



LADOTD OJT Program



January 2022

Year 2021 Enrollments Among Covid and Other Challenges

We are excited that the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* will be providing the State of Louisiana nearly \$6 billion dollars. The highway and bridge infrastructure of Louisiana will be improved, to provide a better ride for the motorists. The additional funds will also provide more opportunities to hire and enroll minorities, females, and disadvantaged individuals on highway construction crafts, as part of the OJT Program. However, the Year 2021 presented difficulties for the Contractors in enrolling trainees.

Covid continued to be a problem in the State of Louisiana in the Year 2021. The labor force was affected by the covid surges. Additionally, hurricanes caused much damage in certain areas. Construction on some projects was delayed due to the weather occurrences. Thus, enrolling trainees to provide construction skills continued to be a challenge.

Covid may be with us for some time yet. Weather events may continue to affect construction, as well as in recruiting new hires. It may not become easier in the near term in Year 2022. Recognizing that these will be impediments in enrolling trainees, how can Contractors be successful?




Contractors can continue to recruit and hire minorities, females, and disadvantaged individuals for the OJT Program. The Louisiana Workforce Commission can provide assistance in the recruiting. Hiring reentrants is beneficial. Contractors can also upgrade current eligible employees in other classifications using the OJT Program. It is, indeed, possible to enroll eligible individuals in the OJT Program.

The Compliance Programs Section, along with the OJT Supportive Services will provide any assistance

you may need to enroll trainees and to complete the trainings. Please reach out to us for the assistance. (Please refer to page 4 for contact information). Please 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

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Current Status of the OJT Program

Chart #1-Trainees Accomplishing Hours shows that six male trainees were continuing with their trainings and accomplishing hours. Five minority and one non-minority male trainees were active. No female trainees were enrolled. Contractors could enroll female trainees to provide more opportunities for women and to contribute to the overall LADOTD OJT goals.

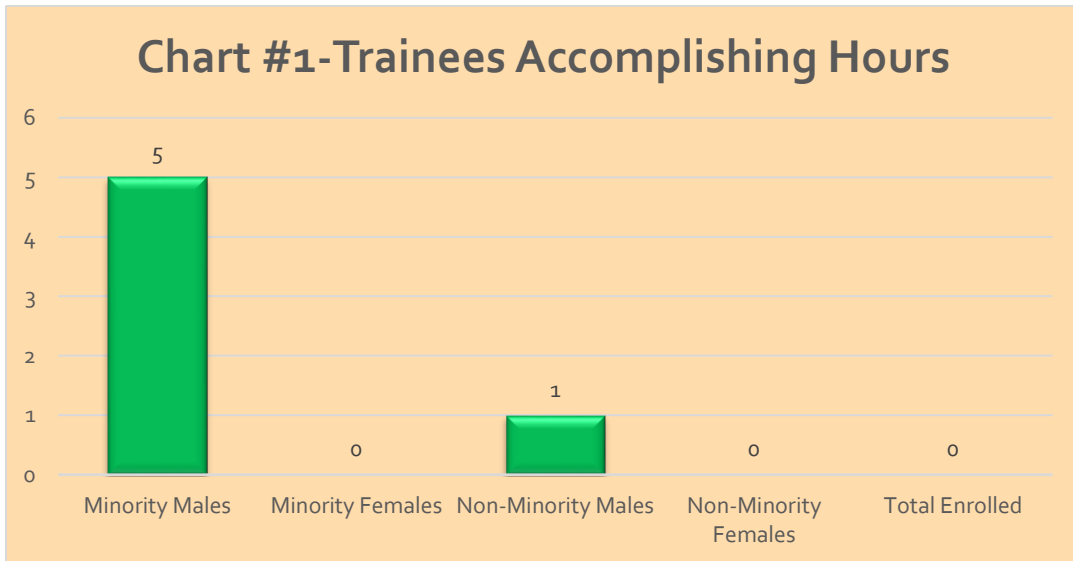
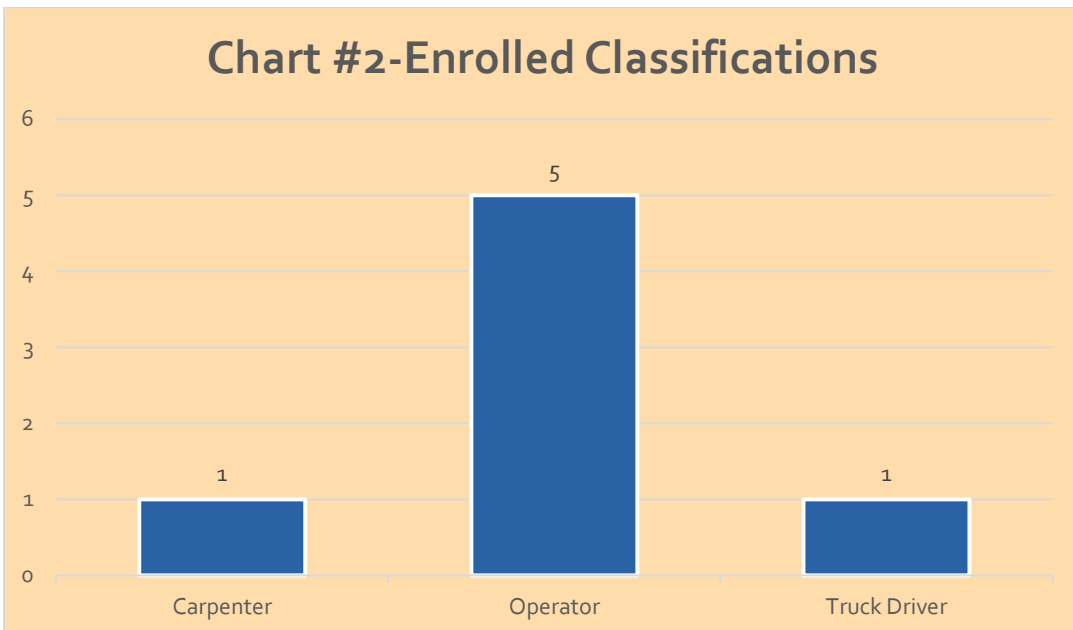


Chart #2-Enrolled Classifications shows that five Equipment Operators, one Carpenter, and one Truck Driver were active in the OJT Program. These trainees are from two companies. While some Contractors are enrolling trainees, it is desirable for more Contractors to take advantage of the \$3.00 per hour reimbursements for their companies as part of the OJT Program.



OJT Program--Equal Employment Opportunity



Why are minority and female employees encouraged to be enrolled? A few Contractors inquire as to the reason for the encouragement of enrolling minorities and females as part of the On-the-Job Training (OJT) Program. It is due to the federal requirements. The OJT Program is part of the Code Federal Regulations Part 230 External Programs, Subpart A-Equal Employment Opportunity on Federal and Federal-Aid Construction Contracts, whose purpose is to *prescribe policies... relative to the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal-Aid construction contracts.*

The LADOTD Supplemental Specification, OJT Program states in the fifth paragraph: ...Contractors should be aware that one of the objectives of the training program is to increase the participation and skills of minorities and females in highway construction. Further, the Federal 23 CFR Part 230.111 (d) states that...*Training programs ...shall be approved only if they meet the standards.*

The Contractors submit the *OJT Enrollment Forms* for review. The OJT Program Specialist reviews the Enrollment Form submissions in accordance with the Federal 23 CFR Section 230.107 Policy which states that... *it is the policy of the FHWA to require full utilization of all available training and skill*

improvement opportunities to assure the increased participation of minority groups, disadvantaged persons, and women in all phases of the highway construction industry. The OJT Program Specialist approves the trainee enrollment if the enrollment submission meets the federal and DOTD requirements. The DOTD Supplemental Specification also states that the *Contractors must exert good faith efforts to comply with the equal employment opportunity contract requirements when seeking to....select candidates for the training program.*

The DOTD Supplemental Specification states that the *Contractor will be reimbursed \$3.00 per hour of training provided in accordance with an approved training program.* The trainees approved by the OJT Program Specialist will receive the \$3.00 per hour reimbursements. The Contractors ask whether other funds are available for training employees who do not meet the OJT Program requirements. Other funds are indeed available from the State of Louisiana for training. The Louisiana Workforce Commission also has an On-the-Job Training Program, at the website, LAWorks Homepage - Louisiana Workforce Commission.

The Contractors can enroll the minorities, females, and disadvantaged individuals for training into the LADOTD OJT Program and obtain the approvals from the OJT Program Specialist. The LADOTD provides \$3.00 per hour reimbursements for eligible individuals approved as trainees, as per the requirements of the federal 23 CFR Part 230. If the Contractors wish to obtain reimbursements for other individuals, the Louisiana Workforce Commission may provide other opportunities.

The screenshot shows the Louisiana Workforce Commission website. At the top left is the logo for the Louisiana Workforce Commission, The Department of Labor. To the right is a search bar with the text 'Search laworks.net' and a 'SEARCH' button. Below the logo and search bar are several navigation menus:

- Online Services
- Local Offices & Services
- Unemployment Insurance
- Career Solutions
- American Job Center Contacts
- Workforce Development
- My HIRE Account
- Labor Market Information
- Workers' Compensation
- Louisiana Rehabilitation Services
- Workforce Investment Council
- Job Opportunities at LWC

Below these menus are three main service categories:

- Job Seekers**
 - Explore Careers
 - Immediate Job Openings
 - Job Fairs & Events
 - Work Search Information
 - Recruitment Videos
- Employers**
 - Report employees refusing to return to work
 - UI employer resources
 - List your job with us
 - On-the-Job Training (OJT)
 - Hire a Laid-Off Worker (HALOW)
- Unemployment Insurance**
 - File a Claim
 - Identity Verification
 - UI Employer Resources
 - Claimant Info and Resources
 - Hurricane Laura Disaster FAQs
 - CARES ACT Extension FAQs

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.

OJT Specific Questions by Contractors

Some LADOTD construction Contractors express interests in implementing the OJT Programs when the OJT Supportive Services reaches out regarding the OJT Program stipulations. In starting on the path to enrolling trainees, the Contractors have a few specific questions regarding the implementation steps. Some of the items are discussed to help the Contractors.



#1-Can employees of a temporary agency be enrolled as OJT Program Trainees?

The employee being submitted for enrollment as an OJT Program trainee must be an employee of the Prime Contractor or the Subcontractor and must be listed on the certified electronic payrolls in AASHTOWare. The temporary agency employee can become a trainee once the individual becomes an employee of the Contractor.

#2-Why cannot general Laborers be enrolled as trainees?

The LADOTD Supplemental Specifications-OJT states that...*It is intended that training under these supplemental specifications be in crafts directly related to highway construction. Therefore, training in classifications such as...unskilled or common laborer will not be approved.* The trainee should receive training and become somewhat proficient in specific highway construction crafts.

#3-Some projects do not include the Davis-Bacon Wages. Can we enroll trainees on these projects?

Projects that do not have Davis-Bacon Wages cannot enroll trainees. The trainees' wage rates are monitored throughout the trainings. Without the Davis-Bacon Wages being stipulated, the wage rates cannot be monitored, as required by the OJT Program requirements.

#4-Must we keep paying the trainee wages on non-DOTD projects to the trainees?

The Davis-Bacon wages requirements are stipulated, contract by contract. The trainee wage rates start at lower rates than the Journeyman rates. At the beginning of the training, the trainee receives 60% of the skilled wage rate, and progresses to 90% at the completion of the training. The non-DOTD projects' minimum wage rates are driven by the corresponding contract requirements. However, it is desired that the trainees continue to receive the appropriate Davis-Bacon wage rates to ensure retention.

OJT Program Contacts

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