

Fact Sheet for Wisconsin Employers

Basic Structure Youth Apprenticeship (YA) is a highly successful talent acquisition strategy in which employers hire high school juniors or seniors for a one or two-year apprenticeship. During the apprenticeship, the student continues toward high school graduation and takes courses related to the profession as a way of enhancing what is being learned on the job. The YA Program is coordinated locally by regional consortia and overseen by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD). Each consortium typically includes several participating high schools. Employers may hire from more than one high school and even work with multiple consortia to meet their hiring needs.

Below are the eleven YA career program areas that have been approved:

- ◆ Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources
- ◆ Architecture and Construction
- ◆ Art, A/V Technology and Communications
- ◆ Finance
- ◆ Health Science
- ◆ Hospitality, Lodging and Tourism
- ◆ Information Technology
- ◆ Manufacturing
- ◆ Marketing
- ◆ Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)
- ◆ Transportation, Distribution and Logistics

Key Attributes for Employers

- ◆ **Hiring:** YA coordinators help identify potential youth apprentices and assist with coordinating interviews, but employers determine who to hire and may opt not to hire any youth.
- ◆ **Mentors:** Before hiring a youth apprentice, employers are asked to identify an individual who will act as a mentor at the workplace for the apprentice.
- ◆ **Education/Training Agreement:** Signed by the apprentice, their parent, the employer, the school principal and the local YA coordinator, this agreement enumerates the expectations and responsibilities of each party during the apprenticeship.
- ◆ **Skills Checklists:** Each type of apprenticeship offers a list of skills that youth are expected to learn at the workplace. These are shared with employers prior to hiring the apprentice.

Benefits for Employers The YA Program has been connecting employers with high school student talent for over 25 years, creating a scalable and successful program with input from industry. Over 2,900 employers and 4,000 youth apprentices across Wisconsin participated in the YA Program during the 2017/18 school year. Employers extend permanent job offers to more than 75 percent of the graduating youth apprentices annually, making YA an excellent pipeline for recruiting and retaining loyal, well-trained talent. Employers continually report a high level of satisfaction, and cite these program benefits:

- ◆ Access to young workers who are eager to learn and have interest in the profession.
- ◆ Quality, prescreened youth apprentices who receive ongoing support during their apprenticeship.
- ◆ A method to address future hiring needs in a cost-effective and timely manner.
- ◆ The chance to shape the skills, expectations and habits of youth apprentices at a young age.

Work Permits Work permits are not required in Wisconsin for anyone 16 years of age and older as of June 23, 2017. Most youth apprentices are 16 – 18 years old.

Student Learner Status of Youth Apprentices Students enrolled in the YA Program are considered Student Learners, a classification which allows them to perform some work that otherwise would be off-limits to youth. This is the case if certain conditions exist, including for short and intermittent periods of time.

Hours Allowed As Student Learners, youth apprentices are allowed to work during school hours. Also, Wisconsin does not limit the number of or which hours youth ages 16 and 17 may work, and labor laws pertaining to minors do not apply once individuals are 18 years old. In certain circumstances, youth apprentices may be 15 years old when they are hired. The following rules related to work hours for youth ages 14 and 15 would apply in those situations:

Maximum Work Hours for Minors Ages 14 and 15	After Labor Day through May 31	June 1 through Labor Day
Daily Hours		
Non-School Days	8 hours	8 hours
School Days	3 hours	3 hours
Weekly Hours		
Non-School Weeks	40 hours	40 hours
School Weeks	18 hours	18 hours
Permitted Time of Day	7 AM – 7 PM	7 AM – 9 PM

Types of Work Allowed For youth under the age of 18, a number of work types are deemed hazardous and are not allowed. Also, youth may not operate certain pieces of equipment in some professions, such as in manufacturing and construction. For additional information, please see these resources from DWD's Equal Rights Division (ERD): [State of Wisconsin Work Permit Officer Handbook: Employment of Minors and Street Trades](#) and [Manufacturing & Construction Equipment & Wisconsin's Employment of Minor Law factsheet](#). Other resources are also available on the ERD website at: https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/er/labor_standards/child_labor_laws.htm.

Employers with specific questions are encouraged to contact ERD's Labor Standards Bureau by calling the Madison Office at (608) 266-6860 or the Milwaukee Office at (414) 227-4384 or connecting with staff online at: <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/er/contacts.htm>.

Wages As employees, youth apprentices must be paid at least the minimum wage.

Workers Comp Once employed, youth apprentices are covered by their YA employer's workers compensation insurance policy. For agricultural employers, youth apprentices must be covered by a comparable general liability insurance policy in the absence of workers compensation coverage. Please note that workers compensation rates are not impacted by the age of employees, but rather the industry in which the employer operates.

Unemployment Insurance (UI) Benefits If a youth apprentice is enrolled full-time in an educational institution and receives school credit for their participation in the YA Program, they are not eligible to file for UI benefits from their YA employer. If these conditions are not met, they may be eligible.

Other Resources for Interested Employers

- Contact the DWD YA staff to get started: Call (608) 267-6705 or send email to ya@dwd.wisconsin.gov.
- Contact your local YA consortia directly at: YA.wi.gov.

