LWDB Resource Guidebook

Version 2.0
March 25, 2021

Table of Contents

BACKGROUND

The Scaling Apprenticeship Through Sector-Based Strategies grant, dubbed the Tech Quest Apprenticeship (TQA) Program, is a Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (DOLETA) H-1B funded program designed to support sector-based approaches to expanding apprenticeships on a national scale in key industry sectors. H-1B Skills Training Grants fund projects that provide training and related activities to workers to assist them in gaining the skills and competencies needed to obtain or upgrade employment in high-growth industries or economic sectors. These grants are supported by user fees paid by employers seeking high skilled foreign workers under the H-1B visa program. The goal of the training grant is to prepare Americans for high skill jobs, reducing the dependence on foreign labor. The program is authorized under the American Competitiveness and Workforce Improvement Act of 1998, Section 414(c), as amended.

The overarching goals of this grant are threefold:

(1) to accelerate the expansion of apprenticeships to new industry sectors reliant on H-1B visas,
(2) to promote the large-scale expansion of apprenticeships across the nation, and
(3) to increase apprenticeship opportunities for all Americans.

The Tech Quest Apprenticeship Consortium, led by Clark University as lead Institution of Higher Education in a consortium with other Institutions of Higher Learning, Public Consulting Group (PCG), private sector IT and IT related businesses, local workforce development boards (LWDB), and other national stakeholders have partnered to meet these goals. The TQ Consortium selected IT and IT-related industries (NAICS Code 54) as the targeted sector for this program. Occupations in demand in this industry are primarily in the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Category 15 – Computer and Mathematical Operations. Funds from this grant will be used to provide H-1B related apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship information technology (IT) training to 5,000 participants.

PURPOSE

This guidebook is designed to help the Tech Quest Apprenticeship Consortium members and others implement the TQA program and help empower and train underemployed and unemployed individuals in the skills needed to become gainfully employed, self-employed, and/or advance within the IT industry sector. This guide outlines the policies and best practices for LWDB program staff serving employers and participants, from application and eligibility determination to job placement, case closure, and follow-up.

PROGRAM OPERATIONS

The TQA program is a customizable program making it simple for participants to navigate their career goals in each local area. All participating LWDBs operating the program have the ability to customize it to the region's specific needs. Having this ability will allow the program to best fit both the employer and worker needs and to target the IT occupations that are most in demand in the local region. All programs, however, are required to provide career development and placement services, including but not limited to:

▪ Outreach and marketing activities.

- Recruitment, eligibility determination, and enrollment of eligible participants.
- Career development / case management activities of enrolled participants, such as the administration of career assessment(s), career planning, placement into pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs (including related instruction and on-the-job training), maintain documentation of activities and follow up services, etc.
- Maintenance of all participant data tracking in the reporting systems.
- Tracking enrollment, training, completion, credential(s), job placement, and other related information captured in the TQA approved systems for reporting purposes.
- Collaboration with the Tech Quest Apprenticeship Consortium, IHEs, and business partners in the design of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs.
- Engagement of the local business community to participate in and support the goals of the program, adopt apprenticeship standards, and become a host OJT worksite employing and training program participants.

Participant Recruitment

Local areas may use any allowable methods for recruitment of eligible participants including all traditional media such as public service announcements, radio and print ads, social media, newsletters, flyers, brochures and posters (see Marketing and Branding chapter for standards). As all workforce partners operate the local workforce development board career center activities for their respective regions, all are engaged with multiple programs for getting unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers back to work which provide an arena for recruitment for TQA. Consequently, regions are encouraged to utilize their current caseloads as a source for potential participants.

All participants are to be pre-screened by the career center staff to ensure that individuals possess the minimum criteria to benefit from the program's career development experience, training opportunities, and benefit the employers with whom they will be matched. Since the TQA program is targeting IT occupations as its employment and training industry sector, LWDBs should focus on the recruitment of individuals most interested in receiving training in IT or IT related occupations that will allow participants to gain the skills and competencies required to enter middle and high-skilled jobs.

Additionally, it is highly encouraged to include underrepresented populations in your recruitment strategies, such as inclusion of minorities, women, ex-offenders, veterans, military spouses, transitioning service members, and other related populations identified at the local level.

Priority of Service

Please note that the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288) requires LWDBs to provide priority service to veterans and spouses of certain veterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services in any job training program directly funded, in whole or in part, by the DOL. In circumstances where a grant recipient must choose between two qualified candidates for a service, one of whom is a veteran or eligible spouse, the veterans priority of service provisions require that the grant recipient give the veteran or eligible spouse priority of service by first providing him or her that service. Please refer to 20 CFR part 1010 and ETA's Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 10-09 (issued November 10, 2009) for regulations regarding implementation of this priority of service.

Application Process

Interested persons will be invited to apply for the Tech Quest Apprenticeship (TQA) program. Preliminary information will be provided in each Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) as part of their normal outreach activities. Those that wish to apply will follow local practices such as registering in their local labor exchange (or similar) system, uploading a current resume, completing the application and any LWDB required assessments.

LWDBs may utilize local program application forms (paper-based or electronic) provided it collects all required H-1B PIRL participant data elements (e.g., race, ethnicity, DOB, educational background, employment status, etc.). This participant data will be required for collection and data entry into the TQA Data Reporting System (described in further detail below). Should a local application be utilized, the LWDB will be required to upload a copy of the application to the TQA Data Reporting System as supporting documentation used to collect applicants' information.

LWDBs also have the option of using the TQA Data Reporting System's secure self-registration process (online application). Participants are provided a unique link to each LWDBs online application where they can enter their own information as well as scan and upload their own eligibility documents. Staff can then review their online application, review documents submitted, and determine eligibility in one, secure platform. Eligibility requirements are described next, and the process for utilizing the TQA Data Entry System's self-registration is described in its own comprehensive staff manual located [here](#).

Grievance Policy

An important element of TQA is its accessibility to everyone. Providers may not refuse to offer or provide services to individuals because of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief. Each LWDB is required to maintain and implement its own organization's grievance policy and procedures. Grievance procedures should address the process to address three types of allegations made by applicants or participants and comply with all applicable law and regulations (see citations below):

    (1) discrimination,
    (2) program related complaints, and
    (3) fraud/waste/abuse or other forms of criminal misconduct.

The policy and procedures should:

- inform participants and other interested parties of the process and their acknowledgement of receipt of this information.
- notify the complainant as soon as possible that the complaint was received, and that it will be handled in accordance with established procedures and timeframes.
- notify the complainant what additional information is needed (if applicable) and identify the next step in the process and when that will take place.
- provide a written decision issued and provided to both parties. This information must include the allegation and issues, a statement of the facts, conclusion drawn, and basis for the conclusion.

- inform the claimant in writing of the final decision and resolution of the complaint. The notice of final resolution must provide complete information on the process and timeframe for the complainant to appeal the decision if they disagree with it.
- provide an opportunity for informal resolution and hearing to be completed within 60 days of the date of filing and adhere to the 120 days deadline for appeals.

Clark University and/or PCG may request copies of grievance and complaint policies for review and/or monitoring purposes.

[Citations: Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Age Discrimination Act of 1975; The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; ADA Amendments Act of 2008; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; WIOA sec. 188; 2 CFR 200.300; 2 CFR 2900.4; 29 CFR Part 31; 29 CFR Part 32; 29 CFR Part 35; 29 CFR Part 37; 29 CFR Part 38; and 49 CFR Part 25]

Eligibility Requirements

Participants eligible for the TQA Program must meet the following characteristics:

- Participant must be 17 years of age or older, and not enrolled in secondary school within a local educational agency (e.g. high school); and
- Participant must be a U.S. citizen or be legally authorized to work in the United States; and
- Participant must be unemployed, underemployed, or an incumbent worker at the time of program enrollment (see employment status definitions below).

a.   Employment Status Definitions

Unemployed worker: is an individual who is without a job, is seeking employment, and is available to work.

Underemployed workers - may be determined by an individual who meets one of three criteria listed below:

1. Individuals who are not currently connected to a full-time job commensurate with the individual's level of education, skills, or wage and/or salary previously earned.

   Compare the current job to the individual's educational background, skills, and/or prior wages earned.

   If any of the answers to the three questions below are "no," then the individual meets the definition of underemployed. If all answers to the questions below are "yes," then the individual does not meet this specific definition of underemployed. Staff should then review criteria 2 and/or 3 below to determine if the individual meets the underemployed status definitions in either of those categories.

   (a) Level of education - Does the current job require the same level of education, or higher as what the individual currently possesses? For example, if an individual received a Bachelor of Science (BS) in computer science, but is currently working in a position that requires less than a BS degree then s/he may be deemed underemployed.

   (b) Level of skill - Does the current job require skills commensurate with the individual's? If an individual is currently employed in a position that requires a skill level less than the skill level the

individual has earned or previously used in a job then s/he may be deemed underemployed.

(c) Level of wage or salary - Does the current job provide equivalent or higher wages/salary as the previous job? If an individual is earning a wage that is less than or not equal to the wage or salary that individual received in previous jobs, s/he may be deemed underemployed.

2. Individuals who have obtained only episodic, short term, or part-time employment (includes seasonal positions, short-term temporary positions, or those that work less than 40 hours and categorized as part-time employees when they are seeking full-time and/or long-term employment).

3. Individuals who are lower skilled, and are without the necessary skills and competencies to be employed in middle and high skilled jobs. Generally, low skilled refers to individuals with a high school diploma or less and little to some work experience. Low skilled individuals seeking a career need training to prepare entry into identified occupations such as IT and related fields.

Incumbent workers: refers to individuals who are employed but need training to upgrade their skills to secure full-time employment, advance in their careers, or retain their current occupations. Incumbent workers are workers who typically are employed in lower-skilled, lower-wage, front line, and/or entry-level positions, and where attaining new skills and competencies could help advance them into middle- and high-skilled jobs with their current employer. The training provided to incumbent worker(s) is developed with the employer.

b. Eligibility Documentation Checklist

Eligibility must be verified from hard copy documentation. Documentation that meets verification purposes is listed on the [TQA Eligibility Verification Checklist](). If applicants do not meet eligibility requirements, they should be referred to alternate community sources for assistance as appropriate.

The TQA Eligibility Documentation Checklist must be used to determine eligibility for all prospective program participants. The checklist documents the participant's basic eligibility for TQA program services:

- Social Security Number*,
- Citizenship/Authorization to Work in United States,
- Age/Identity, and
- Employment Status

* The U.S. Department of Labor requires grantees to request participants' complete and accurate SSNs (with verification), however, participants cannot be denied services if they choose not to disclose their SSN. The principal purpose for collecting this information is to administer the program, including tracking and evaluating participant progress (DOL uses SSNs to track participants' progress, including cross referencing employment and wage information through state databases). Personal information (PII) is kept confidential and secure and will not be shared with any outside agencies other than those involved with the support or oversight of the TQA grant.

Each criterion has a section that notes the acceptable documentation that may be used to verify the applicant's status. Next to each section there is a place for the local workforce development board (LWDB)

program staff's initials and date of verification for that eligibility item. When staff obtains the necessary documentation, they will make a copy and date and initial the date of receipt on the eligibility checklist.

The applicant is not eligible until all required eligibility documentation is obtained and verified.

Exhibit A. below identifies how to fill out the sections. This exhibit shows the section for Age / Identity with the box next to **Birth Certificate** and the place next to **Date and Initial** filled in by the staff member. All of the sections on the eligibility checklist must be completed in this format.

Exhibit A

AGE / IDENTITY	Date and initial: MM 2/01/2020
☐ Driver's License	☐ Public Assistance/Social Service Records
☒ Birth Certificate	☐ Work Permit
☐ Baptismal Record	☐ Native American Tribal Document
☐ Hospital Record of Birth	☐ Federal, State or Local Government ID Card
☐ Passport	☐ DD-214, Report of Transfer or Discharge

At the bottom of the form is a place for the staff member to sign when all documentation has been received and verified. This is the date that the applicant is eligible for services and should match the eligibility date input into any applicable case management system(s) and those reported to stakeholders.

c.   Documentation Standards

Eligibility verification documentation and forms are the basis for providing grant-funded services to participants. As such the forms should be regarded as legal documents. Forms and verification documentation must not be predated or backdated. The actual date of receipt of all verification documentation should be written on each copy and signed/initialed by the appropriate staff member on both the verification document and the eligibility form.

If an error is made on the eligibility form, proper error correction procedures must be followed:

- ▪ Draw through the entry ensuring that the inaccurate information is still legible and initial and date the mark-out.
- ▪ Document the correct information.
- ▪ Do not obliterate or otherwise alter the original entry by blacking out with marker, using white out, writing over an entry, etc.

Additionally, once the participant has signed a form no changes should be made to the document. Any changes that need to be made to an original document after signature of the participant must also be initialed and dated by the participant.

Participant Co-Enrollment

The intent of co-enrollment is to meet the training and employment needs of program participants and provide as many participants as possible with comprehensive services that may not otherwise be available

under an individual grant or funding source. It is not the intent of the grant that TQA will fully fund a participant's training program and support service needs. Staff are encouraged to maximize the use of their resources and minimize the duplication of efforts through partnership building, system alignment, and leveraging of other Federal and non-Federal funding sources.

Leveraging resources may include co-enrolling participants in programs such as: the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA); Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); appropriated apprenticeship funds, such as State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) grants, Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) grants, and AACC Expanding Community College Apprenticeships (ECCA) activities as they are used to expand Registered Apprenticeships; other Federally funded programs; and non-Federal programs.

Staff may co-enroll TQA participants in non-H-1B grant programs provided this co-enrollment aligns with eligibility criteria and allowable activities for each grant and meets additional criteria. The U.S. Department of Labor, however, prohibits co-enrollment of participants into more than one H-1B job training program grant concurrently.

Assessment

After a participant has been determined to be eligible for TQA, s/he should receive an assessment of needs to allow career center staff to individualize a career pathway to employment. Assessments, both formal (i.e. standardized tests) and informal (i.e. interviews, questionnaire), may be utilized to assist both participants and staff in:

- Identifying an appropriate and feasible vocational goal;
- Identifying employment and/or training needs, such as pre-apprenticeships and/or readiness into a registered apprenticeship (RA) program;
- Matching vocational skills and abilities to specific occupations;
- Determining academic and work skills required for entrance into a training program.

During the initial assessment meeting, areas for discussion may include, but are not limited to, information about the participant's:

- Work history;
- Transferable skills;
- Educational background;
- Barriers such as lack of training/experience, transportation, childcare, legal, any other barriers that might be presented toward attaining or maintaining employment;
- Support service needs to overcome barriers and/or allow participation in program activities.

LWDBs should follow their local policies for administering assessments and will utilize any locally developed forms, standardized tools, and procedures. The goal is to collect enough information to be able to begin the planning process with the participant and identify appropriate program activities and service needs. Participants are to make informed decisions on H-1B eligible career tracks, types of training, training providers, and occupations based on information provided by the career center staff.

Once completed, staff will report the appropriate assessment service in the case management tracking

system (see Data Entry chapter below) using the actual start and end date(s)s of the activity. Staff should also follow their local practices with information regarding the participant's goals, readiness for employment, any barriers or support service needs identified, and/or any other pertinent information learned during the assessment process. Typically, assessments are conducted in the beginning of an individual's participation in the program, but may occur anytime as needed.

Career Planning

Based on an assessment of the participant's background and goals, the staff and participant will work together to develop an individualized plan for employment. The plan should be completed with the participant paying particular attention to identifying goals, activities, and anticipated start and end dates. LWDBs may use local forms and processes in developing and documenting career plans (e.g. Individual Employment Plans (IEPs), Individual Service Strategies (ISS)).

The plan should be updated throughout the individual's participation in the program as needs change, activities are completed and/or new ones assigned, etc. until all goals are attained and the case closes. The LWDB staff will record the activity code when the training plan is developed; then update as goals are met and closed when the plan has been completed.

Training

The Tech Quest Apprenticeship program's training design will focus on the nexus of IT industries with business analytics, business intelligence and data science occupations within those industries. Training will include pre-apprenticeship training, incumbent worker training, and related instruction (RI) and on-the-job training (OJT) with employers for registered apprenticeship training in IT occupations.

Participants' selection of training should be directly related to the individual's employment goals, and based on assessment outcomes and planning activities. Pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs will have their respective requirements for entry into the program(s) and should be considered in the assessment process. Further details regarding apprenticeships are described below.

For every year of the grant, LWDBs will be provided annual training budgets. At the end of each program year (or more frequently, if needed), any unspent funds from each LWDB will be combined into the new program year's pot of available training funds, and then reallocated and distributed to each LWDB. This is to help ensure that we are routinely monitoring funding levels and adequately managing the rate of expenditures.

Pre-Apprenticeship Programs

A pre-apprenticeship program consists of a set of strategies designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a registered apprenticeship program, and includes the following elements:

> (a) Training and curriculum that aligns with the skill needs of employers in the economy of the State or region involved;

> (b) Access to educational and career counseling and other supportive services, directly or indirectly;

(c) Hands-on, meaningful learning activities that are connected to education and training activities, such as exploring career options, and understanding how the skills acquired through coursework can be applied toward a future career;

(d) Opportunities to attain at least one industry-recognized credential; and

(e) A partnership with one or more registered apprenticeship programs that assists in placing individuals who complete the pre-apprenticeship program in a registered apprenticeship program.

Pre-apprenticeship services and programs are designed to prepare a diverse pool of individuals to enter and succeed in apprenticeship by providing career-specific training and readiness skills needed on the job. In addition to providing preparatory skills for future apprentices, pre-apprenticeship training can be an effective vehicle to streamline the recruitment process and help move job-ready apprentices into apprenticeship.

For participants engaged in a pre-apprenticeship program, record the activity as "Occupational Skills Training" and include the date the classroom or web-based training began and date it ends (once completed). If work experience or internships are part of a pre-apprenticeship program, that activity will also be recorded separately as "work experience" also documenting the start and end dates.

Registered Apprenticeship (RA) Programs

This section of the Guidebook is intended to provide a high-level overview of Registered Apprenticeships and the LWDBs role in serving interested and eligible participants and employers. The USDOL has extensive guides and resources available to anyone interested in learning more about registered apprenticeships, including the development and registration of new programs, accessing employer toolkits, forms, and sample materials (see Appendix A: Apprenticeship Resources for examples).

Apprenticeship is an employer-driven model that combines on-the-job learning with related classroom instruction that increases an apprentice's skill level and wages. It is essentially an "earn and learn" model where apprentices receive a paycheck from day one, so they earn wages while they learn on the job. One element that differentiates an apprenticeship program from other programs is this alignment and connectivity between academic learning and hands-on, practical on the job training. This dual study approach is unique and results in a deeper level of knowledge, skills and ability for the participant.

Benefits for workers include increased job skills, higher wages, attainment of industry recognized credentials, and/or career advancement. Likewise, employers benefit by having a highly skilled and more diverse workforce, increased work productivity, and reduced turnover costs to name a few.

Apprenticeship programs generally consist of **five core components**: direct business involvement, on-the-job training, related instruction, rewards for skill gains, and completion resulting in a national occupation credential.

Business Involvement

Employers are the foundation of every apprenticeship program and the skills needed by their workforce

are at the core. Businesses must play an active role in building the program and be involved in every step in designing the apprenticeship. The workforce planning process, tools and scope must be seen as a value-add for business leaders.

On-the-Job Training

Every program includes structured on-the-job training. Apprentices get hands-on training from an experienced mentor at the job site for typically not less than one year. On-the-job training is developed through mapping the skills and knowledge that the apprentice must learn over the course of the program in order to be fully proficient at the job. There may be some employers identified who will be reimbursed for a portion of the apprentices' wages to offset the cost of training. Those requirements and the reimbursement process will be described in greater detail in the OJT Earn and Learn section of this guide.

Related Instruction

Apprentices receive related instruction that complements on-the-job learning. This instruction delivers the technical, workforce, and academic competencies that apply to the job. It can be provided by a community college, a technical school, or an apprenticeship training school – or by the business itself. Education partners collaborate with businesses to develop the curriculum based on the skills and knowledge needed by apprentices. All partners work together to identify how to pay for the related instruction, including the cost to the employer and other funds that can be leveraged, including state apprenticeship funds and workforce funding streams.

Rewards for Skill Gains

Apprentices receive increases in pay as their skills and knowledge increase. Progressive wage increases are also built into apprenticeship program standards as apprentices attain skill benchmarks. The wage increases help reward and motivate apprentices as they advance through their training. In addition to wage increases, LWDBs will be required to monitor participants' progress throughout their learning experiences (while in both RI and OJT activities). This is described further in the Measurable Skill Gains section of this guidebook.

National Occupational Credential

Every graduate of a Registered Apprenticeship Program receives a nationally recognized credential. Combined with national credentials, apprenticeship programs are designed to ensure that apprentices master job-specific skills and have all the knowledge needed to be fully proficient for a specific occupation.

Types of Registered Apprenticeships
Apprenticeships can be designed to be <u>time-based, competency-based, or a hybrid</u> of the two. In time-based programs, apprentices complete a required number of hours in on-the-job training and related instruction. In competency-based programs, apprentices progress at their own pace and demonstrate competency in skills and knowledge through proficiency tests, but are not required to complete a specific number of hours. The hybrid approach uses a minimum and maximum range of hours to ensure apprentices can master and successfully apply skills required for the job.

No matter the type, however, a registered apprenticeship program will have specific standards identified and how each will be measured and achieved by the apprentice. These prescriptive standards, adopted in the *Work Process Schedule and Related Instruction Outline* for every apprenticeship program, will become the basis for each apprentice's training plan, and will be used to measure progress toward skill attainment. The *Work Process Schedule and Related Instruction Outline* (an example is linked) describes the type of apprenticeship program (e.g. time-based, competency based, or hybrid), the term of apprenticeship (e.g. 2,000 hours of OJT and 144 hours of related instruction), the ratio of apprentices to journeyworkers (e.g. 2 apprentices to 1 journeyworker), wage schedule (e.g. min $16.00/hour with wage increases defined), a work process schedule, and the related instruction outline.

Employer Engagement and Registered Apprenticeships

As knowledgeable frontline professionals, Business Services Representatives (BSRs) are well suited to share information about registered apprenticeship with employers in their region. The talent development model offers employers the opportunity to build a workforce trained to meet their specific skill needs. This means this type of employer outreach engagement can be incorporated into ongoing workforce operations and promotional activities used with employers seeking services through one-stop career centers. Through the apprenticeship model, employers can also hire apprentices, provide on-the-job training and skill development, while customizing the type and length of training to fit their business needs.

Ideally, apprenticeship can be a value-added strategy for businesses, supplementing traditional tools used by BSRs such as career fairs and recruitment support. A one-stop center may also already use on-the-job training, internships, and/or skills-based training as part of the array of services offered to businesses. BSRs can build on the trust they have developed with employers through these services to engage in a dialogue about apprenticeship.

- *Assessment* - Many local workforce systems involve employers in various levels of their service delivery to job seekers. For example, the assessment and workforce readiness programs offered to job seekers can serve as a foundation for skill-based training, pre-apprenticeship programs, and internships of all varieties. Involving employers in these services can open up conversations that lead to the establishment of apprenticeship programs.

- *Work-based Learning* - BSRs can help employers see the value of apprenticeship by presenting it as an effective work-based learning strategy. They can also offer support from the one-stop center for the apprenticeship program, such as recruiting apprentices, screening and referring quality candidates to employers, and supporting the program through training funds.

- *Incumbent Worker Training* - A focus on incumbent workers is another strategy for engaging employers around apprenticeship. There are many advantages to advancing incumbent workers through career pathways that exist within companies and the apprenticeship model can be an effective strategy to grow highly-skilled, loyal employees for business customers.

A BSR can also use an array of benefits to promote employer use of apprenticeship as a workforce strategy. Apprenticeship:

- Allows companies to be proactive in addressing their present and future skill needs - growing their own when the local pool of skilled workers is small.
- Provides employers with additional tools that complement their existing processes of recruitment and advancement to develop highly-trained workers in the midst of a challenging workforce environment.
- Can be used with both current (incumbent) employees and new workers.
- Allows companies to customize both the on-the-job training component and the related instruction to their specific needs.
- Provides a structured and sustainable way to create career pathways in the occupational areas that businesses will need in the future.

If the initial discussion indicates that the business may be appropriate for participation in an Apprenticeship program, it is necessary to gather and record detailed information that ensures that the business understands and can comply with the required administrative standards. The TQA support team (PCG and Clark University) will work with each LWDB to guide employers toward participation in pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs as needed or requested. Each state, however, may have different requirements depending on if programs must register with the State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) or Office of Apprenticeship (OA).

Employers must be engaged early in the process to ensure the program structure fits with their ability to offer pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities at the worksite. Training and education providers may even have to look at alternate class times, structures or locations in order to allow the employer to appropriately supervise and mentor all participants in the pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship, engage in on-the-job training, and provide opportunities for long-term sustainability after the conclusion of the grant.

The support team will assist in the following:

1. Assessing your current partners and developing your initial engaged partners database

2. Evaluating the opportunities with current partners to meet milestones and benchmarks during the grant period

3. Crafting the employer focused value proposition, and leveraging community assets

4. Calculating the return on investment for the employer engaged in apprenticeship

Establishing an employer-focused apprenticeship model that delivers opportunities to grow and sustain a talent pipeline is of paramount importance. The sense of urgency is apparent as employers emerge post-Covid-19 with a multitude of new workplace issues to navigate in order to maintain stability. As a result, this opportunity presents an ideal time for BSRs to present pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship as a talent solution and demonstrate the value of the public workforce system.

On-the-Job Training (OJT) Reimbursement
As funding permits, the Tech Quest Apprenticeship program allows for small employers (less than 50 employees) to be reimbursed a portion of the apprentice's wages to offset the costs of training and supervision. This section of the guidebook describes an overview of OJT reimbursement payments and

any limitations or restrictions for reimbursing employers for OJT activities.

On-the-Job Training is training by an employer that is provided to a paid participant while engaged in productive work in a job that:

1. provides knowledge or skills essential to the full adequate performance of the job as described in the registered apprenticeships' *Work Process Schedule and Related Instruction Outline* (click on link to view a sample document);
2. provides reimbursement to the employer of **up to 50 percent** of the wage rate of the participant for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training; and
3. is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained.

As described above for all Registered Apprenticeships, the participant is hired as a regular **employee** of the company that has agreed to provide the training. During the course of the OJT, the trainee must be treated as a regular employee and should receive wages and benefits at the same level as other employees working a similar length of time and doing the same type of work.

Grant funds may be used to reimburse a portion of the apprentice's wages (not to exceed 50%) in OJT for small employers (50 or fewer employees) only. For those businesses that have more than 50 employees, grant funds may not be used to reimburse OJT costs (but may be reported as matched funds – see Matched Funds section of this Guidebook).

For reimbursement, the OJT must be provided under a contract with an employer in the private non-profit or private sector. Under the OJT contract (contract template will be provided to LWDBs upon request or they may utilize their local contract and related forms), the employer pays wages to the apprentice and work-based training is provided for the apprentice in exchange for reimbursement to the employer. The OJT contract must not be with an employer who has previously exhibited a pattern of failing to provide participants with continued long-term employment with wages, benefits, and working conditions that are equal to those provided to regular employees who have worked a similar length of time and are doing the same type of work. Funds provided to employers for OJT must not be used to directly or indirectly assist, promote, or deter union organizing.

The following are additional restrictions for OJT activities reimbursed with TQA grant funds:

a) Participant placements may only occur in private for-profit and nonprofit sectors (i.e., the grant does not allow for public sector placements when using grant funds such as the reimbursement of participant wages).
b) No placement may be made in staffing agencies providing workers on a temporary basis to employers for which the agency receives compensation from an employer; and
c) The period of reimbursement should be of an adequate length to ensure the participant has acquired the technical skills needed for employment (defined in the RA standards), but no longer than 12 months. Grant funds utilized for OJT reimbursements may, however, be limited and require further restrictions on this cap due to budgetary or any other constraints (e.g., reimbursement period

reduced to three months). Individuals may not be co-enrolled in other ETA programs for the purpose of extending OJT beyond the time limitations. LWDBs may establish OJT contracts with an employer that will be longer than 12 months (or other time limit imposed if less than 12 months) for multiple participants; however, the reimbursement for each individual that participates in OJT cannot be longer than the established time limit.

d) Time and Attendance - The employer is required to maintain daily attendance records for each trainee employed under an OJT Contract. These records may be kept in any of several ways including payroll reports, sign-in/out sheets, time clocks, online timekeeping system, or any other tracking system that records hours worked. The actual form is less important than the existence of accurate and verifiable records that must be maintained and made available upon reasonable request. The employer must submit documentation that supports the number of hours worked by the trainee and the rate of pay for the time period for reimbursement purposes.

e) Holidays, Vacation and Sick Leave - Although the employer may pay trainees for holidays, vacation, and/or sick leave, the employer may not be reimbursed for this time. OJT rules require an employer to pay the trainee these "benefits" if they are provided to similarly situated employees. However, because the reimbursement is for training, it cannot be provided for time that is not spent in training. The employer is responsible for adjusting the reimbursable salary accordingly and will be verified by staff approving the OJT invoice with supporting documentation.

f) Overtime - An employer is generally required to pay the trainee at a rate of 1.5 times the normal hourly pay rate for hours worked in excess of 40 per week (Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division). The OJT Training Plan may not, however, calculate reimbursement to the employer at the overtime hourly pay rate and may not be reimbursed for overtime hours the participant worked and was paid. It is presumed to be the employer's choice to employ the trainee for more than 40 hours per week. Reimbursement at a higher pay rate would reduce the number of hours of reimbursable training for a given Training Plan obligation. Thus, to ensure that the trainee receives the agreed-upon training, the reimbursement rate is kept at the regular rate of pay. Overtime compensation to the apprentice will be the responsibility of the employer.

Measurable Skill Gains

Once participants are placed into pre-apprenticeships and registered apprenticeships, staff must monitor the individual's training progress and address any problems or concerns as they occur. The Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) indicator is used to measure the interim progress of participants who are enrolled in education or training services for a specific reporting period. MSG is a real-time measure, not an exit-based measure. MSG is defined as the percentage of participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, toward a credential or employment.

For performance accountability purposes, the measurable skill gains indicator calculates the number of participants who attain at least one type of gain during each period of participation within a given program year. Since this indicator is not exit-based, each unique program entry date (not exit date) triggers inclusion in the calculation. Participants will achieve a successful outcome in the indicator as long as they

attain one type of gain. LWDBs should report all measurable skill gains achieved by participants in a program year, although only one gain is required per participation period per program year to meet performance outcomes.

Although there are five types of MSGs reportable in WIOA, the TQA grant only requires we report measurable gains for two types, as described further below:

a. Training Milestones

Record the most recent date that the participant had a satisfactory or better progress report towards established milestones from an employer/training provider who is providing training (e.g., completion of on-the-job training (OJT), completion of one year of a registered apprenticeship program, etc.). Examples of documentation to support a training milestone may include:

- Documented progress report from an employer demonstrating the participant is achieving satisfactory progress in meeting the training objectives outlined by the employer; or that the individual has acquired new skills, or steps to completing an OJT.
- Documentation of successful completion of an OJT.
- A progress report from the apprenticeship documenting satisfactory progress on established milestones.
- Exam results demonstrating satisfactory progress on key competency areas required by the Apprenticeship.
- Increases in pay resulting from newly acquired skills or increased performance also can be used to document progress.

b. Skills Progression

Record the most recent date the participant successfully completed an exam that is required for a particular occupation, or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks such as knowledge-based exams. Examples of documentation to support a skills progression may include:

- Documentation of passage of a component exam in a Registered Apprenticeship program, employer-required knowledge-based exam, satisfactory attainment of an element on an industry or occupational competency-based assessment.
- Copy of exam results demonstrating a passing score for a knowledge-based or completion test necessary to obtain a credential for a particular occupation (e.g., CompTIA A+ Certification).

When the participant completes their training activity, staff will close the corresponding training activity code with the results of the training (e.g., successful or unsuccessful completion, dropped out of activity, etc.). Measurable skills gains (MSG) and credentials will be recorded when they are attained and documentation supporting the MSG and/or credential is collected.

Credentials

A credential is awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or occupational skills necessary to obtain employment or advance within an occupation. Credentials earned must be reported to include the date the credential was attained (i.e., date on the certificate) and the

type of credential as listed below:

- Secondary School Diploma/or Equivalency
- AA or AS Degree
- BA or BS Degree
- Occupational Licensure
- Occupational Certificate
- Occupational Certification
- Other recognized Diploma, Degree, or Certificate

Participants who receive a credential upon completion of the training must have a copy of the credential (e.g., certificate) retained in the individual's case file. The documentation verifies the credential information to support the attainment and reporting of outcomes.

LWDB staff may report up to three credentials for a participant that result from at least one training activity. If a participant earns more than three types of a credential or certificate for a participant as a result of the grant-funded training, replace the third training type and credential with data for the highest credential received. For example, if a training program includes three intermediate credentials leading to an associate's degree, when the participant achieves the associate's degree, the LWDB should replace data about the third intermediate credential (type of training service and date of credential) with data for the associate's degree. This ensures that the highest credential received is recorded for each participant.

Support Services
Supportive services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments, that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in program activities will be determined on an individualized basis according to each region's support services local policy and practices. Because support service funding is limited in the TQA program, it is highly encouraged for LWDBs to utilize other resources as appropriate to assist the participant (e.g., WIOA) and reserve TQA support service dollars for those individuals who have no other sources of funding (e.g., do not qualify for other funding streams such as WIOA). Support services provided to each individual must be recorded and reported as an activity, including start and end dates of the service, and retain documentation of need for the service in the participant's file.

For every year of the grant, each LWDB will be provided an annual support services budget.   At the end of each program year (or more frequently, if needed), any unspent funds from each LWDB will be combined into a support services pot of available funds remaining, and then reallocated and distributed to each LWDB. This is to help ensure that we are routinely monitoring funding levels and expenditure rates. LWDBs will issue support services to qualified individuals, as funding permits, according to local policies and procedures. LWDBs may subsequently submit monthly invoices to financeTQA@pcgus.com for reimbursement of TQA issued support service funds (see also Finance section below).

Specialized Participant Services
Specialized participant services are defined as group-based or one-on-one services that address specific barriers to employment, including the individual's ability to participate in program activities and training.

Such services may include, but are not limited to:

- financial counseling,
- behavioral health counseling,
- mentoring,
- assistance with relocation,
- job coaching,
- networking, and
- job search assistance.

LWDBs should deliver these services according to their local policies and procedures, record the activity or service provided, and report the service for DOL tracking and reporting purposes.

Tracking Case Management Activities

Program activities and services are to be entered and maintained in the approved case management tracking system. LWDB staff should maintain documentation and enter case notes supporting the activities or services provided. The case management activities available to program participants may vary from LWDB to LWDB, but generally includes employment services offered through the American Job Centers (AJC) network. Such case management services may include job search assistance, job referrals, resume development, interview skills and other soft skills development, assessment services, career exploration, employment plan development, training services, support services, and more.

The table below identifies many of the allowable and reportable activities available for open TQA cases.

Activity	When to Use
Assessment Services	Use and report this activity for assessments that are provided after a participant is determined eligible for TQA services. Assessment services may include informal assessments (e.g., interview of skills, background) or administration of formal standardized assessment tools (e.g., TABE, CASAS, CareerScope, etc.). Individuals receiving an assessment to determine eligibility for TQA but do not begin receiving TQA services, should NOT be considered participants. Therefore, they would not be included in this definition.
Service Plan Development	Use and report this case management activity when the regional workforce board develops an employment or training plan with the participant, such as an Individualized Employment Plan (IEP), Individual Service Strategy (ISS), Individualized Training Plan (ITP), or other related plan that outlines a participant's goal and service strategies (e.g., training, support services, etc.) needed to help the individual achieve their employment and training goals.
Pre-Apprenticeship Program **(Occupational Skills Training)**	For participants engaged in a pre-apprenticeship training program, record the activity as "Occupational Skills Training." Occupational skills training is typically used when the participant engages in an educational component such as those offered through classroom-based training or

	online instruction. If work experience or internships are part of a pre-apprenticeship program, that activity will also be recorded separately as described below.
Work Experience **(Pre-Apprenticeship Program Only)**	Work experience and internship activities should be provided and reported as a service when it is part of a pre-apprenticeship program. This will be reported as an additional activity from the occupational skills training reported above for pre-apprenticeships once the apprentice begins their work experience activity.
Registered Apprenticeship **(Related Instruction + OJT)**	Record this activity when the training is designed to provide or upgrade individuals with technical skills and information required to perform a specific job. The training must be established as a Registered Apprenticeship program recognized by USDOL, and incorporate both related instruction combined with on-the-job-training (OJT). OJT should not be reported as its own separate training type as the activity is included as part of a RA program. Likewise, a separate activity/service code is not necessary for the related instruction component of the RA.
Unregistered Apprenticeship	Record this activity if the participant entered into an unregistered apprenticeship program that meets the hallmarks/characteristics of high-quality apprenticeship programs. Use this activity, also, to identify participants who are engaged in an Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Program (IRAP).
Incumbent Worker Training	Participants determined eligible as incumbent workers and enrolled in apprenticeship training should be reported as recipients of "incumbent worker training."
Case Management Services	Used for the provision of a client-centered approach in the delivery of services, designed to (A) prepare and coordinate comprehensive employment plans, such as service strategies, for participants to ensure access to necessary workforce activities and supportive services; and (B) to provide job and career counseling during program participation. Case management services may also include group based or one-on-one services that address specific barriers such as (but not limited to) financial counseling, behavioral health, mentoring, job coaching, job search, networking, etc. This also includes the CE-Oh! Business and Entrepreneurship program. Detailed information about the CE-Oh! program, and how to record the service, can be found in the CE-Oh! guide [here]().
Supportive Services	Use this code for participants who receive supportive services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, or other support services as authorized by local policy, that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in program activities.

Employment Outcomes

Participants will have program outcomes entered as appropriate based on what they achieved at the end of the program. For Scaling Apprenticeships, an unemployed or underemployed participant is generally hired by an employer prior to enrolling in a registered apprenticeship program. LWDBs may report employment outcomes that occur before enrolling into the apprenticeship education/training program, after completing the apprenticeship education/training program or after exiting the program. LWDBs should report these employment placement outcomes in real-time or at least during the quarter in which the placement occurred. Incumbent workers will have employment outcomes identified as employment retention or advancement, as further described below.

There are two main categories to report employment placement outcomes:

(1) Entered employment for unemployed, underemployed, and low-skilled employed program participants.

(2) Employment retention or employment advancements for incumbent workers.

The table below shows the employment outcomes to be used for TQA program participants:

Outcome	When to Use
Entered Employment	This outcome is used for un/under employed participants who either 1) gain employment working for a business, or 2) become self-employed. Used for category 1 participants described above.
Entered Training-Related Employment	Report training related employment if employment placement is related to the training provided through the grant (the employment in which the individual entered uses a substantial portion of the skills taught in the training received by the individual). Used for category 1 participants described above.
Retained Employment	This outcome is used for incumbent workers (category 2 above) if they remained employed with the same employer in their current position.
Advanced to New Position	This outcome is used for incumbent workers (category 2 above) who have advanced to a new position that requires a higher level of skill, either with their current employer or a new employer. An incumbent worker may have up to three quarters to advance in their position, and LWDBs may report these outcomes at any time during the three quarters after training program completion. The employment outcome, however, should be reported in the actual reporting quarter in which the job advancement occurred.

Documentation verifying each participant's employment should include:

- Employer/Business Name
- Job Title
- Hourly Wage
- Start Date

The employment information above must be collected and reported for each participant attaining

employment, including those attained through an OJT arrangement. Sources of documentation may include, but are not limited to, a copy of a paystub, completed verification of employment form, print out from state/employment systems, a staff entered case note verifying employment information was obtained from a reputable source via phone, email, or other method, or via other acceptable means as determined by local policies and procedures. Verifying documentation must be retained in the participant's case file.

LWDBs may utilize incentive payments to collect employment outcomes (restricted to 1.5% of grant funds). Incentive payments allow for the provision of gift cards or other payments to participants for providing information on their employment status, for the purpose of increasing reported employment and retention outcomes to USDOL.

Closing Activities and Cases

Program activities and services should be closed at the time of completion or when the participant is no longer participating in the program. For many of the reportable activities, outcomes are required to identify if the participant completed the activity successfully (all requirements were met) or unsuccessfully (did not meet requirements and/or dropped out of activity or program).

LWDB case management staff should use all resources available through the regional career centers to assist the participant with achieving successful outcomes. This includes active job search for those participants looking for work, enrollment into other career center services, provision of support services and other support as needed. Case managers should refer to their regional policies and procedures for guidelines on providing services to jobseekers.

Ideally, cases will be closed when the participant has completed all training requirements and has successfully attained employment or upgraded skills to advance in their current position, and is fully self-sufficient and no longer in need of services. However, for various reasons there may be participants who do not achieve their goals and do not successfully complete the program. Those individuals will be included in the reporting outcomes unless they meet certain requirements excluding them from the performance measures. In these cases, there may be circumstances where individuals exit for other reasons that are beyond their control or otherwise requires them to leave the program. If a participant meets any of the criteria listed below, they may be excluded and will not adversely impact performance outcomes. Therefore, LWDBs should report when a participant leaves the program for any of the following reasons (known as global exclusions):

- If the participant exits the program because he or she has become incarcerated in a correctional institution or has become a resident of an institution or facility providing 24-hour support such as a hospital or treatment center during the course of receiving services as a participant.
- If the participant exits the program because of medical treatment and that treatment is expected to last longer than 90 days and precludes entry into unsubsidized employment or continued participation in the program.
- If the participant is deceased.
- If the participant exits the program because the participant is a member of the National Guard or other reserve military unit of the armed forces and is called to active duty for at least 90 days.

▪ If the participant is in the foster care system as defined in 45 CFR 1355.20(a), and exits the program because the participant has moved from the area as part of such a program or system (youth participants only).

DATA ENTRY: PARTICIPANT AND EMPLOYER SERVICES

The Tech Quest Apprenticeship (TQA) data reporting system provides a comprehensive view for collecting, tracking, and reporting participant and employer data. Key features include participant tracking from entry to post-exit, a self-registration option for applicants, employer relationship management, and program results reporting and analysis. The system allows us to understand our participants, including demographics, program enrollments, services provided, and results achieved.

Additionally, it can connect enrolled participants with employers who are hiring apprentices by posting and subsequently filling registered apprenticeship occupations. The participant and employer data entered into the system by the LWDBs will be used to report quarterly performance data to the U.S. Department of Labor. Therefore, it is imperative that data entry occurs timely and accurately.

The secure site at https://tqaclark.agsprime.net/ will be accessible to authorized LWDB staff members. Each staff member will be provided his or her own login credentials which should not be shared with anyone else.

The TQA Data Entry and Reporting Guidebook provides LWDB operational staff with instructions for recording program activities and services provided to both participants and employers. Staff can access the complete guide here.

DATA TRACKING

Scaling Apprenticeship Through Sector-Based Strategies (SA) grantees are required, as outlined in the grant's Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) and grant award, to collect participant level data on all individuals served using grant funds and to submit quarterly performance progress reports to the United States Department of Labor's, Employment and Training Administration (USDOL/ETA) to comply with the reporting and record keeping requirements of the grant.

Grantees are required to submit quarterly progress reports each quarter through the end of the grants period of performance. Submissions consist of two parts each quarter: (1) a Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) generated through a comma-separate values (csv) data file upload of all participants served by the grant to date (cumulative, from the start of the grant program); and (2) a Quarterly Narrative Report (QNR) containing updates on the implementation and progress specified in each grant's Statement of Work (SOW).

To achieve this, participant information reported by the LWDBs will be collected, aggregated, analyzed, and reported to USDOL by the grant's lead entity, Clark University, with support from its administrative entity, Public Consulting Group (PCG). This means that the LWDBs will need to maintain and report timely and accurate data/information for each participant served, ideally in real-time (as services are provided, when a participant begins/ends training, when employment is obtained and verified, etc.), but no later

than 15 calendar days after the end of the reporting quarter (see table below for due dates). Each QPR and QNR will be completed and submitted by the lead entities, Clark University and PCG.

Quarterly Progress Reporting Deadline:

Quarter End Date	LWDB Participant Data Entry Due Date	QPR and QNR Due Date	Report Activities Occurring Between
March 31	April 15	May 15	January 1 – March 31
June 30	July 15	August 14	April 1 – June 30
September 30	October 15	November 14	July 1 – September 30
December 31	January 15	February 14	October 1 – December 31

Each Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) will capture and summarize information and data on all program participants including demographics, employment status at program participation, program services and training activities, and program outcomes (i.e., training outcomes, employment outcomes, WIOA primary indicators of performance). The data file used to generate the QPR will include 89 Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) data elements. PIRL data elements are the required pieces of information that must be reported for each participant served in the program.

Three WIOA primary indicators of performance will be tracked by USDOL using state UI/employment databases against participants' social security numbers provided. These three measures include: Entered Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit, Entered Employment 4th Quarter After Exit, and Median Earnings. The following represents a sample QPR generated by USDOL's online reporting system, Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS), once all individual participant level data has been uploaded and validated in the system.

OMB Control Number: 1205-0521
Expiration Date: 06-30-2021
Date of Report: ETA-9173-H1B

PY 20xx Qtr x Performance Report for H-1B

Time Period: (Choose Only One)	☐ Rolling 4 Quarters	☐ Current Quarter	☐ Grant to Date
REPORTING PERIOD COVERED:		mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy	

GRANT OVERVIEW			
Grant Number:	Grantee Name:	Grant Type:	

Performance Items	Total
A. SUMMARY INFORMATION (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)	
1. Total Exiters (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)	A-1
2. Total Participants Served (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)	A-2
3. New Participants Served (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)	A-3
B. PARTICIPANT SUMMARY INFORMATION (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)	
Sex — 1a. Male	B-1a
1b. Female	B-1b
Ethnicity, Race — 2a. Hispanic/Latino	B-2a
2b. American Indian or Alaskan Native	B-2b
2c. Asian	B-2c
2d. Black or African American	B-2d
2e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	B-2e
2f. White	B-2f
2g. More Than One Race	B-2g
Education Level — 3a. Secondary School Graduate or Equivalent	B-3a
3b. Completed 1 or More Years of Postsecondary Education	B-3b
3c. Postsecondary Certification, License, or Educational Certificate (Non-Degree)	B-3c
3d. Associate's Degree	B-3d
3e. Bachelor's Degree or Equivalent	B-3e
3f. Advanced Degree Beyond Bachelor's Degree	B-3f
Other Demographics — 4a. Youth and Young Adults, Ages 17-29	B-4a
4b. Individuals with a Disability	B-4b
4c. Individuals with Limited English Proficiency (English Language Learners)	B-4c
4d. Individuals with Criminal Records (Ex-Offenders)	B-4d
4e. Eligible Veterans	B-4e
4f. Low-Income Individuals	B-4f
4g. Individuals 55 years and Older	B-4g
C. WIOA PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE	
1. Employment Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)*	UI Match C-1
2. Employment Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)*	UI Match C-2
3. Median Earnings (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)*	UI Match C-3
4. Credential Rate (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)	C-4
5. Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)	C-5
D. EMPLOYMENT STATUS AT PARTICIPATION (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)	
1. Unemployed Individuals	D-1
2. Underemployed Worker	D-2
3. Long-Term Unemployed (27 or More Consecutive Weeks)	D-3
4. Incumbent Workers	D-4
5. Dislocated Workers	D-5
E. PROGRAM SERVICES AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)	
Participant Services — 1. Received Case Management Services	E-1
2. Received Assessment Services	E-2
3. Received Supportive Services	E-3
4. Received Specialized Participant Services	E-4
5. Participated in Paid Work Experience or Internship	E-5
Training Services — 6a. Began Receiving Education/Job Training Activities	E-6a
6b. Entered On-the-Job Training Activities	E-6b
6c. Entered in Incumbent Worker Training Activities	E-6c
6d. Participated in Registered Apprenticeship	E-6d
F. TRAINING PROGRAM OUTCOMES (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)	
1. Number Completed Education/Job Training Program Activities	F-1
1a. Number Completed On-the-Job Training Activities	F-1a
Credential Outcomes — 2. Completed Education/Job Training Program Activities and Obtained a Credential	F-2
3. Total Number of Credentials Received	F-3
G. **EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)**	
1. Entered Unsubsidized Employment	G-1
1a. Entered Unsubsidized Training-Related Employment	G-1a
2. Incumbent Workers that Retained Current Position	G-2
3. Incumbent Workers that Advanced into New Position	G-3
H. EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS	
1. Retention with the Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarter After Exit (Cohort Period: mm/dd/yyyy - mm/dd/yyyy)	H-1

The Quarterly Narrative Report (QNR) is a qualitative summary of grant activities that occurred during the reporting quarter, which includes a status update on program activities, as well as participant information that cannot be reported using quantitative data alone. The QNR consists of the following reporting elements (LWDBs may be asked to contribute information such as local best practices, success stories, employer engagement activities, etc. so that it may be included in the report to DOL):

- Summary of Grant Progress
- Progress of Grant Timeline
- Development and Implementation of Effective Practices and Program Model Strategies
- Status Update on Match and/or Leveraged Resources
- Strategic Partnership Activities
- Employer Engagement Strategies
- Significant Activities, Accomplishments and Success Stories
- Evidence and Evaluation
- Additional Information, including any technical assistance needs or barriers to address

GOALS AND METRICS

DOL asked Scaling Apprenticeship grantees to provide both yearly and cumulative targets for the H-1B real-time outcome measures, which are specifically tailored for Scaling Apprenticeship grants, as described below:

1. **Total apprentices served, including participants served in pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs;**
   a. This outcome measure is defined as the total number of all participants served (receiving a grant-funded service) in either pre-apprenticeships or apprenticeship programs.
   b. Figures provided for total participants served include all individuals who receive a grant-funded service, after they are determined eligible to be served by the program.
2. **Total apprentices who are hired by an employer and enrolled in an apprenticeship education/training program;**
   a. This outcome measure is defined as the total number of participants that become apprentices in a Registered Apprenticeship Program or an unregistered apprenticeship.
   b. An apprentice is either first hired, or currently employed, by an employer and enrolled in an apprenticeship education/training program.
3. **Total apprentices who complete an apprenticeship education/training program;**
   a. This outcome measure is defined as the total number of participants who enter and complete an apprenticeship education/training program.
   b. Program completion for a participant is defined as having earned all the formal award units needed towards the degree, certificate, or certification that was the goal of their enrollment or has met another program-specific definition of successful completion.
   c. A program's education/training activities may be one training or a series of courses or activities. For H-1B grants, "training completion" is when a participant has completed all the intended grant-funded training provided to the individual during the grant period of performance.

4. **Total apprentices who complete an apprenticeship education/training program and receive an industry-recognized degree or credential;**
     a. This outcome measure is defined as the total number of participants who enter and complete an apprenticeship education/training program and receive an industry-recognized degree or credential.
     b. This outcome measure is an unduplicated count of participants who complete an apprenticeship and receive at least one industry-recognized degree or credential.
5. **Total number of unemployed and underemployed apprentices who complete an apprenticeship education/training program and maintain their employment status with a current or new employer;**
     a. This outcome measure refers to participants, whose employment status at program entry is either an unemployed or underemployed worker, who complete their apprenticeship education/training program and maintain the employment into which they were hired as an apprentice with their current employer, or a new employer. This outcome measure can also include other workers who do not fall into these categories, such as employed workers, who complete an apprenticeship education/training program and maintain the employment into which they were hired as an apprentice with a current or new employer.
     b. This outcome measure is intended to count the total number of apprentices that complete their training programs and either maintain the job they entered when they began training or obtain new employment after program completion, in alignment with the H-1B Real Time performance measures. Because apprentices are hired at the time of enrollment in an apprenticeship program, that employment outcome is reported in this outcome measure if the apprentice completes the program and maintains that position (or is hired somewhere else).
     c. Incumbent workers are not included in this outcome measure.
6. **Total number of incumbent worker apprentices who complete an apprenticeship education/training program and advance into a new position;**
     a. This outcome measure refers to those participants, whose employment status at program entry is an incumbent worker, who complete an apprenticeship education/training program and advance to a new position with their current employer or with a new employer.
7. **The average hourly wage of apprentices at completion of the apprenticeship education/training program.**
     a. Grantees provided an average hourly wage calculation of apprentices at program completion as part of the target outcomes identified in their SOW. However, grantees will not be required to report this data in their Quarterly Progress Reports. Instead, DOL will track the WIOA primary indicator of performance "Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter after Exit" using wage data obtained via CRIS on behalf of grantees.

The table below represents the overall TQA grant goals, and identifies the performance metric with targeted goals for each year of the grant. The LWDBs will each be responsible for reporting individual participant information and outcomes, while Clark University, in partnership with Public Consulting Group

(PCG), will be responsible for gathering and reporting the data to USDOL. Collectively, our goal is to meet or exceed the grant's goals listed below. Each LWDB will have their local goals identified in their respective Notice of Funds Awarded (NFA) document.

A.	Apprenticeship Employment & Training Apprenticeship Performance Outcomes		
1	Total Apprentices served in pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeship programs	Year 1: 125 Year 2: 1600 Year 3: 1700 Year 4: 1575	Total: 5,000
2	Total Apprentices that are hired by an employer and enrolled in an apprenticeship education/training program	Year 1: 0 Year 2: 225 Year 3: 350 Year 4: 325	Total: 900
3	Total apprentices who complete an apprenticeship education/training program	Year 1: 0 Year 2: 80 Year 3: 280 Year 4: 360	Total: 720
4	Total apprentices who complete an apprenticeship education/training program and receive a degree or other credential	Year 1: 0 Year 2: 80 Year 3: 280 Year 4: 360	Total: 720
5	Total number of unemployed and underemployed apprentices prior to enrollment who complete an apprenticeship education/training program and maintain their employment status with a current or new employer.	Year 1: 0 Year 2: 60 Year 3: 200 Year 4: 260	Total: 520
6	Total number of incumbent worker apprentices who complete an apprenticeship education/training program and advance into a new position	Year 1: 0 Year 2: 25 Year 3: 75 Year 4: 100	Total: 200
7	Average hourly wage of apprentices at completion of apprenticeship education/training program	Year 1: $0.00 Year 2: $15.00 Year 3: $16.00 Year 4: $17.00	Total: $16.00
B	Expanding Apprenticeship Program Outputs		
1	Total number of newly created apprenticeship programs, including Registered Apprenticeship program	Year 1: 0 Year 2: 1 Year 3: 2 Year 4: 2	Total: 5

| 2	Total number of employers engaged (i.e., those employers that adopt apprenticeship programs as a result of your grant project)	Year 1: 0 Year 2: 15 Year 3: 25 Year 4: 10	Total: 50
3	Total number of expanded apprenticeship programs, including Registered Apprenticeship (e.g., new industries, occupations or service areas, or increasing the number of apprentices registered)	Year 1: 0 Year 2: 5 Year 3: 5 Year 4: 0	Total: 10

MARKETING AND BRANDING

The TQA logo and branding system was developed to create a cohesive and distinct identity for the program across the nation. The logo is to be on all documents related to TQA and whenever there is a reference to the TQA program. The TQA icons, colors, and supporting visuals were created for use with marketing materials and to identify specific fields in presentations, or online. Usage of the TQA logo and icons are available to the LWDBs.

To assist with outreach and marketing efforts, a TQA website has been developed at: https://tqaclark.com/. The website provides information about the grant to the general public, potential employers, and interested jobseekers.
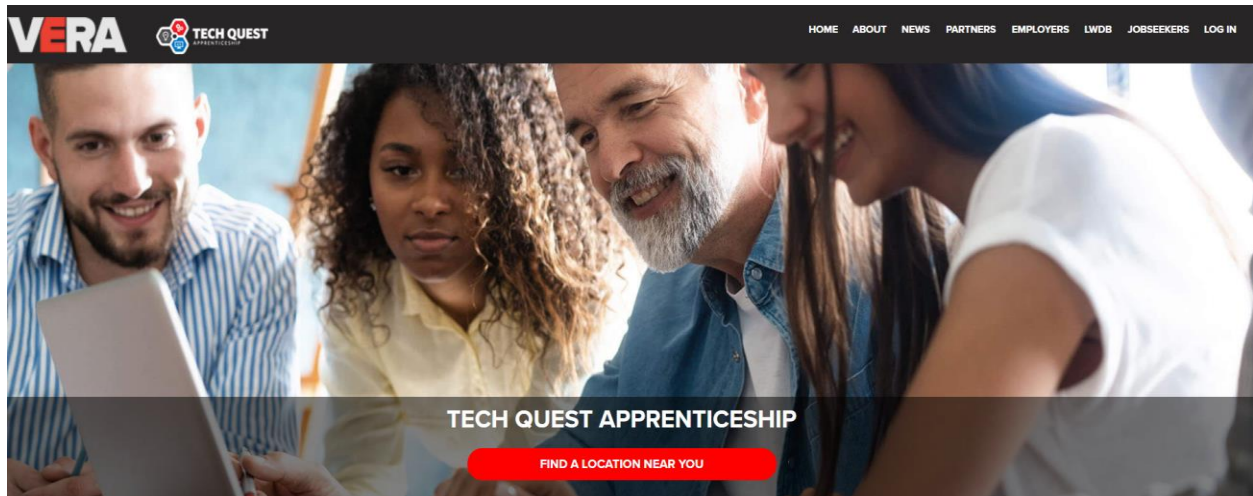
There is also a designated page for staff access only. Here, staff can find TQA resources such as updates to this guidebook, the TQA Data Reporting system guide, the TQA Eligibility Checklist, marketing materials such as flyers, brochures, etc. for employer outreach and participant outreach. Authorized staff members in each LWDB will be provided login credentials to access these resources. On the homepage of the TQA website, click on "Log In" in the upper right corner of the screen. Next, click on "LWDB" in the menu bar at the top of screen as shown:
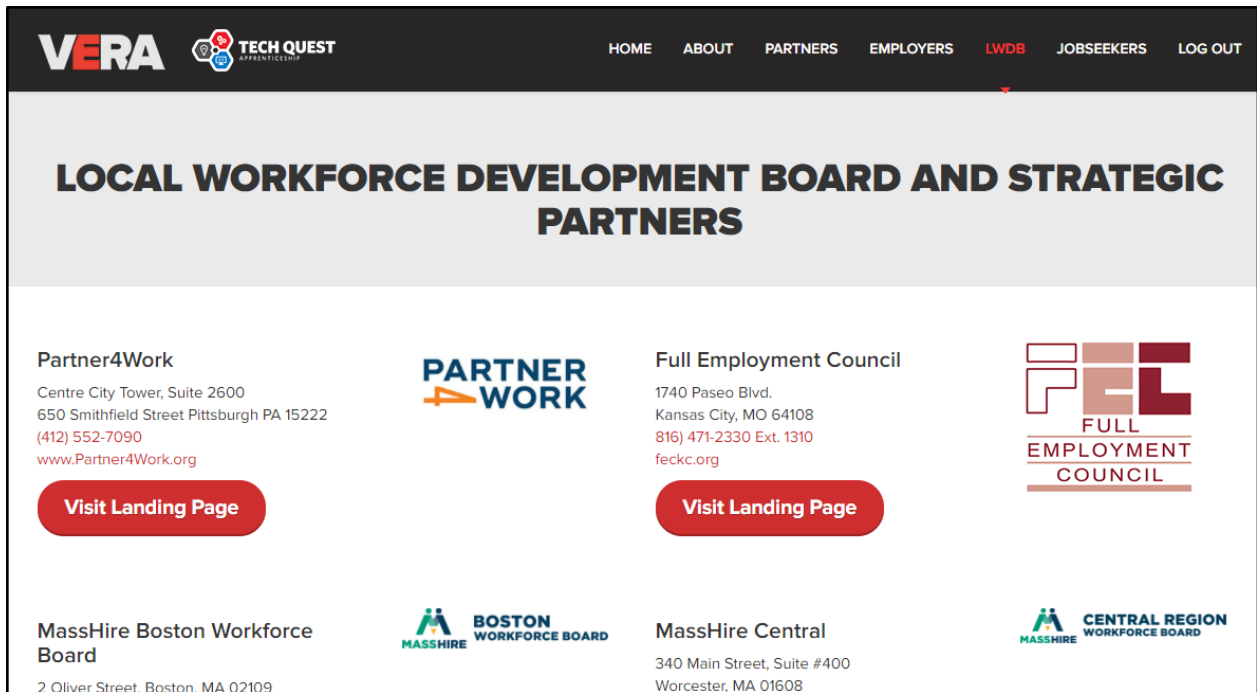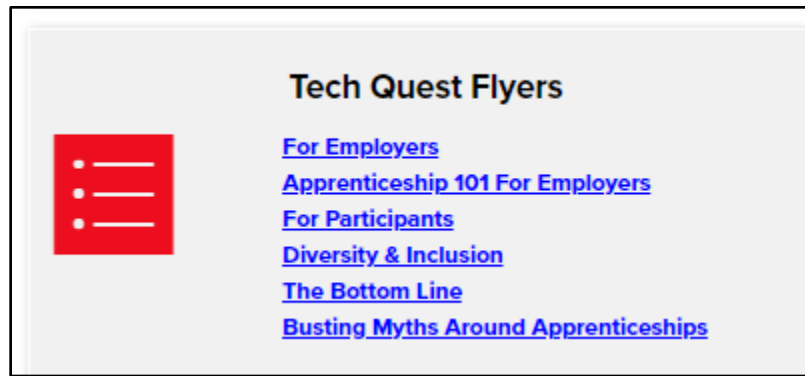
Scroll to the bottom of LWDB main page and click on "Staff Resource Materials," as shown:

On the Staff Resource Materials page, you will find guidebooks, forms, and marketing materials such as the TQA logos/fonts and social media templates.

Additionally, there are TQA outreach materials customized for each LWDB use. To access these materials, click on your region's "Visit Landing Page" (see screenshot further above). Once in your region's page, scroll down to "Section 02 Explore" where you will find these resources (check back periodically as materials may be updated and new collateral added for your use):

Tech Quest Flyers

For Employers
Apprenticeship 101 For Employers
For Participants
Diversity & Inclusion
The Bottom Line
Busting Myths Around Apprenticeships

It is a requirement that outreach materials comply with all required taglines such as equal opportunity notices specified in 29 CFR 38.34. The following is sample boilerplate language that may be used or adapted for use:

The Tech Quest Apprenticeship program is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

All marketing materials created by LWDBs and/or other partners are subject to review by the project lead entity.

FINANCE

TQA grant funds are to be drawn after they are expended so that costs are covered without the LWDBs maintaining material amounts of subaward funds on hand. Costs will be reimbursed to each LWDB in 30 days upon receipt of an approved invoice to Clark/PCG that includes the following information:

- LWDB name and contact information,
- Date of the invoice,
- The words: H1-B Scaling Apprenticeship Through Sector-Based Strategies Subaward, and
- The type and dollar amount of funds being requested for reimbursement with sufficient documentation to support the request.

All invoices and costs must be in alignment with the following:
1. All costs must be allowable, reasonable, and allocable in accordance with Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.402 through 2 CFR 200.411 and meet the general provisions for selected items of cost as defined by 2 CFR 200.420 through 2 CFR 200.475;
2. All invoices must be addressed to Clark University;
3. All invoices must have the appropriate backup documentation for payment processing;
4. Administrative costs must not exceed 10% of total costs;
5. Personnel and fringe costs are allowable with proper documentation;
6. Training and Support Services* costs incurred for direct participant expenses;

* Training and support services funds for TQA activities will be distributed between all LWDBs based on the needs of each region and funding availability. At the end of each program year, any unspent funds will be returned to the pool of training and support services dollars remaining and redistributed between

the regions for the following program year.

LWDBs should submit their invoices, monthly, via email to finance at financeTQA@pcgus.com to receive timely payments and reimbursement of expenditures.

MATCHING FUNDS

The USDOL requires cost sharing or matching funds for this program. Such funds may be in the form of cash or in-kind contribution and must be equal to 35 percent of the total Federal share of costs. DOL encourages applicants to leverage additional resources beyond the required match to supplement grant activities. Both matching and leveraged resources can come from a variety of sources, including, but not limited to: the private sector (e.g., businesses or industry associations); the investor community; the philanthropic community; and the non-profit sector (e.g., community organizations, faith-based organizations, or education and training institutions). Non-Federal, public sector funds (e.g., from States or local governments) may be used for matching funds, if necessary.

At minimum, LWDBs will be required to report matching resources defined below:

1. Salaries paid to incumbent workers while in the related instruction component of the apprenticeship training; and
2. OJT match for employers with more than 50 employees.

The Tech Quest Apprenticeship program's total matching fund's goals on these two resources are identified in the table below:

Match Description	Calculations	Total	Source of Funds
Salaries paid to incumbent workers while in related instruction	400 incumbent workers earning $18.00 per hour and receiving 80 hours of related instruction	$576,000	Employer/ private sector match
OJT match for employers with more than 50 employees	61 apprentices working in employer sites with more than 50 employees, will be in OJT at an average of $18.00 per hour for 640 hours	$702,720	Employer/ private sector match

The table above represents an estimated calculation in determining the targeted dollar amounts. LWDBs will report actual salaries/wages and hours for each individual that fits the match description. During the period of performance, the LWDBs must meet the supporting documentation requirements of matching as specified in 2 CFR 200.306. Additionally, the LWDB must apply the same supporting documentation requirement to tracking match expenditures as it would to grant expenditures (e.g., documentation of wage/salary such as payroll record, employer verification of hours, etc.).

LWDBs will be provided with the procedures for reporting matched funds. Sample input form:

Participant Name	Incumbent Worker or OJT	Hourly Wage	Total Hours*	Total Matched Funds	Reporting Period
Sally Sue	OJT	$21.00	240	$5,040	Jul 1 – Sept 30
Jane Doe	Incumbent Worker	$25.00	40	$1,000	Jul 1 – Sept 30
John Smith	Incumbent Worker	$18.00	60	$1,080	Jul 1 – Sept 30

* For incumbent workers report the total number of hours the worker was paid while in related instruction training activities. For unemployed/underemployed participants in an OJT activity not reimbursed by program funds (e.g. employers with over 50 employees), report the total number of OJT hours the participant completed.

DEFINITIONS

Apprentice: Any individual employed by the employer meeting the qualifications described in the standards of apprenticeship who has signed an apprenticeship agreement with the local sponsor providing for training and related instruction under these standards and who registers with the Registration Agency (e.g., USDOL OA or SAA).

Incumbent workers: This term refers to individuals who are employed but need training to upgrade their skills to secure full-time employment, advance in their careers, or retain their current occupations in H-1B occupations and industries. Incumbent workers are workers who typically are employed in lower-skilled, lower-wage, front-line, and/or entry-level positions, and where attaining new skills and competencies could help advance them into middle- and high-skilled jobs with their current employer. This definition includes newly hired workers and workers whose hours have been reduced and/or earnings have declined. The training provided to incumbent workers is developed with an employer or employer association.

Journeyworker: A worker who has attained a level of skills, abilities, and competencies recognized within an industry as mastery of the skills and competencies required for the occupation. The term may also refer to a mentor, technician, specialist, or other skilled worker who has documented sufficient skills and knowledge of an occupation.

On-the-Job Training (OJT): Tasks learned on-the-job in which the apprentice must become proficient before a completion certificate is awarded. The learning must be through structured, supervised work experience. Also known as on-the-job learning (OJL).

RAPIDS: acronym for Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information System, a federal system that provides for the automated collection, retention, updating, retrieval, and summarization of information related to apprentices and apprenticeship programs.

Related Instruction: An organized and systematic form of instruction designed to provide the apprentice with knowledge of the theoretical and technical subjects related to the apprentice's occupation. Such instruction may be given in a classroom, through occupational or industrial courses, or by correspondence courses of equivalent value, electronic media, or other forms of approved self-study.

Sponsor: Any person, association, committee, or organization that operates an apprenticeship program and in whose name the program is registered. That assumes the full responsibility for administration and

operation of the apprenticeship program.

Underemployed workers: This term refers to individuals who are not currently connected to a full-time job commensurate with the individual's level of education, skills, or wage and/or salary earned previously, or who have obtained only episodic, short-term, or part-time employment. To facilitate the inclusion of less-skilled and disadvantaged workers, applicants may serve individuals who are lower skilled, without the necessary skills and competencies to be in middle- and high- skilled jobs, as long as the program provides the skills necessary for individuals to enter a middle- to high-skilled job, or a job along a career pathway in H-1B industries or occupations, upon completion of an apprenticeship program. The apprenticeship program must include components that will assist those who do not have particular educational prerequisites and/or experience.

Unemployed workers: An unemployed worker is an individual who is without a job, is seeking employment, and is available to work.

USDOL ETA: acronym for United States Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration.

USDOL OA: acronym for United States Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship.

WIPS: acronym for Workforce Integrated Performance System, a USDOL electronic performance reporting system for the Department's employment and training grants.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Financial questions should be addressed to: Finance Manager via email at: financeTQA@pcgus.com. Grant policy and operational questions should be addressed to tqainquiry@pcgus.com.

APPENDIX A: APPRENTICESHIP RESOURCES

United States Department of Labor (USDOL) Apprenticeship Websites:

> Homepage | Apprenticeship.gov

> WorkforceGPS

Virtual Apprenticeship:

> Delivering Apprenticeships Virtually | Apprenticeship.gov

Apprenticeship Toolkits:

Apprenticeship Toolkit: Advancing Apprenticeship as a Workforce Strategy
> https://www.dol.gov/apprenticeship/toolkit.htm

Employer Engagement Toolkit: From Placement to Partners. Jobs for the Future, 2015.
> https://www.jff.org/resources/employer-engagement-toolkit-placement-partners/

The Federal Resources Playbook for Registered Apprenticeship
> https://www.doleta.gov/oa/federalresources/playbook.pdf

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act: Advancing Apprenticeship as a Workforce Strategy
> https://www.dol.gov/apprenticeship/docs/WIOA-RA-Fact-Sheet.pdf

USDOL ETA Training and Employment Notices (TENs) and Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGLs):

TEGL 13-16: Guidance on Registered Apprenticeship Provisions and Opportunities in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

TEGL 02-07: Leveraging Registered Apprenticeship as a Workforce Development Strategy for the Workforce Investment System

TEN 03-18: Creating Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Programs (IRAP) to Expand Opportunity in America

TEN 13-12: Defining a Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program and Related Tools and Resources

Labor Standards for the Registration of Apprenticeship Programs (Title 29, CFR Part 29)
> https://www.doleta.gov/oa/pdf/FinalRule29CFRPart29.pdf