

NEW APPRENTICE APPLICANT FAQ

What to know before applying, starting work, and building a career in the trade

Applicant Information Guide

A practical FAQ for new applicants considering the Boilermaker apprenticeship.

At a Glance

- Apply online at GLABAP.com and select the correct Local, zone, or region.
- You need reliable transportation, valid ID, and a good pair of work boots.
- Contractors provide required safety equipment for the job.
- Travel is part of the trade. If you work out of town in Indiana, lodging is generally your responsibility unless stated otherwise.
- Work can be seasonal. Welding papers and job skills help you stay employable.



Starting Out

Basic expectations for the first day, transportation, lodging, and getting onto the jobsite.

What do I need when I start on day one?

You do not need much to get started. Contractors will provide the required safety equipment for the job.

The main thing you should have is a good, reliable pair of work boots. Boilermaker work is physical, and you will spend a lot of time on your feet in industrial plants, powerhouses, refineries, mills, and other heavy construction settings.

Do I need a vehicle and driver's license?

Yes. You need reliable transportation and a valid driver's license.

Many jobs are located in industrial plants throughout Indiana, and you may have to drive a significant distance to get to work. A valid driver's license or proper government-issued identification is also important because many facilities require valid ID to enter the plant.

Without reliable transportation and valid ID, it may be difficult or impossible to report to certain job sites.

Do I have to pay for my own lodging if I travel for work?

Yes. Our Local covers the entire state of Indiana, so apprentices may be dispatched to jobs away from home.

If you are working out of town, you are responsible for your own lodging unless a specific job or contractor states otherwise. Applicants should understand that travel is part of the trade and should be prepared for lodging costs when working away from home.



Applying Online

The application is completed online. Upload clear copies or photos of your required documents before submitting.

How do I apply?

Applications are completed online through the Great Lakes Area Apprenticeship Program at [GLABAP.com](https://glabap.com).

When filling out the application, make sure you select the correct Local first, then select the correct zone or region within that Local.

The online application will ask for basic information and will also give you a place to upload documentation.

Document Checklist

- High school diploma, GED, or transcripts
- Birth certificate
- Welding certifications, if applicable
- OSHA 10 (Construction) card, if applicable
- Any other industry-related training, certifications, or qualifications

Uploading welding certifications, OSHA training, or other related credentials can help show that you are serious about the trade and may help with the selection process.



Pay, School, and Advancement

Apprentices are paid when working and progress through scheduled periods based on apprenticeship requirements.

Do apprentices get paid?

Yes. Apprentices get paid when they are working. Apprentices start at 70% of the journeyman wage rate and receive scheduled raises as they advance through the apprenticeship. Apprentice advancement is divided into periods, with raises generally occurring every six months.

Apprentice Period	Percentage of Journeyman Rate
1st Period	70%
2nd Period	72.5%
3rd Period	75%
4th Period	77.5%
5th Period	80%
6th Period	85%

Apprentice Period	Percentage of Journeyman Rate
7th Period	90%
8th Period	95%

Welding certification pay increases

Apprentices may also receive additional pay increases for certain welding certifications. Stick or MIG plate welding papers through Common Arc or a signatory contractor may provide a 5% pay increase. Common Arc tube papers through a signatory contractor may provide a 20% pay increase, not to exceed 95% of the journeyman rate.

School pay note

Apprentices do not automatically get paid just for attending school. However, if an apprentice is working for a signatory contractor while attending required apprenticeship school during work hours, they are paid four hours of straight-time pay per school day at their applicable apprentice rate.



Work Schedule and Seasonal Work

Boilermaker work can mean long days during outage seasons and slower periods between busy seasons.

What does a normal workday look like?

A normal workday depends on the job and the schedule set by the contractor.

Common schedules may include:

- 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. - 8-hour day
- 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. - 10-hour day
- 7:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. - 12-hour day

Boilermaker work often involves long hours during outage seasons and shutdowns. It is common to work six 10-hour days per week, or sometimes seven days per week at 10 to 12 hours per day, depending on the job.

Is boilermaker work steady year-round?

Boilermaker work is seasonal by nature.

Work is usually very busy in the spring and fall. We often see heavy work from late February through Memorial Day. Work may slow down during the summer, although there is still work available at times. It usually picks back up around Labor Day and continues until around the beginning of December.

December, January, and the beginning of February are typically slower months. Applicants should understand that this trade can involve periods of heavy overtime followed by slower periods. Good financial planning is important.

What should I do when work is slow?

When work is slow, apprentices are strongly encouraged to come to the union hall and practice welding.

The more certifications and skills you earn, the more employable you become. Contractors need apprentices who can show up, work hard, learn, and develop useful skills. Welding certifications can make a big difference in getting dispatched and staying working.

Slow times should be used to improve your skills, practice welding, and work toward certifications that will help you advance in the trade.



Skills and Jobsite Reality

This is heavy industrial work. Applicants should understand the physical demands before choosing the trade.

Do I need welding experience before applying?

Welding experience is not always required, but it is highly recommended.

Applicants who already have welding experience or welding certifications from an outside source may have an advantage. Examples include training or certifications from Ivy Tech, Calumet Welding, Hobart Institute of Welding Technology, Lincoln Electric Welding School, a vocational school, or another recognized welding program.

Coming into the apprenticeship with welding experience can help speed up your progress, improve your chances of being selected, and help us train you toward contractor-required certifications faster.

What kind of work do boilermakers do?

Boilermakers perform heavy industrial construction, maintenance, repair, and outage work.

The work can include rigging, welding, burning, bolting, fitting, repairing, removing, and installing equipment in power plants, steel mills, refineries, chemical plants, paper mills, and other industrial facilities.

A lot of the work involves rigging and moving heavy materials. Apprentices may be expected to carry and work with chain falls, chokers, shackles, come-alongs, tools, welding leads, air lines, and other equipment.

This trade is physically demanding. Boilermakers often work:

- At heights
- In tight or confined spaces
- Around heavy equipment
- Outdoors in all weather conditions
- In hot, humid environments during the summer
- In freezing conditions during the winter
- On stairs, ladders, scaffolds, grating, and elevated work platforms
- In cramped or awkward positions

Applicants should understand that this is not light-duty work. There is a lot of walking, climbing, crawling, lifting, carrying, and working in uncomfortable positions.

You cannot be afraid of heights, and you should not be severely claustrophobic. Much of the work is done in vessels, boilers, tanks, ductwork, and other confined or restricted areas.

Boilermaker work can be hard, dirty, hot, cold, loud, and demanding, but it is also a skilled trade with strong wages, benefits, and long-term opportunity for people who are willing to work, learn, and show up.

What kind of person does well in this apprenticeship?

A good apprentice is dependable, willing to travel, willing to work long hours, and willing to learn.

This trade requires hard work, good attendance, a good attitude, and the ability to follow directions. Boilermakers work in tough environments, and apprentices are expected to show up prepared, work safely, and keep improving their skills.



Things to Seriously Consider

Before applying, make sure you understand the realities of seasonal work, travel, physical demands, and apprenticeship advancement.

Boilermaker work can be a great career, but it is not easy work and it is not always steady year-round. There will be periods when work is slow, especially for apprentices who do not yet have welding papers or additional job skills.

If you join this trade, you may have to travel for work. That could mean traveling within the state of Indiana, or possibly traveling out of state to work in other areas or other Locals when work is slow at home.

Apprentices who do not take the trade seriously, do not work toward welding papers, or do not put in the time to learn the other skills of the trade will limit their ability to work. Contractors are more likely to request and keep apprentices who are dependable, skilled, certified, and willing to learn.

Hours are also important. Apprentices must get enough work hours to progress through the apprenticeship. If there is no work available close to home, but there is work available out of town or through another Local, choosing not to travel may affect your ability to get the hours you need. Without enough hours, you may not be able to advance to the next period and could be held back.



- This is something every applicant needs to take seriously.**
- There is no shortcut around the physical work.
 - You will be expected to carry tools, equipment, chain falls, chokers, shackles, welding leads, air lines, and other materials.
 - You may have to lift, climb, crawl, bend, kneel, work overhead, and work in awkward positions.
 - No one is going to do the work for you. You need to pay attention, learn the job, and start understanding what comes next.

If you are on the job and you do not understand what is going on, ask questions. Ask your journeyman. Ask your foreman. Pay attention to the work being done around you. The best apprentices are the ones who listen, learn, ask questions, and try to think ahead.

This trade can provide strong wages, benefits, training, and opportunity, but it requires effort, commitment, travel, and a willingness to work hard. If you are not willing to do physical work, travel when needed, learn new skills, and keep improving, this may not be the right trade for you.

Ready to Apply?

Start your online application through the Great Lakes Area Apprenticeship Program: [GLABAP.com](https://glabap.com)