

## **CHAPTER 3: COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW OF POLICY STRATEGIES**

### **Utilizing Earn and Learn Strategies**

“Earn and learn” policies are designed to facilitate skills attainment while also providing those participating in these programs with some form of compensated work experience, allowing them to “earn” income while they “learn” to do a job. Because many WIOA customers have barriers to employment and cannot afford to attend an education or training program full time, not only because of costs associated with training and education fees and tuition, but also because time spent in the classroom reduces time that can be spent earning income, “earn and learn” opportunities are an important strategy for success.

Under SB 342, (H.B. Jackson, Chapter 507, Statutes of 2015), the California State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act defines “earn and learn” policies as those training and education policies that combine “applied-learning in a workplace setting with compensation allowing workers or students to gain work experience and secure a wage as they develop skills and competencies directly relevant to the occupation or career for which they are preparing”. SB 342 points out that “earn and learn” programs typically bring together “classroom instruction with on-the-job training to combine both formal instruction and actual paid work experience.”

These programs include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

- apprenticeships;
- pre-apprenticeships;
- incumbent worker training,
- transitional and subsidized employment;
- paid internships and externships; and
- project-based compensated learning.

The principles of “earn and learn” are broad enough to allow for flexible program design. As such, programs may be customized to serve clients on the basis of their given level of skills and their particular educational or training needs. Transitional and subsidized employment programs, for example, can be used to provide work experience to those who have none, facilitating the hiring of individuals that employers might not otherwise employ. These programs may help get TANF recipients and other individuals with barriers to employment into the labor market, thereby helping establish work experience and an employment history that individuals need to build their resume.

Other “earn and learn” programs, like the incumbent worker training programs operated by ETP, may serve other purposes, such as keeping the state’s workforce productive and its businesses competitive. Similarly, pre-apprentice and apprenticeship programs can provide access to formal skills training opportunities in a variety of occupational fields that typically provide good wages and a middle class income. To

ensure the use of quality providers, California statute directs the State Board and Local Boards to ensure that any services funded by WIOA and directed to apprenticeable occupations, including pre-apprenticeship training, are conducted in coordination with one or more apprenticeship programs approved by DIR-DAS for the relevant occupation and geographic area.

In general, “earn and learn” programs can be flexibly designed and paired with other policy strategies, such as sector strategies and career pathways, to increase the skills and employability of the workforce while also aligning workforce, education, and training programs with labor market dynamics and employer needs.

In all industry sectors, it is the policy of the State Board that pre-apprenticeship training must connect directly to apprenticeship programs approved by the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS). This is required by state law if utilizing Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds (AB 554, T. Atkins, Chapter 499, Statutes of 2011). In the construction industry, it is the clear policy of the State Board that pre-apprenticeship training utilize the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3). This is also required in state statute if using WIOA funds (AB 2288, A. Burke, Chapter 692, Statutes of 2016).

The Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) is an apprenticeship readiness curriculum developed by North America’s Building Trades Unions (NABTU) National Training Directors. These programs provide a gateway for local residents, particularly those from underserved communities, including women, people of color and transitioning veterans, to gain access to the building trades’ state-approved and registered apprenticeship programs. The Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) is a standardized comprehensive pre-apprenticeship curriculum that delivers an industry-recognized credential. Job seekers get to explore different trades through these introductory programs and decide which one is the best fit. The building trades and construction contractors get a pool of qualified, diverse candidates who have received a minimum of 120 hours of rigorous instruction.

To become an MC3 training provider, an entity must contact a local building trades council in the entity’s area of operation. For approval as a new MC3 provider, a building trades council must submit an MC3 Implementation Plan to the NABTU for approval and for specific instructions on access to and use of the curriculum.