|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| OFFICE OF APPRENTICESHIP  BULLETIN | **NO.**  2023-36 |
| **DATE**  December 5, 2022 |

**TO:** NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM STAKEHOLDERS

OFFICE OF APPRENTICESHIP STAFF

STATE APPRENTICESHIP AGENCIES

**FROM:** JOHN V. LADD /s/

Administrator, Office of Apprenticeship (OA)

**SUBJECT:** Revisions to Apprenticeship Program Review Manual (Version 1.1, Updated October 2022)

1. **Purpose.** To inform the staff of OA, State Apprenticeship Agencies (SAA), Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors, and other Registered Apprenticeship partners of updates to the Apprenticeship Program Review Manual.
2. **Action Requested.** OA staff, SAAs and program sponsors should familiarize themselves with this bulletin and the attached documents, as a source for conducting program reviews and/or providing technical assistance.
3. **Summary and Background.**
4. Summary – OA has made updates concerning the recommended timing of reviews, processes for developing recommendations and providing notice to sponsor, as well as notification and disposition of reviews.
5. Background – The Apprenticeship Program Reviews (APR) and Extended Apprenticeship Program Reviews (EAPR) Manual was released in 2021. The Manual provides OA staff with the knowledge and procedures necessary to conduct comprehensive reviews to evaluate the performance of a sponsor’s Registered Apprenticeship program, and to offer quality technical assistance to help sponsors

meet their EEO requirements and affirmative action goals, where applicable. The standard operating processes and procedures set forth in the Manual provide a framework for standardizing the review process. As a reminder, the Manual establishes two main types of program reviews to assess conformance:

* Apprenticeship Program Review (APR): conducted on all sponsors, assesses an apprenticeship program’s performance with regard to the provisions outlined in 29 CFR part 29 (previously, the “Quality Assurance Review”), as well as an apprenticeship program’s compliance with regard to those provisions of 29 CFR part 30 that apply to all sponsors.
* Extended Apprenticeship Program Review (EAPR): assesses an apprenticeship program’s compliance with those provisions in 29 CFR part 30 that cover only sponsors that are required to develop an Affirmative Action Program under 29 CFR § 30.4.

1. **Revisions.**

As part of its continuous improvement efforts and in establishing effective program controls consistent with 29 CFR 29 and 30, OA revised the Manual to set clearer benchmarks about the timing of provisional program reviews as well as more consistent procedures in communicating the results of those reviews in a timely manner so programs have clear notice of program findings and needed technical assistance, as well as can make timely adjustments to ensure they are operating in conformity with the regulations.

Below is a short description of the updates to the Manual:

1. Chapter 2 – Programs for Reviews

The provisional review should occur within 455 days of the program registration date (within 90 days of its first anniversary date), consistent with 29 CFR § 29.3(g)

*Explanation – Provisional reviews are critical touchpoints with a new Registered Apprenticeship program to assess the quality and operations of programs, and to see if technical assistance is needed. 29 CFR part 29 states that “the Registration Agency must review all new programs for quality and for conformity with the requirements (of 29 CFR part 29) at the end of the first year after registration.” This addition operationalizes this regulation, while providing flexibility to staff to schedule their provisional reviews appropriately.*

*\*Please note that this also includes programs that have zero apprentices.*

1. Chapter 7 – Write-Up, Submission, and Follow-Up

* (B) Development of Recommendations

Staff should submit this analysis and assessment to the supervisor within 10 business days of the completion of review, and ultimately should receive final approval by the supervisor within 30 days of this receipt.

*Explanation – This update provides more structure to OA’s processes for communicating program review findings and sets targets for staff and their supervisors for finalizing those findings so they can be communicated to sponsors in a timely manner.*

* (C) Notice to Sponsor

Under 29 CFR part 30, OA must send a Notice of Review of Findings providing the results of the review to the sponsor’s contact person within 45 business days of the date of the completion of review supervisor’s agreement as to the nature of any deficiencies from an audit or visit.

*Explanation – This is a technical adjustment to ensure programs receive their notices in a timely manner from the review date.*

* (E) Submission of Recommendation and Discussion with Supervisor; Notice to Sponsor

When the Review Packet is approved, the supervisor will direct the Field Representative to communicate the Notice of Review Findings to the sponsor (such as, certified mail, electronic mail, etc.). Registration Agency staff should store a record of the Notice of Review Findings in RAPIDS.

*Explanation – As OA continues moving toward electronic recordkeeping, it is important that these review findings are properly stored and accessible to staff. Additionally, this revision communicates that review findings may be communicated via electronic mail.*

No changes to related documents were made.

1. **Inquiries.** If you have any questions, please contact Andrew Ridgeway, Division Director, Division of Registered Apprenticeship and Policy, at [Ridgeway.Andrew@dol.gov](mailto:Ridgeway.Andrew@dol.gov)
2. **Attachments.**

   

  