

Arizona Apprenticeship Advisory Committee (AAAC) Public Meeting Minutes for April 8th 2026

(Draft manuscript. Subject to approval at the next meeting.)

Attendance

Committee Members Present (Virtually)

Mr. Dennis Anthony, Chairman (Phoenix Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee)
Ms. Allison Moore (Rummel Construction)
Ms. Jill Smith (Careers through Culinary Arts Program)
Ms. Karen King (Tucson Electrical JATC)
Ms. Kimberly Faust (Maricopa County Community College District)
Mr. Mike Greenawalt (Rosendin Electric)
Mr. Jason Lujan (Arizona Public Service Company)
Mr. Jared Beard (Maricopa County ARIZONA@WORK)
Mr. Michael Malloy (Arizona Pipe Trades)
Mr. Phil Murphy (Industrial Commission of Arizona)

Committee Members Absent

Ms. Linda Vedo (Central Arizona Project)

Vacant (Office of Apprenticeship)
Vacant (Department of Education)

Staff Present For Dept. Of Economic Security (DES)/Arizona Apprenticeship Office (AAO)

Joann Bueno, State Apprenticeship Program Director
Betsy Nelson, Registered Apprenticeship Supervisor
Brynn Gieron, Apprenticeship Compliance Specialist
Gina Revere, Lead Apprenticeship and Training Representative
Robert Demeter, Lead Apprenticeship and Training Representative

Ms. Corinna Pereira, Multi-State Navigator (Invited by AAO Staff), DOL Office of Apprenticeship

Minutes of the Meeting

Call To Order

Mr. Dennis Anthony called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

Welcome And Introductions

Mr. Anthony welcomed all Committee members and asked all in attendance to introduce themselves.

Acceptance Of January 14, 2026 Minutes

Mr. Anthony requested a motion to accept the January 14th, 2026, AAAC meeting minutes. Mr. Malloy moved the motion, which Ms. King seconded. The motion to accept the minutes, as submitted, was unanimously approved by those present.

New Business

Introduction to New Members

Mr. Anthony informed the Committee that Mr. Jason Lujan with Arizona Public Service (APS) and Mr. Jared Beard with Maricopa County ARIZONA@WORK have accepted their appointments as Committee members. Mr. Anthony allowed the new members to introduce themselves to the Committee.

Key Sub-regulatory Guidance for the National Apprenticeship System

Ms. Joann Bueno informed AAAC members last month that the Office of Apprenticeship released several circulars and bulletins to serve as guidance for the National Apprenticeship system.

Ms. Bueno reported that Circular 2026-01 provides guidance on the three registered apprenticeship training approaches: Time-Based, Hybrid, and Competency-based. The Circular aims to outline the flexibility within each model and clarify that Related Technical Instruction may be delivered up front, in segments, or alongside on-the-job learning. Ms. Bueno also informed that the Circular 2026-01 focuses on validating skills attainment, specifically for both competency-based and hybrid approaches, shifting the focus away from the 2,000 minimum-hour requirement to validated skills attainment. Ms. Bueno further informed the Committee that this Circular does not cancel or rescind 29 CFR 29.4(c), which requires an apprentice to obtain a minimum of 2,000 hours of on-the-job learning for skill attainment. Ms. Bueno informed the Committee that clarification will be included in the Arizona Apprenticeship Office policies and procedures.

Ms. Bueno explained Circular 2026-02, which clarifies the roles of the State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) and the State Apprenticeship Council (SAC). In Arizona, ADES is the State Apprenticeship Agency, and the AAAC is its SAC. The SAC is intended to reduce barriers, improve consistency, and prevent undue influence in program approvals and oversight. Ms. Bueno noted that Circular 2026-02 emphasizes that SAAs should retain full decision-making authority, referencing 29 CFR 29.13, which states that the council reports directly to the SAA. Furthermore, repositioning the SAC as an advisory body. Ms. Bueno reported that the current AAAC is advisory and is in compliance with the guidance. Ms. Bueno added, however, that the

AAAC is out of compliance because it operates under the direction of the Workforce Arizona Council (WAC). Ms. Bueno reports that this is currently being addressed internally at DES in response to the DOL Compliance Review findings.

Ms. Bueno provided information on Circular 2026-03, which establishes a standard method for calculating and measuring registered apprenticeship completion rates. Ms. Bueno further detailed that it reinforces data transparency and the ability to evaluate program performance.

Ms. Bueno informed the Committee about Bulletin 2026-35, which introduces a federal “Shot Clock” for the approval of apprenticeship programs. The objective is to speed up registration timelines and enhance transparency. The Office of Apprenticeship has committed to making registration determinations within 30 days of receiving a complete application.

Ms. Bueno mentioned that the Arizona Apprenticeship Office currently registers programs within 24 to 48 hours, but noted that Arizona will not be included on the dashboard anyway, since the “Shot Clock” applies to local program standards submitted through Standards Builder, National Program Standards, or National Guideline Standards, all managed by the Office of Apprenticeship. The public-facing website not only tracks the number of registered programs but also displays the average approval time, thereby increasing transparency and accountability in achieving the President of the United States' goal of one million apprentices.

Ms. Moore noted that there will be more flexibility in programming with the new guidance. Ms. Moore then asked for clarification on program standards and agreements that require updates. Ms. Bueno reminded the Committee that Registered Apprenticeships are driven by employers; therefore, training must be tailored to the employer's needs and in accordance with industry standards and expectations

Increasing Apprentices Workgroup by OEO/WAC Status

Ms. Joann Bueno stated the Increasing Apprentices Workgroup through OEO will be sunsetted, and the final meeting will be held at 3:00 PM today. The workgroup will be reevaluated and strategized to better support the initiative. Governor Katie Hobbs and the Workforce Arizona Council continue to prioritize increasing the number of apprentices in Arizona. Mr. Anthony added that the workgroup had grown large but lacked employer representation. Mr. Anthony emphasized that Registered Apprenticeship is meant to be employer-focused and employer-driven.

RESTART Grant

Ms. Bueno informed the Committee that the federally funded Re-Entry Employment and Skilled Trades Advanced Manufacturing Registered Apprenticeship and Training (RESTART) grant. This grant aims to connect justice-involved individuals not only to employment but also to skills and training, such as registered apprenticeships. Ms. Bueno also shared that it is part of a broader re-entry framework that emphasizes the second-chance workforce connected to in-demand industries. The total amount of funding is 81 million dollars, to be awarded to 20 grantees nationwide, with a minimum of 1 to 5 million dollars per project. Ms. Bueno shared

details on the key components, expected outcomes, and targeted in-demand industries. Ms. Bueno shared with the Committee that ADES will be applying for the RESTART grant in partnership with the ADES Re-Entry program team to provide training for 500-600 incarcerated individuals in Arizona. Ten percent of the total will be placed in the manufacturing industry through Registered Apprenticeship with Skill Up Arizona Apprenticeship and Award Foundation. If awarded, the grant will occur for a period of three and a half years.

Arizona Apprenticeship Week/National Apprenticeship Week

Ms. Bueno announced that National Apprenticeship will take place this month, during the last week of April. The Arizona Apprenticeship Office has secured a proclamation from the Governor declaring it as Arizona Apprenticeship Week. Ms. Bueno encouraged all programs to submit their events on the National Apprenticeship Week website. Ms. Bueno shared that the Arizona Apprenticeship Office will be hosting a series of statewide events during Arizona Apprenticeship Week. The RAP on the AZ Map Roadshow will be occurring simultaneously on Tuesday, April 28th, in Yuma and Flagstaff, and on Thursday, April 30th, in Mesa and Tucson. The AAO team will meet locally with employers, education providers, community-based organizations, and workforce partners to discuss challenges and barriers to creating registered apprenticeship programs. More importantly, to help local organizations and businesses initiate program registrations and development. Ms. Bueno encouraged all Committee members to share the invitation with others and register if they can attend.

Old Business

Update Department of Labor State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) Compliance Review

Ms. Bueno shared with the Committee that the response letter was submitted to the Department of Labor on time, and AAO is awaiting a response. Ms. Bueno advised that it is with the Solicitors' Offices in DC.

Update on State Apprenticeship Rules and Policies based on 29 CFR 29

Ms. Bueno shared on April 5th, 2026, that rules have been finalized and published within the Department of Economic Security, Employment and Training Rules -- Arizona Administrative Code Title 6, Chapter 2, Article 2, Section R6-2-101. Ms. Bueno expressed gratitude to everyone who supported the Rules as AAO renewed its recognition as a State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA). AAO will work with the ADES Policy team, with assistance from the Apprenticeship Compliance Specialist, to finalize the policies and procedures. It was also noted that once the policies and procedures have been finalized, they will be shared with the Committee for insight.

Update on DOL Notice of Proposed Rule Making on 29 CFR 30

Ms. Bueno informed the AAAC members that, with the Non-Enforcement of 29 CFR 30, AAO will not be formulating an Equal Opportunity plan regarding 29 CFR 30 and the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking.

Update on Outstanding Apprentice Awards

Ms. King provided the Committee with an update on the Outstanding Apprenticeship Awards (OAA). It was announced that a poll was conducted, and the results, along with discussions, determined that the Outstanding Apprentice Awards will take place in Tucson on November 14, 2026, at Lowe's Ventana Canyon. Mr. Anthony further explained that various factors, including cost, influenced the venue selection and requested that the Committee members save the date for the event.

Status Reports

Chairman's Report

Mr. Anthony expressed positive remarks about AAO's current compliance status and the favorable assessment received during the DOL audit. He mentioned that he is looking forward to finalizing the policies and procedures to ensure they align with the relevant regulations. The Committee was asked to assist in reviewing these policies and procedures to further support their development and to provide feedback once they are received.

Apprenticeship Activity Report

Ms. Joann Bueno reported that the AAO is 116 apprentices away from 9,000 active apprentices participating in Registered Apprenticeship in Arizona. Ms. Bueno shared the current metrics, which currently stand at 8,884 active apprentices registered across 316 active programs within the state of Arizona. There are discrepancies in the data reported, specifically on [Apprenticeship.gov](https://www.apprenticeship.gov), which shows that Arizona has 10,000 apprentices participating. It was explained that apprentices who live and work in Arizona may be counted, as well as apprentices participating in Office of Apprenticeship (OA) programs. Ms. Bueno congratulated the Apprenticeship Compliance Specialist and the Apprenticeship and Training Representatives for diligently upholding the quality of registrations and ensuring reviews are completed on time.

Ms. Bueno also updated the Committee on John Aguirre, Apprenticeship Training Representative, who left state employment in March, and informed the Committee that the position will not be filled. The AAO is currently a team of eight. Ms. Bueno announced that the AAO team continues to engage in various employer outreach activities to increase participation in Registered Apprenticeship programs throughout Arizona.

Ms. Bueno stated that the AAO is part of a Workgroup for Workforce Pell, which is currently open for public comment and now includes Registered Apprenticeships eligible for funding. Ms. Bueno noted that the AAO, in partnership with the Governor's Office, is formulating a response.

US DOL Multi-State Navigator Report

Ms. Corinna Pereira shared National Apprenticeship Week registration link has been added to [Apprenticeship.gov](https://www.apprenticeship.gov), encouraging Arizona programs to add events and proclamations in Arizona. Ms. Pereira provided data on the current active apprenticeship registrations in RAPIDS for all SAA's, totaling 701,645 nationwide, continuing to make progress towards the Administration's goal of 1 million apprentices. Ms. Pereira reported that Bulletin 2026-35 is primarily directed to the Office of Apprenticeship and internal staff and provides further clarification on Circular 2026-02, emphasizing that recognition of the State Apprenticeship Agency makes final decisions, not

the council, and ensuring that all states comply. Ms. Pereira congratulated AAO on the recent passing of the rules. Further information regarding the guidance documents can be found on the RA Academy website, which recently launched Sub-Regulatory training videos. Ms. Pereira discussed opinion letters and noted that the DOL website does not include a section for registered apprenticeships. Ms. Pereira suggested that if anyone is interested in an opinion letter regarding registered apprenticeship, they can be routed to DOL. Ms. Pereira shared more details on the following grants: American Manufacturing Incentive fund, and is available for technical assistance if needed. The Pay-for-Performance Incentive Fund will include multiple industries, and the application has since closed. Intermediary RFPs will go out, as the contracts have recently expired, and will include 9 industries to support Registered Apprenticeship.

Council Members Report

Mr. Michael Malloy (Arizona Pipe Trades)

Mr. Malloy stated that the program currently has close to 1,200 registered apprentices. After experiencing a slowdown in the industry towards the end of 2025, the program has now entered a recovery period and has lifted its hiring freeze. He noted that last year, the number of individuals out of work increased due to several large projects moving into different phases of work. However, starting in January 2026, activity has picked up again.

Mr. Malloy is actively working on the process to indenture all the apprentices, which will boost their apprenticeship numbers. He explained that there are currently 3,000 people on the waiting list and that he plans to expand the campus to accommodate continued growth. Additionally, he is looking into developing a new campus in Tucson. Mr. Malloy discussed the ongoing growth of the job market in Southern Arizona and emphasized that Arizona Pipe Trades is looking to become more involved in the region. He announced that during the last week of April, they will host the Local State Apprenticeship Contest, where the winner will have the chance to compete at the Regional Level in Southern California. Additionally, Arizona Pipe Trades will be holding an Open House and has invited all Committee members to attend on Friday and Saturday.

Ms. Allison Moore (Rummel Construction)

Ms. Moore shared 48 active apprentices participating, including Heavy Equipment Operators, Heavy Equipment Mechanics, and Laborers. She shared that the biggest challenge is finding more instructors and is exploring ways to make the program more robust.

Ms. Jill Smith (Careers through Culinary Arts Program [C-CAP])

Ms. Smith reports that the pre-apprenticeship program for high school seniors is offered through Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs throughout the state. Marriott Corporation has quickly become the largest partner.

Ms. Kimberly Faust (Maricopa Community College District [MCCD])

Ms. Faust reports will be in communication with AAO regarding future grant funding to ensure alignment and continued collaboration within the community college district.

Mr. Phil Murphy (Industrial Commission of Arizona)

Mr. Murphy reported is seeking to develop a registered apprenticeship program for the safety department.

Mr. Jared Beard (Maricopa County ARIZONA@WORK)

Mr. Beard reported that in 2022, Maricopa County invested several million dollars to expand registered apprenticeships, aiming to fund 3,000 apprentices by the end of 2026. As of the end of February, 2,341 apprentices have been funded. He also announced that Maricopa County will host an Annual Registered Apprenticeship Fair at the Goodyear Recreation Center on April 29, 2026, which has already received 479 pre-registrations.

Ms. Karen King (Tucson Electrical JATC)

Ms. King shared that they have 200 apprentices undergoing interviews, with the testing deadline set for April 1, 2026. She also mentioned that work has been slow, leaving several apprentices unemployed at the moment. However, she stated that work is starting to pick up, and they expect to achieve full employment very soon.

Mr. Jason Lujan (Arizona Public Service)

Mr. Lujan reported that there are currently 91 apprentices actively participating in the program, and recently, 15 Linemen and Substation Electricians have graduated. He also mentioned that on Monday, 28 pre-apprentices in various occupations will be onboarded. Additionally, Mr. Lujan concluded by stating that a new building is under construction, which will double their capacity to support future apprentices.

Mr. Mike Greenawalt (Rosendin Electric)

Mr. Greenawalt has been working with The Greenawalt Foundation and reports that there is a high demand for Registered Apprenticeships in schools. The Foundation aims to help fund high school seniors who are entering registered apprenticeship programs. He further explained that the industry is changing, particularly with the emergence of large job sites and delays, which have resulted in an increase in out-of-work apprentices.

Additionally, Mr. Greenawalt mentioned that he will be on the East Valley Institute of Technology (EVIT) campus for Career Day and will also present at the Construction Owners Summit at Grand Canyon University (GCU).

Call To The Public

Mr. Anthony asked the public for any comments.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on July 8th, 2026. The meeting may be held in a Hybrid format, offering both in-person and virtual options for attendees, to be confirmed by the AAO.

Committee members will be notified of the next meeting with an invitation that includes the agenda and draft minutes of this meeting. Future meetings are scheduled for the second Wednesday of each month (October, January, and April) from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. This schedule is subject to change, pending the logistics for the next meeting.

Adjournment

Mr. Anthony adjourned the meeting at 11:29 am.