



FAQs Regarding \$12 Million Apprenticeship Expansion Funds

1. **Q:** Can you please explain the company size of less than 500 employees? Is it by location or by company size as a whole?

A: Small business are defined by the Small Business Administration as businesses with no more than 500 employees. The size of the business is tied to where the company is located. If the employer has more than 500 employees on a corporate level, but only a few hundred locally, the business will qualify for the funds as long as the business resides in a Tier 1 or 2 county and is adding new apprentices between the ages of 16 and 25 in the specified high-demand careers and within the dates outlined.
2. **Q:** Could you please explain what the legislation means by “new apprentice”?

A: New apprentices are defined as any new apprentices between the ages of 16 and 25 years of age who have not been previously registered in an apprenticeship program who are being brought on with a company in one of the high-demand careers identified in the legislation (Session Law 2021-180 Section 6.14). The company must also have fewer than 500 employees and reside in Tier 1 or 2 counties to qualify for the funding.
3. **Q:** What exactly is considered a high demand career?

A: Section 6.14.(a) of the legislation defines high demand trades or careers as “including but not limited to surveying, engineering, design, and all construction trades, as well as welding, pipe fitting, and engine mechanics.” The Expansion Fund Committee developed a comprehensive list to include the following high-demand careers or trades:

 - Computer and Mathematical (Including IT) (15-0000)
 - Architecture and Engineering (17-0000)
 - Education (25-0000)
 - Healthcare Technicians (29-0000)
 - Healthcare Support (31-0000)
 - Protective Service (33-0000)
 - Food Preparation and Service (35-0000)
 - Office and Administrative Support (43-0000)
 - Construction and Extraction (47-0000)
 - Installation, Maintenance, and Repairs (49-0000)
 - Production (51-0000)
 - Transportation (53-0000)



4. **Q:** Will the \$2,500 for educational support cover the cost of uniforms for healthcare students?
A: No, the \$2,500 would not cover the cost of uniforms for students in healthcare. The \$2,500 may be used to cover the cost of tuition, fees and books for apprentices enrolled in community colleges. Uniforms are covered under the \$2,000 reimbursement.
5. **Q:** What will the \$2,000 cover for employers?
A: The \$2,000 will cover program expenses, including costs for purchasing program equipment and for costs associated with payroll, mentor stipends, insurance, training, uniforms and safety equipment.
6. **Q:** Is there a limit (yearly or total) on the amount of money a company can get reimbursed?
A: Wage reimbursement is for the first year of training only. The 50% salary reimbursement is capped at \$15 per hour for non-high school students and \$14 per hour for high school students.
7. **Q:** Can small businesses qualify for the funding if they do not have the local community college providing the related instruction?
A: Yes, a small business may qualify for the funding even if they are not using the college for related instruction, but the employer will need to work through the college for any reimbursements.
8. **Q:** Can businesses that do not use the local community college for apprentice-related instruction qualify for funds to pay for certifications and other education expenses?
A: Businesses do not have to use the local community college to utilize this funding for apprentice education expenses, but the business will still work through their local community college to receive funds.
9. **Q:** Is Early Childhood covered under Education or is it K-12?
A: Yes, education is included as one of the high-demand fields so early childhood would be covered.
10. **Q:** Will there be any funding available for apprentices older than 25 years of age?
A: No, the funding is for apprentices between the ages of 16 and 25. Additional funding for apprentices over the age of 25 may be available through USDOL.
11. **Q:** Are there additional funds provided for marketing purposes?
A: Other than the \$2 million marketing funds disbursed to the 50 Tier 1 and Tier 2 community colleges (\$40,000 per college), there are no additional funds available for marketing the apprenticeship expansion funds.



12. **Q:** Will any funds be available to support instructors or college staff?
A: No, the funding does not support instructors, existing staff members or the hiring of new staff members.
13. **Q:** Do students who sign as apprentices during high school still receive the Tuition Waiver?
A: Yes, if the apprentice is enrolled in a Registered Apprenticeship program within 120 days of graduation, the tuition waiver would apply, and no tuition would come out of these funds. Please note any fees not used will revert to the System Office.
14. **Q:** As we continue to market and solicit new registered sponsors, should we wait until after July or August to register the program, being that this is still in draft form?
A: No, you can go ahead and register the program but do not register the apprentice until after June 1. The funding was approved by the State Board on Friday May 20.
15. **Q:** With the \$2,000 for employers, is that per apprentice per year?
A: The funds are per apprentice and are available for one year.
16. **Q:** When will the funds be available?
A: The funds were approved by the N.C. State Board of Community Colleges on Friday May 20.
17. **Q:** If a company is paying an apprentice \$16 per hour, how much will the company be reimbursed?
A: The company will receive a 50% reimbursement. For example, if the employer pays the apprentice \$16 per hour, the employer will be reimbursed at a rate of \$8 per hour. New apprentices cannot be brought on with this funding after Dec. 31, 2024, and the funds must be spent by Dec. 31, 2026. Wage reimbursement will only be available in the first year.
18. **Q:** Are there any funds available for Pre-Apprenticeship programs?
A: The funding is not available for Pre-Apprenticeships.
19. **Q:** Will guidance be sent to the Business Offices of participating colleges?
A: Yes, once the N.C. State Board of Community Colleges approves the funding and process, guidance will be provided to business offices at the participating community colleges.
20. **Q:** Is there a timeline for use of the funds?
A: Yes, the funds must be obligated by Dec. 31, 2024, and spent by Dec. 31, 2026.
21. **Q:** Can the funds go directly to the apprentice?
A: No, unlike WIOA and FAFSA, the funds cannot go directly to the apprentice. The college will



have flexibility on how they set up student accounts such as through the student bookstore or some other student account, but it will not go directly to the apprentice. Colleges are encouraged to use these funds first before pulling from other funding sources as any funds not

used will revert to the System Office.

22. **Q:** I noticed the N.C. Board of Community Colleges approved \$11.6 million for apprenticeship expansion at the May board meeting. Wasn't the legislation for \$12 million in apprenticeship expansion funds?

A: Yes, the \$12 million included a timed position for data collection which reduced the funds to \$11.6 million.