



# **IRWA APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**



The Idaho Rural Water Association has dedicated time and resources to develop a robust and well-rounded apprenticeship program so apprentices can, through a systematic program of related instruction and on-the-job learning, become qualified System Operations Specialists.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **DO I HAVE TO TRAVEL TO THE IRWA OFFICE FOR CLASSES?**

Apprentices have the option to participate in scheduled classes virtually. Apprentices will enroll in cohorts beginning in January and July of each year. Participants will gather two days per year for training in Boise.

### **HOW MUCH DOES THE PROGRAM COST?**

Annual tuition is \$1,000 and is paid by the employer sponsor. Eligible communities may apply for financial support to include: tuition match, mentor wage reimbursement, and travel reimbursement. The employer is responsible for paying the apprentice's wages.

### **DO I HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN WATER AND WASTEWATER, OR CAN I DO BOTH?**

Apprentices are required to choose between either the water or the wastewater track. After completing one track, apprentices can do the other track.

### **CAN I GET CREDIT FOR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING?**

Yes. Previous experience and training must be approved by the Apprenticeship Training Committee.

### **WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE APPRENTICESHIP IS COMPLETED?**

Upon completion of the program, the apprentice will receive a nationally-recognized credential. The apprentice must take the appropriate licensing exam through DOPL to become a licensed Operations Specialist. Although it is not a requirement, most apprentices continue working for their employer sponsor after they complete the program.

### **WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE EMPLOYER SPONSOR?**

The employing utility acts as the employer sponsor. Prior to participating in the program, an employer participation agreement must be sent to IRWA for approval. The employer sponsor is required to provide appropriate training and supervision as well as maintain employment and on-the-job training records.

### **HOW DO I GET STARTED?**

To be considered as an employer sponsor, the utility must review the Standards of Apprenticeship and submit the Employer Participation Agreement to IRWA.

To apply as an apprentice, the individual must review the Standards of Apprenticeship and submit an application to IRWA.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

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