registered Apprenticeship opportunities across growing sectors
 - Offer expertise to build Registered Apprenticeship programs that help workers meet industry skill needs.
 - Develop curriculum, related instruction outlines, and competency-based Registered Apprenticeship program models.
 - Offer support in the administration and tracking of related instruction and on-the-job training hours.
 - Increase awareness of the apprenticeship model among secondary and post-secondary educators and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs
- Technical Assistance and Partnership Building
 - Assist employers in developing high-quality Registered Apprenticeship standards for new programs and subject-matter-expertise in apprentice recruitment strategies.
 - Leverage partnerships and other resources that help bring employers together to build a talent pipeline that helps growing sectors stay competitive in today's global economy.
 - Assist employers and partners in offsetting the costs of developing, launching, and sustaining Registered Apprenticeship programs.
- Support a Diverse and Inclusive Apprenticeship Pipeline
 - Guide strategies and best practices, such as linkages with pre-apprenticeship and the provision of critical support services, that lead to successful placement and retention in Registered Apprenticeship opportunities, particularly for underrepresented populations
 - Provide technical assistance on how Registered Apprenticeship can be a critical tool to help organizations meet their DEIA goals, as well as ensuring that new sponsors understand their Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) requirements and obligations

Intermediaries consider their assets and strengths, other organizations operating in the ecosystem, and their focus areas as they prioritize their resources and activities. Despite commonalities across them, only some models exist for intermediaries. While the intermediary's unique role is to convene partners

and forge a shared vision and accountability to learners, all other roles and functions can be shared across organizations participating in the pathways' partnership. We learned that intermediaries across several industries offer many services, and there is no "one size fits all" approach to intermediary services. For example, one organization may be well-positioned to take on the role of data lead based on its track record for collecting, analyzing, reporting on, and helping others to use collected information. Another organization might have a firm policy arm and can assume leadership in helping partners plan around a policy agenda for creating pathways. Another organization could take on the roles of recruiting new apprentices, providing related instruction, and tracking on-the-job learning.

As we expand apprenticeships in Maryland, we must prioritize industries that can help reach the goals and provide actual career pathways for students and other job seekers in our state. By prioritizing industries, it will be easier to determine the intermediary services required to help employers expand apprenticeship opportunities within industries that would need the aid provided by the intermediaries. Once industries are targeted for intermediary services, a vetting process should be presented to help determine intermediary organizations that can provide the services needed. Each industry may require different services provided by intermediaries or taken on by the apprenticeship sponsor/employer themselves. A checklist of tasks that would determine which organization would be responsible could help narrow the information. Items for such a checklist would include (but not be limited to) the following:

Apprentice recruitment, application, and selection
Apprentice case management and support
Marketing to students, families, etc.
Employer recruitment
Employer relationship management and ongoing support
Employer on-boarding and mentor training
Employer risk management (i.e., liability, insurance, etc.)
Integration and alignment with proximate work-based learning & CTE ecosystem
Identification of target occupations for program development
Competency identification, development, and validation

This is an initial report; we have laid out some services that intermediaries will provide; these services should be further discussed, tweaked as needed, and approved by the commission. There is continued work required to do. We recommend that the commission...

- Create a standardized definition of "intermediary" for Maryland, building on USDOL and other best practices but recognizing that intermediaries can take on a variety of responsibilities, and they may vary by organization.
- Building on the standard definition, develop a checklist template of critical functions for apprenticeship intermediaries to take on or identify another partner organization to ensure all critical facets of an apprenticeship program are considered and effectively planned for in Registered Apprenticeship creation.
- Identify target industries where intermediaries can help Maryland scale Registered Apprenticeship pathways due to labor market demand.
- Invest in intermediaries to strategically support target industries to scale Registered Apprenticeship activities in the State.