



**STATE TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (STEP)  
REQUEST FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS (RGA)  
APPENDICES**

## **STEP RGA Appendices**

These appendices form an integral part of the STEP Request for Grant Applications (RGA) and establish the required templates, definitions, and structured submission components applicants must use when preparing their application.

### **Purpose of the Appendices**

The appendices to the STEP Request for Grant Applications (RGA) provide the required templates, formats, definitions, and structured submission components applicants must use to prepare and submit a complete and compliant application.

These appendices establish application submission requirements and evaluation artifacts, including required templates and supporting tools used during the review and evaluation process. They are not intended to serve as instructional guidance.

Detailed application guidance, examples, scoring insights, and best practices are provided separately in the STEP Technical Assistance (TA) Guide.

Applicants are responsible for reviewing and using the required appendices when preparing their application. Failure to use the required templates or formats may result in the application being deemed non-responsive or receiving reduced evaluation scores, as applicable under the RGA.

## **Appendix A – Applicant Budget and Budget Narrative Template Instructions**

### **Purpose**

Appendix A establishes the required structure for the STEP budget and Budget Narrative and ensures fiscal transparency, cost allowability, cost reasonableness, and alignment with the proposed project design and performance scale.

The STEP budget is not simply a financial attachment. It is a structural representation of the proposed training model and must demonstrate that the requested funds support the enrollment, training activities, and participant services described in the application.

Applicants must demonstrate clear alignment between:

- Narrative responses provided in EGrAMS
- Training and credential information entered in EGrAMS
- The Budget Narrative (Appendix A template)
- The Participant Services 50% Validation Worksheet
- The program design projections provided in Appendix C – Performance Projection Table

Budgets that are inconsistent with program design, enrollment projections, training capacity, or employer demand may receive reduced evaluation scores or may be deemed non-responsive.

### **Required Appendix A Components**

Applicants must submit three required Appendix A components as part of the application.

#### **1. EGrAMS Budget**

Applicants must enter a complete and accurate budget in EGrAMS using the standardized budget categories.

The EGrAMS budget establishes the official financial request and must reconcile with all supporting documents submitted with the application.

#### **2. Appendix A – Budget Narrative Template**

Applicants must complete and upload the Appendix A Budget Narrative Template.

The Budget Narrative explains and justifies all requested costs and demonstrates alignment between:

- Project scale and projected enrollment
- Training design and staffing structure
- Employer demand and employment outcomes
- Budget allocations and projected program scale

The Budget Narrative must also include required alignment calculations, including:

- Cost per participant
- Total participant services expenditures
- Participant services percentage of the total budget

These calculations support the evaluation of cost reasonableness and the proportionality of program design.

#### **3. Appendix A – Participant Services 50% Validation Worksheet**

Applicants must complete and upload the Participant Services 50% Validation Workbook.

This worksheet verifies that the proposed budget satisfies the STEP Participant Services expenditure requirement. The worksheet automatically calculates:

- Total participant services expenditures
- Participant services percentage of the total budget
- Whether the proposed budget meets the minimum 50% participant services requirement

All totals must reconcile with both:

- the EGrAMS budget, and
- the Budget Narrative

Failure to submit the completed worksheet or failure to meet the minimum requirement may result in the application being deemed non-responsive.

### **Structural Budget Alignment Requirement**

*(Design-first approach)*

Applicants should develop the project design before completing the budget documents.

Budget entries should be based on the following design sequence:

1. **Define program scale**
  - projected enrollment
  - cohort structure or training capacity
2. **Confirm training model**
  - credential or occupational pathway
  - training duration and provider
3. **Confirm employer demand**
  - hiring commitments
  - employment pathway
4. **Complete Appendix C projections**
  - total enrollments
  - training completion rate
5. **Develop the budget**
  - tuition and training costs
  - staffing proportional to scale
  - participant services
6. **Complete the Participant Services 50% Validation Worksheet**

Completing the budget before confirming program scale and training capacity frequently results in inconsistent or unrealistic budget structures.

### **Participant Services Expenditure Requirement (50% Minimum)**

At least fifty percent (50%) of total STEP funds requested must be allocated to eligible Participant Services, as defined in Appendix D – Definitions and Key Terms.

Participant Services are direct costs that primarily benefit enrolled participants and support:

- Participation in training
- Training completion
- Credential attainment
- Employment placement
- Employment retention

Examples may include:

- Tuition and training costs
- Required certification or testing fees
- Tools, equipment, and work gear required for training
- Transportation or other supportive services necessary for participation

Administrative, indirect, recruitment, and general operational costs do not count toward the 50% requirement.

Applicants must clearly identify participant services costs in:

- The EGrAMS budget
- The Budget Narrative
- The Participant Services 50% Validation Worksheet

Failure to meet the 50% requirement at the time of application submission may result in the application being deemed non-responsive.

### **EGrAMS Budget Categories**

Applicants must structure budgets using the standardized EGrAMS categories, including:

- Personnel/fringe
- Travel
- Supplies
- Contractual services
- Supportive services
- Indirect costs
- Match / leveraged funds (if applicable)

Applicants should ensure that the allocation of costs across categories accurately reflects the program design and participant services described in the application.

### **Budget Narrative Requirements**

The Budget Narrative must explain and justify all requested costs and must include sufficient detail to allow reviewers to understand:

- Personnel roles and allocation of staff time
- Training provider costs and tuition structure
- Participant services and supportive services calculations
- Contractual services scope and procurement approach
- Travel purpose and cost basis
- Supplies and equipment used for training delivery
- Indirect cost methodology, if applicable
- Budget alignment with enrollment and training capacity

Line-item entries in EGrAMS alone are insufficient.

Applicants must clearly explain the purpose and calculation of each major cost category.

### **Budget Alignment Expectations**

Budgets must demonstrate proportional alignment between:

- Requested funding
- Projected enrollment

- Training capacity
- Employer hiring demand
- Participant services expenditures

Budget totals must reconcile across all application components, including:

- EGrAMS budget
- Budget Narrative
- Participant Services 50% Validation Worksheet
- Appendix C – Performance Projections

Failure to reconcile totals may result in scoring deductions or the application being deemed non-responsive.

## **Appendix B – Eligible Training & Credential List**

### **Purpose**

Appendix B identifies priority sectors, occupations, and credentials aligned with Alaska’s workforce needs and STEP statutory objectives under AS 23.15.620–652.

This appendix is intended to guide applicants in proposing training that supports high-demand occupations, industry-recognized credentials, and unsubsidized employment outcomes consistent with STEP program goals. Appendix B is provided for guidance and program alignment purposes and does not constitute an exclusive list of allowable occupations, training programs, or credentials.

Applicants are encouraged to propose training aligned with the priority sectors and credentials identified below. Training not listed may be proposed if adequately justified, as described in this appendix.

Training supported with STEP funds must be reasonably expected to lead to unsubsidized employment in occupations demonstrating employer demand.

### **Use of Appendix B and EGrAMS Requirements**

All proposed training programs and associated credentials must be entered in the EGrAMS Training & Credential section, which serves as the official record of the proposed training activities.

Training information entered in EGrAMS must be consistent with:

- Narrative responses provided in EGrAMS
- Proposed scope and activities described in the application
- Appendix A – Budget Narrative and Participant Services 50% Validation Worksheet
- Appendix C – Performance Projection Table

Proposed training that lacks documented employer demand, labor market justification, or a recognized credential pathway may be determined ineligible for funding consideration or may receive reduced evaluation scores under applicable evaluation criteria.

### **Training Not Listed in Appendix B**

Training not specifically identified in this appendix may be eligible if the applicant provides sufficient justification demonstrating:

1. Documented employer demand
2. Alignment with Alaska labor market data
3. A pathway to an industry-recognized, portable credential or skill leading to unsubsidized employment

Approval of non-listed training is not automatic and will be evaluated based on the strength of justification, alignment with labor market demand, and consistency with STEP statutory objectives.

### **National or Industry-Recognized Bodies (Definition)**

For purposes of this appendix, a national or industry-recognized body is an organization that:

Certifies occupational skills

Accredits training programs

Establishes widely recognized industry standards

Examples include:

- OSHA, CompTIA, AWS, NCCER
- State licensing boards (e.g., CDL, Nursing)

- Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors, including Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees (JATCs)
- Accrediting agencies (e.g., COE, ACCSC)

**Note:**

The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) identify approved training providers or programs but do not issue occupational credentials.

**Eligible Sectors, Occupations, and Credentials**

The table below identifies priority sectors, occupations, and credentials based on current and projected labor market demand in Alaska.

This list is not exhaustive.

Applicants may propose additional occupations or credentials if supported by employer-demand documentation, labor market justification, and alignment with STEP statutory and programmatic objectives.

Proposed training occupations should also be consistent with the enrollment and completion projections provided in Appendix C – Performance Projection Table.

Sector	Target Occupations / Job Families	Recognized Credentials / Certifications	Priority Notes
<b>Healthcare</b>	CNA, LPN, Medical Assistant, Behavioral Health Tech, Dental Assistant	CNA License, CPR/BLS, MA Cert, BHT Cert, Dental Assistant Cert	High rural need; employer co-investment is common
<b>Construction</b>	Laborer, Carpenter, Electrician, Plumber, HVAC Tech	NCCER, OSHA 10/30, Pre-Apprenticeship Certificates, HVAC Certification	Strong alignment with union pathways; pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship pathways encouraged
<b>Oil &amp; Gas</b>	Drill Rig Operator, Well Servicing Technician, Pipeline Maintenance, Roustabout	API Certifications, H2S, RigPass, Safeland, OSHA 10	Critical sector: credentials should align with employer onboarding and safety requirements
<b>Maritime</b>	Deckhand, Marine Maintenance, Vessel Crew	MMC, TWIC, First Aid/CPR	Required for seafood processing and shipping industries
<b>Transportation</b>	CDL Driver, Equipment Operator, Pilot Car, Aviation Mechanic	CDL-A/B, Flagging Certification, OSHA 10, FAA A&P	High placement potential; strong rural relevance
<b>IT / Cyber</b>	Technical Support, Network Administrator, Cybersecurity Analyst, Web Developer	CompTIA A+/Network+, Google IT, Cisco, AWS, Microsoft	Credentials should align with entry- or mid-level job opportunities in Alaska
<b>Natural Resources</b>	Mill Operator, Camp Support, Mine Laborer, Environmental Technician	MSHA, OSHA, Safeland, HAZWOPER	Aligns with mining, forestry, and resource extraction projects
<b>Education</b>	Preschool Aide, Classroom Assistant, Paraeducator	CDA, Parapro Assessment, Early Childhood Certification	Statewide early childhood demand across regions

<b>Hospitality &amp; Tourism</b>	Cook, Front Desk, Tour Guide, Housekeeping	ServSafe, Guest Service Gold, Food Worker Card	Seasonal employment is allowable; applicants should describe retention or career progression strategies.
<b>Office / Administrative</b>	Administrative Assistant, Receptionist, Records Clerk, Medical Office Assistant	Microsoft Office Certification, QuickBooks, Medical Billing Certification	Entry-level occupations often provide rural placement opportunities
<b>Behavioral Health / Human Services</b>	Peer Support Specialist, Recovery Coach, Community Health Aide	Peer Support Certification, Mental Health First Aid, CHA/P Certification	Supports critical rural and underserved populations
<b>Manufacturing / Fabrication</b>	Welder, CNC Operator, Machinist	AWS Welding, NIMS, NCCER Fabrication	Cross-sector demand supports apprenticeship and incumbent worker upskilling.
<b>Renewable Energy / Utilities</b>	Wind/Solar Technician, Energy Auditor, Line Worker	NABCEP, OSHA, Utility Line Certifications	Growing sector aligned with infrastructure and energy transition
<b>Public Safety</b>	Firefighter, EMT, Corrections Officer	Firefighter I/II, EMT-B, ICS 100/200	Requires documentation of placement or hiring intent
<b>Other</b>	Applicant-defined occupations	Applicant-identified credentials	Must be supported by employer demand, labor market data, and a clear pathway to unsubsidized employment

**Table Note**

Inclusion of an occupation or credential in this table does not guarantee funding approval. Applications are evaluated based on employer demand, program design, projected outcomes, and alignment with STEP statutory objectives.

## Appendix C – STEP Performance Indicators

### Purpose

This appendix establishes the performance framework applicable to the State Training and Employment Program (STEP) under AS 23.15.652 and 8 AAC 84, including statutory performance requirements and structured program design projections used during application review.

Applicants must complete and upload the STEP Performance Projection Table (Excel) as part of the application.

In the Appendix C spreadsheet, applicants are required to enter only two input values:

- Total New Enrollments
- Training Completion Rate

The spreadsheet automatically calculates projected training completions based on these entries.

Statutory performance indicators required under AS 23.15.652 and 8 AAC 84 are measured during program implementation and do not require projections at the application stage.

The Appendix C spreadsheet collects core program design projections used during application review to assess:

- Program scale
- Operational capacity
- Proportional alignment between enrollment, staffing, and training delivery
- Alignment with the proposed budget and training model

Final contractual performance benchmarks may be adjusted during post-award scope, funding, and performance alignment discussions and will be reflected in the executed Grant Agreement.

### Part I – Program Design Projections (Applicant Input)

Applicants must complete the required projection fields in the Appendix C spreadsheet.

These projections represent program design assumptions used for application review, not guaranteed outcomes.

Applicants are required to enter projections for the following indicators:

Performance Indicator	Definition
<b>Total New Enrollments</b>	Total number of eligible participants expected to enroll during the grant period
<b>Training Completion Rate</b>	Percentage of enrolled participants expected to complete the planned training program.

The Appendix C spreadsheet automatically calculates the projected number of participants who will complete training based on the enrollment and completion rates entered.

Applicants should base projections on:

- Program design and training model
- Instructional capacity and cohort structure
- Employer demand and industry conditions
- Organizational capacity and staffing
- Participant population characteristics

Completion projections should generally fall within the expected benchmark range below, unless justified by program design.

Indicator	Expected Benchmark Range
Training Completion Rate	75% – 90%

Program design features, historical program performance, or other documented factors should support completion rates significantly above this range.

Documentation and reporting compliance expectations are reflected in the Appendix C spreadsheet and will be monitored through AlaskaJobs reporting and program oversight.

## Part II – Statutory Performance Metrics (Measured During Implementation)

The following performance metrics are required by AS 23.15.652 and 8 AAC 84 and apply to all STEP-funded training programs.

These statutory indicators are measured during grant implementation, not projected during the application process.

Failure to meet statutory minimum standards during program implementation may result in corrective action, funding conditions, or future funding limitations, as permitted by law.

Performance Indicator	Definition	Minimum Standard	Citation
Employment Retention Rate	Percentage of participants who are employed one year after program completion	≥ 50%	8 AAC 84.100(a)(1)
Wage Gain	Median wage of participants 7–12 months after completion exceeds the median wage 6 months before program entry	≥ \$1,000 annual increase	8 AAC 84.100(a)(2)
Training Relevance to Employment	Percentage of employed participants reporting that their job is related or somewhat related to the training received	≥ 50%	8 AAC 84.100(a)(3)
Participant Satisfaction	Percentage of participants reporting satisfaction with program quality within 60 days of completion	≥ 65%	8 AAC 84.100(a)(4); 8 AAC 84.110
Employer Satisfaction	Percentage of employers satisfied with the services provided to STEP participants whom they hired	≥ 60%	8 AAC 84.100(a)(5)

## Year 1 Implementation and Calibration of AWIB-Defined Metrics

The revised STEP framework introduces structured program design projections to strengthen evaluation, alignment, and accountability.

Because this is the first full implementation year of these enhanced program design modeling expectations, AWIB will apply a structured calibration approach during the initial implementation period.

For the initial implementation year:

- Projections will be evaluated for realism and proportional alignment during application review
- Final contractual benchmarks may be refined during post-award scope and funding alignment discussions

- Performance results will be interpreted in context, including sector, geography, participant population, and program design
- AWIB may prioritize technical assistance and performance improvement strategies before imposing funding conditions related to projection assumptions

This calibration approach does not waive or modify statutory performance requirements under AS 23.15.652 or 8 AAC 84.

It supports a measured transition to a more structured performance framework while maintaining strong stewardship of state funds.

AWIB may refine projection expectations in future funding cycles based on:

- Statewide performance data
- Sector trends
- Implementation experience

### **Use of Performance Projections**

Performance projections submitted in Appendix C are used to:

- Assess program feasibility and comparative alignment during application review
- Evaluate proportional scale relative to funding and operational capacity
- Support post-award scope and performance alignment discussions
- Inform monitoring, technical assistance, and program oversight
- Inform corrective action or future funding decisions when applicable

Submission of projections does not automatically establish final contractual performance benchmarks.

Final performance targets will be incorporated into the executed Grant Agreement following award, including any necessary scope, funding, or proportional adjustments.

## APPENDIX D – DEFINITIONS AND KEY TERMS

### Purpose

Appendix D provides official definitions used throughout the STEP RGA, the appendices, the grant agreement, and the monitoring process.

The definitions below apply throughout the STEP RGA, the appendices, the grant agreements, and the program monitoring activities, unless otherwise specified.

Term	Definition
<b>Administrative Costs</b>	Costs associated with overall program management and operations that do not directly benefit an individual participant, including executive oversight, accounting, payroll processing, and general office administration. Administrative costs do <b>not</b> count toward the participant services expenditure requirement.
<b>Allowable Cost</b>	Costs associated with general program management and administrative operations that do not directly benefit an individual participant, including executive oversight, accounting, payroll processing, and general office administration. Administrative costs do not count toward the participant services expenditure requirement.
<b>AlaskaJobs</b>	Alaska’s official case management and performance reporting system for workforce programs. All STEP participant enrollment, services, outcomes, and documentation must be recorded in AlaskaJobs.
<b>Barrier to Employment</b>	A condition that limits an individual’s ability to obtain or retain employment, including but not limited to low income, disability, justice involvement, limited English proficiency, lack of work experience, or transportation barriers.
<b>Cost Per Participant</b>	Total STEP funds requested, divided by the projected number of participants to be served, to assess cost reasonableness and efficiency.
<b>Credential (Industry-Recognized)</b>	A credential that is recognized by industry or employers and verifies attainment of specific occupational or technical competencies, including licenses, certificates, or certifications.
<b>Deliverables</b>	Quantifiable products or outcomes that result from grant-funded activities, including enrollments, training completions, credentials earned, and job placements.
<b>Direct Costs</b>	<p>Direct costs are expenses that can be specifically identified with a particular STEP-funded program activity, service, or participant support function. Examples include training costs, instructional staff time, participant supportive services, and other program expenses directly attributable to participant training or services.</p> <p>Direct costs must be necessary, reasonable, allocable, and allowable under 2 CFR Part 200 and applicable STEP statutes and regulations.</p> <p>Unless specifically authorized under program rules, STEP funds may not be used to subsidize or reimburse employer-paid wages.</p>
<b>Direct Instruction</b>	Instructor-led occupational training delivered to enrolled participants, including classroom, laboratory, shop, or supervised technical instruction directly tied to credential or occupational skill attainment. Direct Instruction does not include case management, supportive services, recruitment, administrative activities, or job placement services.
<b>Evidence of Demand</b>	Documentation demonstrating employer or labor market demand for the occupation or training proposed, including labor market information, employer letters, or industry data.

<p><b>Incumbent Worker</b></p>	<p>An individual who is currently employed at the time of enrollment in a STEP-funded training activity and who receives training to upgrade occupational skills, obtain an industry-recognized credential, advance within a career pathway, or retain employment.</p> <p>Incumbent worker training may include skill upgrading, credential attainment, apprenticeship progression, or other training that improves the participant’s ability to maintain employment or advance within their occupation.</p> <p>Participants receiving incumbent worker training remain subject to all applicable STEP eligibility, documentation, and reporting requirements.</p>
<p><b>Job Placement</b></p>	<p>Entry into unsubsidized employment following participation in STEP-funded training or services.</p>
<p><b>Job Retention</b></p>	<p>Continued employment for a defined period following placement, as specified in performance reporting requirements.</p>
<p><b>Participant File</b></p>	<p>The complete record of documentation supporting participant eligibility, services received, outcomes, and compliance requirements for an individual participant, including documentation maintained in AlaskaJobs and any required supporting records maintained by the grantee.</p>
<p><b>Participant Services</b></p>	<p>Direct services and costs that primarily benefit enrolled STEP participants and are necessary to support participation, training completion, credential attainment, employment, or retention.</p> <p>Eligible participant services include training delivery, supportive services, and participant-facing staff activities that directly support participant progression through training and employment outcomes.</p> <p>Administrative, executive, fiscal, recruitment, and general program management activities do not qualify as participant services unless they are directly attributable to the delivery of participant services.</p> <p>Only eligible participant services count toward the 50% participant services expenditure requirement.</p>
<p><b>Participant Services Expenditure Requirement</b></p>	<p>AWIB policy requires that at least 50% of total STEP grant funds be allocated to eligible participant services, as demonstrated by the required validation worksheet.</p>
<p><b>Performance Indicators</b></p>	<p>Measures used to evaluate program effectiveness and outcomes under the STEP program. Performance indicators may include training completion, credential attainment, job placement, retention, and other program outcomes.</p> <p>Certain indicators are required by statute and regulation, while AWIB may use others for program evaluation, monitoring, or continuous improvement.</p>
<p><b>Program Design Projections</b></p>	<p>Applicant-provided estimates of program scale and outcomes used during application review, including projected enrollments and training completion rates entered in Appendix C. Program design projections represent planning assumptions and do not constitute contractual performance guarantees.</p>

<b>Prohibited Participant Charges</b>	<p>Participants may not be required to repay STEP funds expended on their behalf for training or participant services. Applicants and subrecipients may not use promissory notes, income share agreements, wage withholding, reimbursement clauses, or similar mechanisms to recover STEP-funded costs from participants, regardless of program completion or employment outcomes.</p> <p>This prohibition applies only to STEP-funded costs and does not prevent a training provider from charging participants for non-STEP-funded portions of training, provided such charges are clearly disclosed and are not tied to the repayment of STEP funds.</p>
<b>Reasonable Cost</b>	A cost that does not exceed what a prudent person would pay under similar circumstances and reflects fair market value.
<b>Supportive Services</b>	Financial or material assistance provided to participants to enable participation in STEP-funded activities, such as transportation, tools, safety gear, testing fees, or childcare.
<b>Supplement, Not Supplant</b>	STEP funds must be added to, not replace, existing funding sources that would otherwise support the same activities.
<b>Training Completion Rate</b>	<p>The percentage of enrolled participants who complete the planned training program or credential pathway supported by STEP funds.</p> <p>Training completion occurs when a participant finishes the required training activities or instructional components identified in the approved program design. Completion may include successful attainment of a credential, certificate, license, or other documented training milestone where applicable.</p> <p>For application purposes, the Training Completion Rate is used in Appendix C – STEP Performance Projection Table to estimate the number of projected training completions based on total projected enrollments.</p> <p>Training completion rates are calculated as:  Number of participants completing training ÷ total participants enrolled</p> <p>Actual completion rates will be monitored during program implementation using documentation recorded in AlaskaJobs and participant files.</p>
<b>Unsubsidized Employment</b>	Employment not supported by public funds or wage subsidies, other than allowable training-related wage supports.

### Final Note

Applicants are responsible for reviewing and complying with all requirements in the STEP RGA Appendices Guide and applicable statute and regulation. Detailed application guidance is provided separately in the STEP Technical Assistance (TA) Guide.