

Frequently Asked Questions - Families

The Apprenticeship:

What is modern youth apprenticeship?

Modern youth apprenticeship is an opportunity for high school students to learn in a professional setting while earning an hourly wage over the course of three years. CareerWise apprentices earn a paycheck and get a head start on their careers by working with 21st-century businesses while finishing high school. While they're working and learning valuable skills, they're also earning industry certifications and accessing debt-free college credit. The apprenticeship provides meaningful work experience and makes higher education more relevant, more accessible and more affordable for all young people.

Who are CityWorks DC and CareerWise DC?

CityWorks DC is a new non-profit venture incubated by CityBridge Education. Our work will include launching new and amplifying existing initiatives that reshape education-to-employment pathways in Washington, D.C. Our first initiative is CareerWise DC, a citywide, three-year youth apprenticeship program for D.C. high schoolers in high-wage, in-demand occupations, based on the CareerWise Colorado youth apprenticeship model.

What will my student learn through an apprenticeship?

Apprentices gain a real-world context for what they've learned in the classroom and develop strong leadership and professional skills. Not only will they learn what it is like to be in a professional environment and contribute to a company's success, they will also learn a set of professional competencies that are transferable to the rest of their career. These competencies are derived from O*NET, a database sponsored by the US Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration, and were refined through meetings with subject matter experts and industry and education leaders.

Why does the apprenticeship last three years?

CareerWise apprenticeships typically last three years to allow students time to become fully work-ready in their given career field. One of the primary outcomes is that it signals to both CareerWise employer partners and non-CareerWise employers that apprentices are ready to step into their careers as productive, full-time employees. The three years allow employer partners to invest the necessary resources and time into their apprentice's training while having the opportunity to experience their professional growth and increased productivity before the end of their apprenticeship.

Frequently Asked Questions - Families

What makes CareerWise DC a high-quality apprenticeship program?

CityWorks DC has partnered with K-12 partners and DC-area companies to build a robust apprenticeship program for students growing up in Washington, DC. By partnering with companies in high-growth industries, our local education agencies, and community-based organizations, we are building systems that will set every apprentice up for success. This includes providing apprentice supervisors with the training needed to help a high school student feel welcomed and supported in their new working environment, partnering with community-based organizations to make sure students are prepared to begin their apprenticeship, and working closely with our school partners to ensure our apprentices' academic success.

Can my student still participate in extracurricular activities? What about their after-school responsibilities?

In some cases, extracurricular activities may be accommodated. Students should be open about their time commitments during the interview process to ensure the employer is working with accurate information in regard to the apprentice's potential work schedule.

Apprentices typically go through a bit of an adjustment period at the start of the apprenticeship as they learn to balance school, their apprenticeship, and their after-school commitments. Apprentices will have to work closely with their families, school support network, and the CityWorks DC team to develop time-management and prioritization skills. CityWorks DC is here to help along the way and make sure students feel supported enough to succeed at school, home, and work.

Can apprentices get a full-time job at their apprenticeship site after completing the program?

While CityWorks DC cannot guarantee apprentices a full-time job after their apprenticeship, employers will be keeping an eye on their performance, skillset development, and their own job opening projections to potentially offer apprentices an opportunity to stay with their company after successfully completing their apprenticeship.

How will my student get to/from their apprenticeship site?

Apprentices should take into consideration commute times and public transportation options when looking at apprenticeship opportunities. While CityWorks DC and our employers do not provide transportation to/from the apprenticeship site, we can work with your student to identify feasible transportation options. When considering apprenticeship opportunities, we recommend students stick to the opportunities available within a 45-60 minute commute from their home or school.

Frequently Asked Questions - Families

Is there a financial cost to participating in an apprenticeship?

No. Applying for and participating in a CareerWise apprenticeship is cost-free to students and their families. However, we know things like transportation and professional clothing might require some spending on the front-end of the apprenticeship. This should not deter your student from participating in the program. We are happy to work with you and your student to identify low- or no-cost solutions.

Can my student's apprenticeship wages affect our family's participation in public assistance programs such as SNAP, TANF, etc.?

Your family's participation in public assistance programs may be impacted by your student's apprenticeship earnings. We encourage you to reach out to a public assistance program administrator to better understand how your student's apprenticeship may impact your family's public assistance eligibility.

Higher Education:

How does my student's participation in a CareerWise apprenticeship impact their college plans? Can they still attend a university outside of the DC region?

The CareerWise program is not an alternative to college; it is an options multiplier. If your student's post-high school plans include college, students can work closely with the CityWorks DC team, their employer, and their school counselor to create a post-secondary plan that aligns with their goals and their apprenticeship.

CareerWise apprenticeships will provide students with real-world experiences that will help ensure success regardless of where they go after the apprenticeship. While in a CareerWise apprenticeship, we ask that your student does not attend a school out of driving distance from their apprenticeship site. The apprenticeship will be a great addition to your student's resume and college applications, so upon completing an apprenticeship they will be well-positioned to the school of their choice—in or outside of the DC region.

Can my student earn college credits while in an apprenticeship?

CityWorks DC works with higher education and employer partners collaborate to recommend and fund college courses that are closely aligned with the competencies required at work to ensure the highest level of effective and relevant learning for apprentices both in the classroom and in training at work. These career-connected college courses are independent of the dual-enrollment college courses the apprentices may already be taking through their high school.

Frequently Asked Questions - Families

Are the debt-free college credits transferable to any higher-ed institution?

Credit transferability is negotiable with colleges and universities. Some of the career-connected credits earned during the apprenticeship will be naturally transferable, some of them may be negotiated with the institution, and others may be transferred due to an apprenticeship agreement that CityWorks DC has worked out with the college.

Can my student's apprenticeship wages affect their eligibility for the Federal Pell Grant, Mayor Scholar's Program, or the DC Tuition Assistance Grant?

Your student's eligibility for college financial aid may be impacted by their apprenticeship earnings. We encourage your student to reach out to their school's college counselor to better understand how their apprenticeship may impact their financial aid options.

How To Apply:

What are the minimum requirements to apply for an apprenticeship?

Apprenticeship is for any student that believes they could thrive in a meaningful applied-learning environment. A potential apprentice must be at least 16 years old by the time their apprenticeship begins (September 2020), willing to commit to their apprenticeship for its entire duration, and be on track to graduate high school. Some schools may have additional requirements, so students should check in with their school's CareerWise Coordinator and their counselor to confirm their eligibility.

How does a student apply? Are they hired by CareerWise or a business?

Students apply in the spring semester for apprenticeships that begin in the fall. The CareerWise DC website is where students will find all of the available positions for the year. While CityWorks DC supports students throughout the application process and their apprenticeship, the student will be hired as an apprentice directly by one of our employer partners.

Heads-up: it's competitive! Employers are interviewing multiple candidates and are hiring the best fit for their company. Just like any other hiring process, your student will want to bring their A-game and research the positions and companies, tailor their resume, and do some interview prep. CareerWise has online resources to help with those things and will hold workshops to support your student. Have your student visit www.careerwisedc.org/fall2020 to get started.

Frequently Asked Questions - Families

How can I support my student through the application process?

CareerWise's application and hiring process is designed to help students build the self-advocacy and self-accountability skills required in any job search. However, it is important that you help guide them through any questions and offer your own insight. We know that it can sometimes feel intimidating to seek help from non-family members, so we also ask that you encourage your student to utilize their resources: their teachers, school counselor, their school's CareerWise Coordinator, and the CityWorks DC team.

Here are some additional ways you can support your student during the application process:

- Ask your student what interests them about specific CareerWise employers or apprenticeship opportunities. This will help them identify which position to apply for and serves as great interview practice!
- If your student has a resume or is working on one with the CityWorks DC team, review it with them and make sure it highlights their abilities and experience.
- Encourage your student to sign up for a resume-writing or interview prep session with their CityWorks DC point of contact.
- Join your student at any virtual or in-person CareerWise family events and/or hiring events when possible.

Still have questions or prefer to chat with one of our team members?

You can email us at info@careerwisedc.org or call/text us at (202) 886-7688