



ABA Quick Tips

Data Systems and Utilization

The purpose of this **Quick Tip** is to offer ABA grantees promising strategies to meet federal data reporting requirements and track participant data internally. ABA grantees are required to collect data on apprentices and submit quarterly and yearly reports. Below are quick tips that offer an overview of federal data systems and strategies for utilizing data systems to support ABA grant management.

Quick Tips offer short, easy to use strategies, recommendations, and tips for Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) grantee consideration, exploration, and use. The tips and recommendations listed below draw from the expertise of ABA Technical Assistance Coaches, research, and grey literature (see references below).

Database Systems and Utilization

ABA grantees are required to report specific performance measures on a quarterly and annual basis utilizing the [Workforce Integrated Performance System \(WIPS\)](#). To upload data into WIPs, ensure files follow the appropriate [Participant Individual Record Layout \(PIRL\)](#) schema with the correct number and appropriate order of columns. The [Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Database System \(RAPIDS\)](#) is a system that serves as the primary platform for managing apprentices, occupations, job openings, etc. RAPIDS is not a case-management, grants-management, or reporting system, and is not used as a performance reporting tool. RAPs registered through the Office of Apprenticeship (OA) are required to use RAPIDS for the registration, oversight, and tracking of apprentices. RAPs registered through State Apprenticeship Agencies (SAAs) may use a separate system unique to that state or may also use RAPIDS.

ABA Grantees have the flexibility to use a data tracking system of their choosing to collect the data that is reported to WIPS and RAPIDS. Early in the grant proposal process, grantees should take into consideration the data tracking platform they would like to use internally and budget for it accordingly. Budgeting in advance for an effective data tracking system will alleviate the stress of unplanned programming costs down the road.

Federal Data Systems

Participant Individual Reporting Layout (PIRL)

The PIRL is a federally mandated reporting layout which provides a consistent framework for grantees and programs to meet federal reporting requirements. ABA grantees can use the 2021 full PIRL, State Integrated Reporting Schema (SIRS), or Apprenticeship schemas to determine the required columns and data elements needed to upload data into WIPS. The full PIRL has all 500+ data elements, most of which are not required for ABA reporting, which can be useful to grantees reporting on multiple programs. The SIRS has fewer data elements than the full PIRL and can be useful for state grantees. The Apprenticeship schema contains only the data elements required to be collected by apprenticeship grants. Visit the [PIRL Reporting Online Resource](#) and the [ABA Grants Performance Reporting Resources](#) to learn more about successfully preparing and submitting the PIRL.

Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS)

WIPS is the Department of Labor's reporting system that allows grantees to upload, certify, and submit data to generate Quarterly Performance Reports (QPRs) for submittal to DOL as outlined in the grant agreement reporting requirements. Grantees input participant-level data for all individuals provided grant-funded services into WIPS and at the end of each calendar year quarter they upload the QPR and Quarterly Narrative Report (QNR). PIRL Reports are submitted through WIPS which verifies that the submitted files are compliant and rejects non-compliant files, forcing grantees to address errors before report certification. WIPS will prepare an edit check report for non-compliant files that details all errors identified in the automated edit check. You can view the edit check report on WIPS under the "Edit Check Results" tab and export the entire list of errors into an Excel file. Grantees will need to repeat this process until the report file passes all edit checks. At that point, WIPS will generate a QPR and grantees can certify the report. Grantees will also use WIPS to submit and certify QNRs. A series of walkthrough "how to" videos is available to new users [here](#).



Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Database System (RAPIDS)

RAPIDS aka “the apprenticeship system” is utilized by two entities: the Department of Labor (DOL) Office of Apprenticeship (OA) and recognized States Apprenticeship Agencies (SAA). RAPIDS is used to collect data on apprentices and Registered Apprenticeship Programs. Both entities register and oversee RAPs by providing support such as technical assistance, answering questions about the apprenticeship model, guiding partners in each phase of the program, finding, and incorporating other funding sources, etc. A few key differences between OA and SAA:

Office of Apprenticeship	State Apprenticeship Agencies
- Registers and oversees programs in states without a recognized SAA. - Staff are federal employees of DOL - Uses standard documentation for registration process. - Utilizes RAPIDS for tracking and compliance.	- Agencies allowed to act on behalf of DOL to register and oversee RAPs in their recognized state. - Staff are state employees. - May use standard documentation but have flexibility to use state specific documentation for registration process. - May utilize RAPIDS but has flexibility to use a separate system unique to that state.

Internal Data Tracking Systems

Deciding which internal data tracking system to use is up to the discretion of each program. First, each program should determine their capacity and need prior to choosing an internal data tracking system. Take time to speak to other established RAPs to find out what has worked and not worked for them.

The [Strategic Partnerships and System Alignment RA TA Center – Safal Partners](#) is a good resource to utilize when choosing an internal data tracking system. They can connect you to related resources and partners to advise and guide.

Examples of data tracking systems that are currently being used by programs are:

- [AGS Prime](#)
- [ApprentiScope](#)
- Microsoft Excel
- [Salesforce](#)

References

- ApprenticeshipUSA, U.S. Department of Labor. *Apprenticeship System*. <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/about-us/apprenticeship-system>
- ApprenticeshipUSA, U.S. Department of Labor. *What is RAPIDS?*. <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/help/what-rapids>
- U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. *Workforce Performance System (WIPS)*. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/wips>
- Apprenticeship Building America, WorkforceGPS. *Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) Grants Performance Reporting Resources*. <https://aba.workforcegps.org/resources/2023/03/10/22/03/Performance-Reporting>
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- Association of Nonprofit Accountants & Finance Professionals (ANAFP). *Best Practices in Grants Management*. <https://www.anafp.org/Best-Practices-in-Grants-Management>
- Lewis, Sheila an Rosenberg, Evan. U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. *Office of Apprenticeship Performance Reporting Workshop: Focus on PIRL Data Elements*. March 2022. <https://aba.workforcegps.org/resources/2023/01/06/21/45/Office-of-Apprenticeship-Performance-Reporting-Workshop-Focus-on-PIRL-Data-Elements>
- U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. *Grantee Handbook: Effectively Managing Competitive Grants*. (2020). https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/grants/pdfs/ETA_Grantee_Handbook.pdf



Resources

Apprenticeship Data Alignment and Performance Technical Assistance Center (ADAP-TAC) – Center for State Governments

<https://web.csg.org/adap-tac/what-we-do/>

Apprenticeship Building American Grants Performance Reporting Resources – Workforce GPS

<https://aba.workforcegps.org/resources/2023/03/10/22/03/Performance-Reporting>

Introduction to the PIRL Reporting Online Resource – DOL

<https://d2leuf3vilid4d.cloudfront.net/MediaFiles/ws/performance-reporting/Folders/%7BCF3CA142-959D-4097-9A85-23EC51F0A399%7D/637166934710680199/index.html?rev=#/>

Performance Reporting FAQs (May 2022) – Office of Apprenticeship [https://d2leuf3vilid4d.cloudfront.net/-](https://d2leuf3vilid4d.cloudfront.net/-/media/2D518AA5C2D841BBA288AAB0DCC9C0F3.ashx?rev=BF1C857A191A0D9B029AC676C35CF157)

[/media/2D518AA5C2D841BBA288AAB0DCC9C0F3.ashx?rev=BF1C857A191A0D9B029AC676C35CF157](https://d2leuf3vilid4d.cloudfront.net/-/media/2D518AA5C2D841BBA288AAB0DCC9C0F3.ashx?rev=BF1C857A191A0D9B029AC676C35CF157)

WIPS User Walkthrough Videos – DOL <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/wips/walkthrough-videos>

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