

APPROVED

THE VIRGINIA APPRENTICESHIP COUNCIL MINUTES

The Virginia Apprenticeship Council met on Thursday, June 26, 2025

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dudley Harris, Chair
Patrick Dean
Dr. Latitia McCane
Dr. Jameo Pollock (Virtually)
Gary Pan
Grant Shmelzer
Doris Crouse-Mays
Michelle Ramaker
William Dunn
Bo Bundrick
Steve Masterson
Marjorie King, (Designee)

STAFF PRESENT:

Angela Kelly-Wiecek, Chief Deputy Commissioner
Faith Clayton, Registered Apprenticeship Region Supervisor
Miguel Granillo, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
James Edmunds, Program Support Technician
Tereza Edwards, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
Claudia Williams, RTI Education Specialist

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Chair Dudley Harris called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed the council members.

Angela Kelly-Wiecek recommended amending the agenda .to add Item 7a Review of Interim Reciprocity Requirements, add Item 7f overview of Work-Based Learning, and add Item 7g a presentation by Timothy Aylor for the Registered Apprenticeship Return on Investment Report. A motion was made by Gary Pan and seconded by Grant Shmelzer.

MEMORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Doris Crouse-Mays announced that the acknowledgment is for Darryl Kemp. Mr. Kemp was the business manager for the Operating Engineers (Local 147) as well as Chairman of the Virginia Apprenticeship Council from 2009 until 2018. Mr. Kemp passed away on February 22, 2025. Doris Crouse-Mays requested that the Virginia Apprenticeship Council send a letter of condolence to his family.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Laura Duckworth, University of Virginia (UVA) – Laura mentioned that she is very passionate about the intersection of Registered Apprenticeship and safety and health. She wanted to make sure this focus stays at the forefront of the mission of what the council members are doing. When looking at the sponsors and programs in Virginia, it is imperative that they have robust integrations of safety and health into their Registered Apprenticeship program. Ms. Duckworth cautioned the council that there is a low injury and illness in apprentices is reactive data. It is also data that relies on reporting and there is underreporting when it comes to injuries and illnesses across all industries. A solution Ms. Duckworth suggested by provided was formalizing a relationship with the consultative branch of the Department of Labor and Industry's (DOLI) Virginia Occupational Safety & Health Program (VOSH) division. This could be as simple as setting up new sponsor packets with information about VOSH and encouraging new sponsors to reach out to DOLI to find out more information about safety in the workplace. Lastly, Ms. Duckworth recommended that Virginia Works implement digital certificates. Digital certificates can help make completed apprentices more marketable while also decreasing lag time between completion and receiving of their certificates.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

March 2025 meeting minutes were approved through a motion by Patrick Dean and seconded by Grant Shmelzer.

OLD BUSINESS: Reciprocity Policy Update – Dr. Jameo Pollock

Dr. Jameo Pollock updated the Council on the Reciprocity Workgroup. The members of the workgroup include Dr. Jameo Pollock, Grant Shmelzer, William Dunn, David Johnson, Marjorie King, Michelle Ramaker, and Miguel Granillo. The workgroup spent some time tracking down the states that already have reciprocity agreements and are leading the charge. They were able to meet with the Deputy Director of Administration for the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors (Janna Lege).

Elimination of Formal Reciprocity Agreements

After meeting with them, one of the key findings was that they have eliminated the formal reciprocity agreement effective October 2024. They now have an application process that has streamlined the licensure process significantly. They also stated that exam reviews are no longer conducted, and applicants must simply pass the licensing exam required in their home state (meaning if you passed your required electrician exam in Virginia, that is enough documentation for the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors. It has not been a full year since this was implemented, but Louisiana has no issues reported to date and no known wage classification discrepancies. However, it is too early for a full assessment of long-term impacts.

Current Reciprocity Process

In Louisiana, reciprocity applications are still required for licensure, but they are not governed by formal agreements. A company can apply for licensure on behalf of all employees and then a supplemental application is used to add any new employees not listed in the original application.

Tracking and Metrics

Louisiana tracks whether applying companies already maintain reciprocity with other states. They are currently working with applications from 20 different states and the data they are tracking includes the number of participating companies and the types of occupations involved.

Rationale for Policy Change

Dr. Jameo Pollock inquired with Louisiana as to why they removed their reciprocity agreement, and they said it was due to the Welcome Home Act (Act No. 253, 2024 Regular Legislative Session). The main purpose of this act was to reduce the employment barriers and attract skilled professionals back to Louisiana. The key provision for this was universal recognition of occupational licenses across the state. Applicants must also now verify proof of residency and upon confirmation, a conditional license or certification may be issued while full licensure is pending.

Dr. Jameo Pollock also provided the council with a draft Reciprocity Agreement with a few questions for the council:

1. Should Virginia Works Commissioner be the primary point of contact for reciprocity agreements?
2. Is granting reciprocity within 45 days after receiving an appropriate amount of time?
 - a. Should it be longer or shorter?
 - b. Who should be involved in the approval process?
3. Should we create a review process?
 - a. How often should this process occur?
 - b. What does DPOR do with its reciprocity agreements?
 - i. Should we mirror what they already do?
4. Should we attach the minimum standards of apprenticeship to the reciprocity paperwork?

Dr. Pollock requests that the council members look at the draft reciprocity agreement with a critical eye and email any thoughts, comments, and/or concerns to Dr. Pollock.

NEW BUSINESS:

REPORT - Division of Registered Apprenticeship (Virginia Works):

Angela Kelly-Wiecek, Chief Deputy Commissioner of Virginia Works, gave the following report on behalf of Registered Apprenticeship:

Pre Apprenticeship Definition:

Pre-apprenticeship is a program or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals for entry into Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP) or other job opportunities. Pre-apprenticeships may last from a few weeks to a few months and may or may not include wages or stipend. Pre-apprenticeship programs have varied program elements; however, at the core, places an individual on a pathway to employability through an apprenticeship program registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the “National Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et. seq.) and includes the following elements:

1. **Approved Curriculum** to include training that is based on industry standards and approved by a RAP partner and align with the skill needs of employers in the economy of Virginia. For the purpose of providing greater diversity of training or continuity of employment, any apprentice agreement made under this article may, in the discretion of the Commissioner, be signed by a single employer or an association of employers.
2. **Simulated Experience** including 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.
3. **Facilitated Entry** represented as agreements in place with RAP sponsors that allow program participants to enter directly into a RAP.
4. **Supportive Services** including but not limited to referrals as may be appropriate to wrap-around services or supports to complete the program (e.g. childcare, transportation), directly or indirectly.
5. **Sustainability** through partnerships with community organizations.
6. **Compliant** with all state laws regulating the job activities of minors and meets performance objectives as defined and applied by the Department of Workforce Development and Advancement.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek also provided the council with the Interim Reciprocity Requirements. These requirements include:

- Name of the organization/entity and the details of their proposal
- The Registered Apprenticeship standards it currently follows in its own state
- List of occupations involved in the project
- List of apprentices involved in the project
- Acknowledgement of the labor laws in the Commonwealth of Virginia including but not limited to the following: journeyman to apprentice ratio and exceptions, compensation, and child labor laws

Review of Registered Apprenticeship segment at www.virginiaworks.gov :

Registered Apprenticeship has had some management updates. Our Registered Apprenticeship Field Staff as well as RA Field Managers (Diana Lyons and Faith Clayton) are reporting to the Director of Service Delivery, Dr. Rob Walker, for better integration. Registered Apprenticeship is also gradually transitioning the territories for the RA Field Managers to Registered Apprenticeship Consultants to allow them to focus more on management and growth strategy. Registered Apprenticeship has also brought on two new Registered Apprenticeship Consultant Apprentices. David Galloway is working out of the Cherokee Avenue office in Northern Virginia and Alice Weathers is working out of the Prince George Office.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek showed the council Registered Apprenticeship's new "RA Dashboard" (<https://virginiaworks.arch-apps.com/>). The pilot of the dashboard was shown to the council at the last meeting. Angela covered how to access the dashboard, navigate the dashboard, and talked about some of the information that is contained on the dashboard (Active Apprentices by Gender, Race, Education, Veteran Status, Disability Status, Ethnicity, Location, Occupation, etc.)

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek showed the council Registered Apprenticeship's new website (<https://viriniaworks.gov/registered-apprenticeship/>). Ms. Kelly-Wiecek showed the members the different tools on the website and how to navigate the website. She also mentioned that the website is currently tailored to the business and the employer as the sponsor is the primary focus of the program and the work that it does. This site also emphasizes the benefits of Registered Apprenticeship to the employers (reduced turnover, increased loyalty, increased company culture, product or process innovation, etc.)

New Apprenticeship Promotional Video:

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek informed the council that Registered Apprenticeship has four new promotion videos that speak to the program. The videos included:

- “Why Apprenticeship?” which talks about the benefits of the Registered Apprenticeship Program
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkHghcld4h0>
- “4 Simple Steps” which shows the simple steps for how to get registered as a sponsor
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0Nnkm9zwP4>
- “The Employer’s Perspective” which talks about Registered Apprenticeship from the point of view of a sponsor
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jsdf7-KPbiE>
- “The Apprentice’s Perspective” which talks about Registered Apprenticeship from the point of view of an apprentice.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=etsSBqWy43s>

New Apprenticeship Materials:

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek presented the council with two new brochures that have been made to distribute to current or potential apprentices and sponsors. The first brochure is called the “Registered Apprenticeship Works in Virginia – Apprentice Overview.” This covers information as to why Registered Apprenticeship is the right option for anyone looking to better their career as well as many important resources for apprentices. The second brochure is called “Registered Apprenticeship Works in Virginia – Employer Overview.” This covers why Registered Apprenticeship works for employers in Virginia as well as many of the benefits of joining the Registered Apprenticeship program.

Apprenticeship Accelerator Concept:

Clayton Duvall, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant, presented a PowerPoint about the Apprenticeship Accelerator.

The Apprenticeship Accelerator is a four-hour in-person workshop that walks through the 101 of Registered Apprenticeship, the Return on Investment (ROI) / value prop for employers, and key aspects of program design (works process, mentorship, program registration, RTI, etc.). Special guests – employer sponsors, intermediaries, and others who can speak to value & process. This best applies to groups of CHRO's, talent development specialists or program coordinators WITH subject matter experts in the room (critical) – along with RTI providers. The results from the first pilot were very successful. The Accelerator Workshop busted several Healthcare myths, aligned Partners with Registered Apprenticeship to realize pathways that can alleviate labor force deficits in the Healthcare industry in Virginia, expanded Industry engagement by connecting H-CAP and

Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association with various workforce partners, and attendees gained the knowledge and “building blocks” to stand-up their own Registered Apprenticeship program in three high demand occupations.

Registered Apprenticeship Bootcamp

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek presented some of the goals, highlights, and takeaways from the bootcamp. The goals of the Registered Apprenticeship bootcamp are to

1. Understand RA in the context of Virginia Works – as our core work-based learning team, as part of a broader Commonwealth-wide team, and as part of our Service Delivery team
2. Better understand the clients of Registered Apprenticeship
3. Establish Registered Apprenticeship’s practices and standards, and discuss, explore, and address the challenges and opportunities for our staff.

The boot camp lasted two and a half days here on site and included an opportunity to participate live in our agency’s strategic plan focus group, business panel discussion moderated by Kathy Byron and including guest from Carter Machinery, Southern Air, and IALR to understand what our some of our sponsors have to say about RA, how programs are run, and receive feedback on future success. The main takeaways from the bootcamp were:

1. Best practices discussion including the need to establish FAQs and share them broadly externally
2. Updating our Field Operations Manual for internal consistency and efficiency
3. A Registered Apprenticeship policy template
4. Ensuring a clear understanding of and participation in our referral process.

Registered Apprenticeship Return on Investment:

Timothy Aylor from Virginia Works gave the following presentation on Registered Apprenticeship Economic Impact and Return on Investment Analysis:

The purpose of using data to explore the Virginia Works Registered Apprenticeship program is to help move the Commonwealth toward its goal of being **THE TOP STATE FOR TALENT**. This research may help do this by exploring whether it is a ‘Win—Win—Win’ for the Commonwealth. This analysis focuses on the ‘win’ for taxpayers. Timothy explored the three different wins – it is a win for taxpayers, a win for Virginia Workers (especially young workers), and a win for the Virginia Employers.

Timothy presented the council with the Five Model Structure Questions:

- **Who** – The model describes registered Virginia apprenticeship program completers.
- **What** – The model measures what Registered Apprenticeship program completers would likely earn BUT FOR their apprenticeship.
- **When** – The model describes impacts in a given fiscal year. I chose 2023 because the economic impact modeling software uses 2023 data
- **Where** – The model describes effects in Virginia, but I also ran the same model for three LWDA regions (Hampton Roads, Capital, and Shenandoah Valley) to measure regional effects.
- **Why** –The ‘BUT FOR’ difference provides the ‘event’ needed for the economic impact software to calculate additional impacts (including tax effects). The estimated tax revenue

impacts were compared to the costs to administer the program. This relationship yielded the return-on-investment (ROI) estimate.

Timothy also presented the council with several takeaways from the Registered Apprenticeship Economic Impact and Return on Investment Study:

- The registered apprenticeship programs deliver significant expansions in access to living wages for participants across the Commonwealth. This was more evidence in areas with lower living wage levels and lower wages.
- Positive results are likely driven by two things: better wages than likely alternatives and the apprenticeships are often in industries that have high value-added production and extensive supply chains. These things boost contribution to GDP and spur on indirect spending effects in a region. The greater the participation in the ‘right’ industries, the greater the impact.
- Regional impacts are interesting. In less expensive regions, the comparison between RAPIDS wages and the local average wage is often more positive. The statewide average wage is higher than in rural areas. This difference is larger than the difference between RAPID wages among regions.
- Trade unions often provide better paying apprenticeships and are a large source of apprenticeships. Perhaps it’s a big part of their mission of passing on skills and maintaining a sufficient workforce in needed occupations. Basic takeaway is that starting and exiting wage exceeding Living Wage.
- Economic impact leaders were 238 Specialty Trades Contractors, 336 Transportation Equipment Manufacturing (Ship Building), and 813 Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations (Trade Unions, NGOs, etc.).
- Personal Care Services underperformed in economic impact, influenced by lower apprenticeship wages compared to the average and to the relatively small secondary and tertiary effects on the state economy in those services industries.

Mr. Aylor wrapped up his presentation by showing that Virginia’s economy is positively impacted by the Virginia Works Registered Apprenticeship Program. It has yielded +300% Return on Investment, Registered Apprenticeship is over 80% in in-demand occupations and provides \$53 million in total output (\$35 million in Gross Domestic Product (GDP)).

REPORTS:

Virginia Works:

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek, Chief Deputy Commissioner of Virginia Works, gave the following report on behalf of Virginia Works:

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek shared the seven different program buckets that are overseen by Virginia Works and their key duties.

1. Ecosystem Policy & Strategy

- a. Agency strategic plan
 - b. Policy and regulatory sprints this summer
 - c. Communications sprint
 - d. Updating Business Services catalogue
2. Partnerships & Engagement
 - a. Work-Based Learning lookbook and work in partnership with VCCS, VEDP, VDOE, and SCHEV
 - b. Employer-focused webinars with Chamber and VEDP
 - c. Preparing implementation plan for partnership with DOC
3. Service Delivery
 - a. Assessing, integrating, and modernizing service delivery as a whole
 - b. Implementing refresh of “Workforce Services Rep” role -> Career Navigator
4. Program and Grants Management
 - a. Monitoring Report – creating implementation plan to address findings
 - b. Hired Director of Program & Grants Management
5. Technology and Data
 - a. Virginia Workforce Connection and virginiaworks.gov enhancements
 - b. Additions to Virginia Has Jobs – small business content
 - c. Coming soon: Future-Ready Virginia upskilling microsites (AI, data science, career skills)
6. Outcomes Evaluation & Improvement
 - a. Commonwealth Metrics-goal setting and dashboard
 - b. Regional snapshots pilot
7. Learning & Development
 - a. Held additional leadership & Career Navigator training; built a new version of the “Career Navigator Field Guide”
 - b. Registered Apprenticeship and Rapid Response teams coming to Holland Tower

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek also provided the Council with an operational update on assessing and improving service delivery at Virginia Works. She covered three main questions:

1. What services does this agency deliver via the local workforce system?
 - a. Meaningful UI claim support & targeted coaching and workshops for unemployed Virginians
 - b. Basic career services (resume review, job search / matching, program referrals)
 - c. Employer support for Registered Apprenticeship programs, foreign labor, job orders
 - d. Veterans’ career navigation
 - e. Farmworker outreach
2. How do we deliver services today?
 - a. In-person – individual and group/workshop-based (Rapid Response)
 - b. Virtual appointments (RESEA)
 - c. Digital self-service – Virginia Workforce Connection, Virginia Has Jobs, webinars
3. What challenges do we have and how are we addressing them collaboratively?
 - a. Variable hours, staffing limitations, and different expectations about delivery cause inconsistent client experience: Conducting staffing analysis and time

studies; working with local areas via biweekly Service Delivery meeting to identify opportunities to standardize to improve client experience and ensure capacity for follow-through; working with VEC and local areas to ensure that client expectations around UI support are clear on websites, documentation, etc.

- b. Client intake processes vary between centers: Piloting “VOS Greeter” capability within VWC with two local areas; setting common expectations among our staff
- c. Need to modernize core career navigation and employer talent pipeline content: Leveraging new techniques / training staff to address broad range of needs and “meet clients where they are” (including via virtual events, webinars)

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek updated the Council with Virginia Works’ strategic plan using a set of questions to build the strategy for this agency and align it with the broader vision for Virginia’s workforce development ecosystem. The four questions are:

- 1. What are the aspirations for the ecosystem?
- 2. How does Virginia Works contribute?
- 3. What capabilities does Virginia Works bring?
- 4. How do we communicate our role?

Lastly, Ms. Kelly-Wiecek shared Virginia Works’ new mission statement with the council. The new statement is clear and to the point – “We connect people to careers and employers to skilled talent”

Department of Professional and Occupational Regulations (DPOR):

Marjorie King, Executive Director for DPOR, gave the following report to the Virginia Apprenticeship Council on behalf of DPOR:

Ms. King informed the Council that Brian Wolford is no longer with DPOR as he took a full-time classified position. The new agency director is Jeb Wilkinson.

The Department of Professional and Occupational Regulations (DPOR) regulations are being amended effective April 28th, 2025, to allow for the hearing aid specialist Apprenticeship. Regarding tattooing and body piercing Apprenticeship, DPOR is still overseeing this apprenticeship. DPOR is working closely with individuals at Virginia Works to hopefully transition that over.

Virginia Community College System (VCCS):

Dr. Jason M. Williams Sr., the Coordinator of Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning programs at VCCS in the Workforce and Academic Division provided the following written report to the council:

VHCC The Virginia Highlands Community College Workforce Financial Aid Program received a \$240,000 grant at the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission’s in May. The VHCC service area includes the City of Bristol, Washington County, and part of Smyth counties. The Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center Foundation received a \$252,000 grant for the development of a statewide apprenticeship expansion program. This funding will support

salary and benefits for a newly created Apprenticeship Coordinator position. The coordinator will work with businesses in the region to create employer sponsored apprenticeship opportunities. The grant would also support employer-related technical instruction costs up to \$2,700 per apprentice. These expenses include the classroom (in-person or virtual) component of the program, such as tuition, books, class fees and instructors.

VWCC/NRCC To support nursing education throughout Virginia, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) announced the recipients of the [Earn to Learn grant program](#). The funding will allow nursing students across the Commonwealth to earn a stipend while completing classes and hands-on clinical training at partnered clinical sites. Virginia Western Community College received \$439,521.22 in Earn to Learn grants, while New River Community College in Dublin received \$358,911.

MECC A regional partnership working to add solar panels to commercial buildings in the ME region aims to train young people in developing workforce skills in anticipation of increasing demand for renewable energy-focused jobs where skill sets and energy options are both changing. Virginia ranks eighth in the nation for installed solar capacity, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association. Approximately three dozen apprentices have signed up for the program. They work on a variety of solar projects, including on rooftops, carports, and ground-mounted installations. Apprentices get free equipment and a transportation subsidy, along with nine community college credits at Mountain Empire Community College, which provides classroom training before students step onto the job site.

Work-based Learning Tracking System (WTS) The WTS project is ending its discovery phase and transitioning into the user-stories and work groups. The WTS will align the VCCS to a one system approach by inputting, tracking, and the ability to create and share reports on the VCCS' WBL experiences and opportunities. **Department of Education (DOE):**

The Department of Education did not have a representative or designee present at the meeting.

Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI):

Gary Pan, Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Industry, gave the following report to the Virginia Apprenticeship Council on behalf of DOLI:

Commissioner Pan spoke on how great it has been to have such a strong relationship with the Department for Aging and Rehabilitation (DARS) and the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR).

Commissioner Pan wanted to share that he is the President of the National Association of Government Labor Officials. There is going to be a conference from September 28th to October 1st in Newport News and commissioner Pan would love the opportunity to highlight Registered Apprenticeship.

DOLI has been aware that the temperatures outside have been rising and informed the Council that the Heat Stress and Illness Prevention program has been working very hard to make sure that the workplace feels safe for both employees and employers.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next meeting Virginia Apprenticeship Council Meeting is on Thursday, September 25, 2025.

Chair Harris announced that all 2025 meetings will take place at Virginia Works HQ – Holland Tower – 2221 Edward Holland Dr, Suite 500, Richmond, VA 23230 from 10am – 12pm.

Chair Harris thanked the Council, and all in attendance.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm.

Dudley Harris, Chair
Nicole Overly, Commissioner and Secretary