

AB 235 Fact Sheet

California has a long-standing commitment to supporting the apprenticeship training model and leads the nation in promoting and funding apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship initiatives.

A focus in recent years has been the development of new, non-traditional programs. To this end, the state has invested \$15 million annually beginning in 2015-16 to promote the creation of new apprenticeship programs in industry sectors such as healthcare, advanced manufacturing and IT.

At the same time, apprenticeship in the building and construction trades remains the backbone of the apprenticeship system. As the economy has rebounded and the state has made historic investments in infrastructure, there remains a steady demand for skilled and trained workers to enter construction careers.

Also, pre-apprenticeship is increasingly recognized as a strategy to promote access and level the playing field for women and disadvantaged populations to compete for spots in state-certified apprenticeship programs. Yet the state currently has no statutory authority to regulate and approve pre-apprenticeship, leading to varying degrees of quality and the potential for predatory programs.

AB 235 modifies the apprenticeship approval process in a way that supports apprenticeship expansion in California, ensuring quality and program integrity, while promoting flexibility, transparency and access.

AB 235 amends the Labor Code to authorize a two-pronged process for the approval of apprenticeship programs, maintaining the current process for the trades and firefighting, and establishing a separate path for programs in newly emerging areas of apprenticeship. This change will ensure the ability of the existing California Apprenticeship Council (CAC) to maintain its primary focus, while creating flexibility for Division of Apprenticeship Standards to support the development of new programs outside of the trades. In addition, the Division would also be authorized to create standards, approve and support pre-apprenticeship programs that have a legitimate and visible connection to a state-registered apprenticeship program.

- 1. Reinforce the California Apprenticeship Council (CAC):** The CAC would retain its focus and regulatory authority over apprenticeship in the building and construction trades and firefighting industry and be responsible solely for apprenticeship in those sectors. Approval and oversight of all other apprenticeship would be the responsibility of the Chief of the Division of Apprenticeship Standards, with guidance from a new advisory body.
- 2. Create the Interagency Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (IACA):** The new IACA would focus on increasing the number of registered apprenticeship programs in non-building trades and non-firefighting industries, providing guidance and input on apprenticeship programs in emerging sectors. The IACA's members would come from the various Labor & Workforce Development Agency departments, the Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and Department of Education, as well as from non-building trades industry and labor representatives. These apprenticeship programs would have to meet similar minimum standards for training and on-the-job instruction as in the construction trades, yet the metrics for assessment would be adaptable based on the type of industry.
- 3. Establish Pre-Apprenticeship Authority:** A pre-apprenticeship approval process would be created in the Labor Code to formally recognize those pre-apprentice programs which meet specified standards and can demonstrate a legitimate and visible pathway from pre-apprenticeship to apprenticeship.
- 4. Make Conforming and Updating Changes:** Other Labor and Education Code changes as needed to affect the above and update where necessary.

