



LADOTD OJT Program



October 2022

Exciting Time in LADOTD

It is an exciting time for the LADOTD. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) is providing needed increased federal funding to address the roadway needs of Louisiana. The LADOTD Contractors are gearing up for the additional work. Our own Secretary, Dr. Shawn Wilson, is also the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) President. As the AASHTO President, Dr. Wilson represents all highway transportation agencies in the US.

With Dr. Wilson representing the State of Louisiana both as the Secretary and as the AASHTO President, let us be a model state DOT in the Equal Opportunity (EO) area. One of the aspects of the EO objectives is the implementation of the On-the-Job Training (OJT) Program. Increasing OJT trainings for more minorities, women, and disadvantaged individuals would provide long lasting careers in

highway construction and improve the standards of living for more families.

The OJT Program implementation is straight forward. Submit the OJT Enrollment Forms, receive approvals, and record the training hours worked of the trainees.

There are benefits of implementing the OJT Program for both the trainees and the Contractors. The LADOTD reimburses \$3.00 per hour of training provided, in the Estimates. Additionally, if the trainees are in approved apprenticeships, an additional \$1.00 tax credit per apprentice may be possible. With a higher leadership profile, let us strive to have every Contractor in Louisiana enroll OJT trainees, and provide trainings to result in proficiencies, benefiting the Contractors, employees, and the LADOTD.

We, in the Compliance Programs Section, along with the OJT

Supportive Services, are ready to help you successfully enroll trainees. Please reach out to us for the assistance. (Please refer to page 4 for contact information). Please also feel free to reach out to me directly by phone at (225) 379-1382, or by email at Paula.Roddy@la.gov.

Ms. Paula Merrick Roddy
LADOTD Program Director
Compliance Programs Section

What's Inside

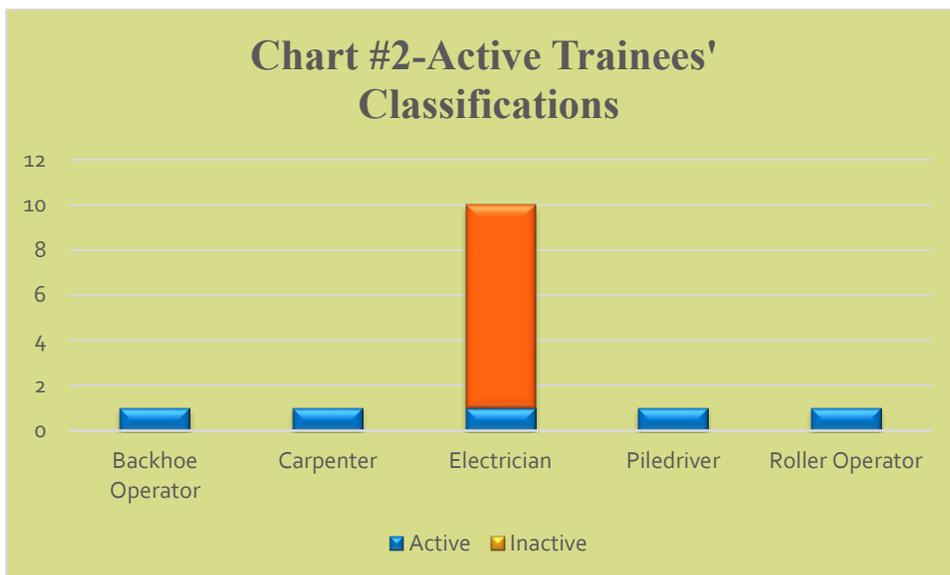
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Current Status of the OJT Program

Chart #1-2022 Trainees shows that 14 trainees were enrolled by several Contractors in 2022, to date. Only males were enrolled, with ten minority, and four non-minority employees. Five trainees are active, with nine trainees that were not active on the projects. More trainees could continue to work and be active on the projects to continue the trainings. Additionally, more females could be enrolled in the OJT Program.



Chart #2-Active Trainees' Classifications indicates that one each of the following classifications were active in the OJT Programs: Backhoe Operator, Carpenter, Electrician, Piledriver, and Roller Operator. Nine electricians are not active. The Contractors could ensure that trainees receive trainings continuously to facilitate retentions. Additionally, AASHTOWare being updated monthly would show the active training hours and enable reimbursements of \$3.00 per training hour.



Dr. Wilson's Commitment to Diversity (US House of Representatives Subcommittee)



Dr. Shawn Wilson provided testimony to the *House of Representatives Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures of the Committee on Ways and Means of the United States* in 2022. He discussed workforce management and diversity, among other items. Dr. Wilson stated that, *Workforce talent management is experiencing increased workforce movement as well as talent shortages*. Further, he stated...*I would like to share with you the emphasis areas I am leading as AASHTO President this year: pathways to equity and partnering to deliver*. Further...*As the first African American President of AASHTO in our 107-year history, equity, as noted earlier, is one of my Presidential emphasis areas. I'm looking for state DOTs to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past, and make real, sustainable changes by cementing the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion into the fabric of the state DOTs*.

The OJT Program is a major program that supports Dr. Wilson's goals, both as the Secretary of LADOTD and as the AASHTO President. The LAGC and the Contractors can support the achievement of diversity and workforce development as a part of equity by enrolling minorities, females, and disadvantaged individuals.

What can the Contractors do to support the LADOTD's and AASHTO's objectives to increase diversity? Using the OJT Program, hire eligible individuals to train in the highway

construction classifications, such as Highway/Bridge Carpenters, Roller Operators, Truck Drivers, etc. The trainees' supervisors will be providing trainings to the new hires to make them proficient. By enrolling the new hires into the OJT Program, the company can obtain \$3.00 per hour reimbursements.

Why would the Contractors want to enroll employees into the OJT Program? After all, a highway project funded by tax dollars requires much documentation, such as material certifications, paving plans, quality assurance plans, etc. Signing up for the voluntary OJT Program only means more documentation. The LADOTD, indeed, is required to ensure that the Contractors follow the Codes of Federal Regulations. The OJT Program documentation is required, in accordance with the 23 CFR 230, *External Programs*. The LADOTD has streamlined the documentation and is minimal. The Contractor completes the *OJT Enrollment Form* for approval to the OJT Program Specialist. The trainee hours are input into the AASHTOWare, from which the reimbursements can be received by the Contractors.

The Contractors can stand with Secretary Wilson and contribute to the success of the OJT Program in the LADOTD. Additionally, the Contractors can show Louisiana as the leader of encouraging diversity by each company enrolling more minorities, females, and disadvantaged individuals as trainees.

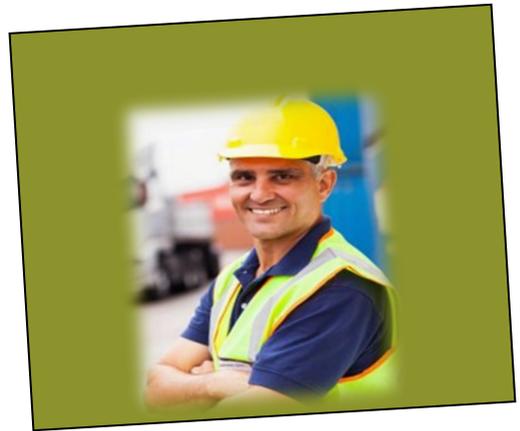
Upcoming OJT Program Contractor Forum

Quarterly, the LADOTD will conduct Contractor's Forums to discuss the OJT Forums. In these forums, come learn about the OJT Program. Get an overview, information on how to implement, provide input on the OJT Program and ask questions. Interact with the LADOTD staff to ensure meeting the OJT goals.

The date of the next OJT Program Contractor's Forum will be announced. You will receive an email invitation for the Contractors' Forum. Please accept the invitation and come join us. Please contact Ms. Joyce Brignac with any questions at (225) 379-1364 or joyce.brignac@la.gov.

Establishing Apprenticeships

The Louisiana State Apprenticeship Law, (R.S. 23:381) authorizes the establishment of an apprenticeship for a trade. Developing an apprenticeship is a benefit to employers and employees. The apprenticeships establish employer requirements to ensure quality work by the employees, which translates into higher productivity and retention. The employees also benefit by being able to obtain employment and long-term family sustaining jobs. A well-trained employee will be a more productive employee, resulting in increased profits for the companies.



The apprenticeship program must provide at least two thousand hours of on-the-job training, along with classroom instruction of a minimum of 144 hours per year. What are the steps to developing apprenticeship programs?

The Louisiana Workforce Commission's link, https://www.laworks.net/Downloads/App/Developing_RAP.pdf provides the steps, as shown in the *Apprenticeship Development Process Chart* and details shown below.

Apprenticeship Development Process



1. Requirements Information

Apprenticeship sponsor submits a request on how to begin a Registered Apprenticeship.

2. Pre-Application

Program sponsor submits the Apprenticeship Pre-Application for review.

3. Application Meeting

Program sponsor attends a meeting with an Apprenticeship Training Representative to outline the responsibilities and benefits of the proposed Apprenticeship.

4. Standards of Apprenticeship

Program sponsor submits Standards of Apprenticeship.

5. Completion

Sponsor receives approval and implements the Apprenticeship in *Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Database System (RAPIDS)*.

Another benefit to the Contractors is a possible tax credit. An approved Apprenticeship program sponsor who is paying the apprentice's wages may be eligible. The tax credit may be \$1 per hour worked annually, with a maximum allowable amount for each apprentice being \$1,000 per year. To obtain more information on developing an apprenticeship, tax credits, etc., contact Apprenticeshipla@lwc.la.gov.

OJT Program Contacts

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