

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF MARYLAND

Apprenticeships within Public Service Companies

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*Prepared in response to the 2025 Joint Chairmen's Report from the Senate Budget and Taxation
Committee and House Appropriations Committee*



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I. Introduction

The Public Service Commission of Maryland (“PSC” or “Commission”) hereby submits this report in response to the 2025 Joint Chairmen’s Report (“JCR”) from the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and House Appropriations Committee (collectively, “Committees”) pertaining to apprenticeship opportunities within utility companies. The Committees requested the report includes information on existing registered apprenticeships within utility companies, workforce needs that could be met by registered apprenticeships, any barriers to creating and expanding apprenticeships, and goals for scaling apprenticeships by occupation and industry. Accordingly, the Commission initiated PC69 to collect the information requested by the Committees from public service companies. On June 30, 2025, seven utilities responded to the Commission’s request. This report includes the information reported by the responding utilities and additional research.

II. Existing Programs

There are numerous apprenticeship programs offered by utilities throughout the state. There are also several similar alternatives. The table below provides an overview of the programs offered by utilities.

Utility	Total Programs	Program(s)
Delmarva Power and Light Company (Delmarva Power)	1	Path to Success: General Utility Helper Program
Potomac Electric Power Company (Pepco)	1	Career Bridge: Utility Service Helper Program
Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SMECO)	2	Youth Lineworker Journeymen Lineworker
Chesapeake Utilities of Maryland (Chesapeake)	7	Meter Technicians Distribution System Technicians Meter Readers Line Locators Measurements Technicians Compressor Technicians Integrity Technicians

The Potomac Edison Company (PE)	4	Distribution Lines Apprenticeship Substation Electrician Apprenticeship Cable Splicing Apprentice Relay Tech Apprentice
Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (BGE)	4	Environmental Service Unmanned Aerial Crews Designer Project Management
Washington Gas Light Company (WGL)	0	N/A

Delmarva Power has its Path to Success program and Pepco has its joint Career Bridge program with the District of Columbia Public Schools. Both programs engage students in their senior year of high school with mentoring, industry test preparation, driver’s education, and hands-on learning experience in both gas and electric operations.¹ Both utilities have agreements with International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) unions to hire students for two-year programs as either a utility service role for Pepco and general helper role for Delmarva Power after which the participants are eligible to apply for open entry-level helper roles.² Neither company considers these true apprenticeship programs based on the definition of apprenticeship, but they are close alternatives. Neither company’s program is registered at the state or federal level, and they have not participated in a registered apprenticeship program previously. Both companies have various paid high school and college internships.³

SMECO offers a Journeymen Lineworker apprenticeship program during the school year and a fulltime, four-year Youth Lineworker apprenticeship program.⁴ Both programs include curriculum-based instruction, instruction by the Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee, and on-the-job training. Each apprenticeship has eight steps with written and in-field exams.⁵ Participants that complete the Journeyman Lineworker program can perform all construction and maintenance activities for SMECO’s electric system. Participants that complete the Youth Lineworker program are eligible to become full-time Groundmen upon completion of high school and are eventually automatically enrolled into the Journey Lineworker program.⁶ SMECO’s programs are the only apprenticeship programs in the state registered at the state and federal level. SMECO also offers internships during the summer for college students or through

¹ Maillog No. 319971 at page 1.
² *Id.*
³ *Id.* at page 7.
⁴ Maillog No. 320002 at page 1.
⁵ *Id.*
⁶ Maillog No. 320002 at page 2.

partnerships with a local government workforce development board, community organization, or school system in addition to its apprenticeship programs.⁷

Chesapeake offers apprenticeships for meter technicians, distribution system technicians, meter readers, line locators, measurements technicians, compressor technicians, and integrity technicians.⁸ These programs are not registered at the state or federal level and Chesapeake has not participated in a registered apprenticeship program previously.⁹ Chesapeake also offers internships in its corporate divisions in addition to its apprenticeship programs.¹⁰

PE offers apprenticeships for the fields of distribution lines, substation electrician, cable splicing, and relay tech.¹¹ While PE has not previously had its programs registered at the state or federal level, it is currently pursuing federal registration for its distribution line and substation electrician apprenticeships.¹² PE also offers internships in the fields of Information Technology, Generation, and Engineering in addition to its Utility Operations apprenticeship programs.¹³

BGE offers four apprenticeship programs in coordination with the MD Department of Education and MD Department of Labor including Environmental Service, Unmanned Aerial Crews, Designer, and Project Management.¹⁴ These programs are not registered at the state or federal level and BGE has not participated in a registered apprenticeship program previously.¹⁵ BGE also offers internships in addition to its apprenticeship programs including the BGE Career Academy, a paid six-week internship for high school students, and paid summer college internships.¹⁶

WGL does not offer any apprenticeship programs that have been registered at the state or national level.¹⁷ WGL offers internships in the fields of accounting, finance, and engineering. Interns are eligible for additional internships or full-time employment post-graduation. The Company also offers a new graduate program that pairs participants with mentors to help their career development.¹⁸

Through additional research, the Commission was able to find information on several other apprenticeships and internships offered by public service companies or related entities in the state. The Maryland Rural Water Association offers a water and wastewater operations specialist apprenticeship program through the National Rural Water Apprenticeship Program.

⁷ *Id* at page 3.

⁸ Maillog No. 320004 at page 3.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id* at page 5.

¹¹ Maillog No. 320058 at page 2.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Id.* at page 3.

¹⁴ Maillog No. 320059 at page 1.

¹⁵ *Id.* at page 1-2.

¹⁶ Maillog No. 320059 at page 4.

¹⁷ Maillog No. 320067 at page 1.

¹⁸ *Id.*

This is a federally registered program and culminates in a certification from the MD Department of the Environment after two years.¹⁹ Constellation Energy and Constellation Home offer three apprenticeships, one for commercial HVAC,²⁰ commercial plumbing,²¹ and commercial electrician.²² Constellation also offers 10-week paid internships over the summer or longer Co-ops during the winter and spring while school is in session.²³ NRG offers an electrician apprenticeship²⁴ and internship opportunities for students.²⁵

While Easton Utilities is part of the Maryland Rural Water Association, it also offers internships for high school and college students.²⁶ Choptank Electric Cooperative (Choptank) offers a four-year apprentice lineman program that results in the participants becoming journeymen.²⁷ Choptank signed the Governor's Apprenticeship Pledge and works with the Department of Labor through its Registered Apprenticeship Program.²⁸ The Town of Berlin Electric has a Registered Apprenticeship Program for Electrical Line Worker.²⁹ The Department of Labor offers the Maryland Pilot-in-Training Program³⁰ which trains participants to become pilots as part of the Association of Maryland Pilots.³¹ Verizon offers its Thrive Apprenticeship program with training across different disciplines at the company.³² Verizon also offers internships, Co-ops, and military fellowships. There is a three-year Telecommunications Technician Program offered by the Independent Electrical Contractors Chesapeake that is recognized at the federal and state levels.³³ Both Comcast³⁴ and AT&T³⁵ offer internships.

Further, the non-profit organization Civic Works,³⁶ based in Baltimore, offers several workforce initiatives, including the BGE Workforce Collaborative (Infrastructure Academy) and the Utility Infrastructure Training Program, which function as pre-apprenticeship pathways that prepare participants for entry into registered apprenticeships and mid-skill jobs in the construction and utilities sectors. Civic Works also maintains a close partnership with the

¹⁹ <https://lightsail.md-rwa.org/services/apprenticeship-program/>.

²⁰ <https://jobs.constellationenergy.com/careers-home/jobs/120981?lang=en-us>.

²¹ <https://jobs.constellationenergy.com/careers-home/jobs/119937?lang=en-us>.

²² <https://jobs.constellationenergy.com/careers-home/jobs/122897?lang=en-us>.

²³ <https://jobs.constellationenergy.com/internships>.

²⁴ <https://careers.nrgenergy.com/nrg/job/THOMPSONS-Apprentice-Electrician-TX-77481/1198451300/>.

²⁵ <https://www.nrg.com/about/careers/student-opportunities.html>.

²⁶ <https://eastonutilities.com/internship-program/>.

²⁷ <https://choptankelectric.coop/employment>.

²⁸ *Id.*

²⁹ <https://media.berlinmd.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/22102112/Electric-Line-Worker-Apprentice-11.2022.pdf>.

³⁰ <https://www.labor.maryland.gov/license/bp/bpapply.shtml>.

³¹ <https://www.mdpilots.com/a-pilots-course>.

³² <https://mycareer.verizon.com/>.

³³ <https://www.iecchesapeake.com/education/electrical-apprenticeship-programs/three-year-telecommunications-technician/>.

³⁴ <https://jobs.comcast.com/early-career>.

³⁵ <https://connect.att.jobs/students>.

³⁶ <https://civicworks.com/>.

Baltimore-Washington Laborers Joint Training Fund (LIUNA) which operates a registered apprenticeship program. Graduates of Civic Works' utility and solar training programs are frequently referred to LIUNA and BGE contractors for direct entry into apprenticeship and employment opportunities that support the region's infrastructure and clean-energy workforce needs.

III. Related Apprenticeship Information

Several utilities provided details on workforce needs that can be met with apprenticeship programs. PE noted that its apprenticeship programs help recruit local workers, particularly in its territory where there are limited educational opportunities in these fields.³⁷ SMECO detailed how its apprenticeship programs have provided the foundation to develop and train the workforce it needs to construct and maintain its distribution systems.³⁸ Chesapeake noted that apprenticeship programs provide the structure and training needed for positions that require specialized training.³⁹

Delmarva Power and Pepco and BGE are currently meeting their employment needs through other workforce development strategies including pre-employment testing, internal training programs, professional development, and partnerships with community colleges, workforce development organizations, and veteran transition programs.^{40,41}

Only one utility, Chesapeake, reported that it plans to scale up its apprenticeship programs. It plans to expand all its programs within the next two years.⁴² Delmarva Power and Pepco noted they plan to expand their existing high school programs to other local counties like Prince George's County and Wicomico County.⁴³

Neither PE nor SMECO experienced any barriers to creating or expanding their apprenticeship programs. Chesapeake noted several potential barriers including:

1. Potential cost limitations to create new apprenticeship programs or expand existing programs due to the costs of curriculum development, equipment, and wages.
2. Recruiting talent that is interested in participating in the apprenticeship programs.

³⁷ Maillog No. 320058 at page 2.

³⁸ Maillog No. 320002 at page 2.

³⁹ Maillog No. 320004 at page 4.

⁴⁰ Maillog No. 319971 at page 4.

⁴¹ Maillog No. 320059 at page 2.

⁴² Maillog No. 320004 at page 4.

⁴³ Maillog No. 319971 at page 6.

3. The upfront cost of apprenticeship programs by the company versus the time it takes to realize the benefits of the programs.
4. The administrative and operational time it takes to review standards and create new programs.⁴⁴

BGE described how apprenticeships can be administratively burdensome and add additional costs to ratepayers.⁴⁵ Partnerships with community colleges, veterans' programs, and workforce initiatives provide alternative pathways for BGE to find talent.⁴⁶

SMECO notes the importance of promoting apprenticeship programs and creating partnerships at the state and local levels and of the career advisors created by the Blueprint for Maryland's Future at working with companies like SMECO to show students the potential careers available through apprenticeships.⁴⁷ BGE launched its four apprenticeship programs to support the College and Career Readiness Pillar of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.⁴⁸ Chesapeake recommended several ways the state could further support apprenticeship programs including:

1. Increasing funding for workforce development through tax credits, grants, or other subsidies to offset the costs of establishing apprenticeships.
2. Establishing educational pathways at community colleges, vocational schools, and universities.
3. Developing state-supported credentialing for specialized utility skills which can be integrated into utility apprenticeship programs.
4. Start state-funded public campaigns on the benefits of utility careers.⁴⁹

BGE, Delmarva Power, and Pepco note the need to recognize that each utility's workforce development needs and strategies are unique and that flexible approaches will be most effective.^{50,51} These utilities have been able to maintain their workforces without apprenticeship programs,^{52,53} but they are committed to collaborating with the State and other stakeholders.^{54,55} BGE further recommends the state invest in community-based partnerships

⁴⁴ *Id.*

⁴⁵ Maillog No. 320059 at page 2.

⁴⁶ *Id.* at page 3.

⁴⁷ Maillog No. 320002 at page 3.

⁴⁸ Maillog No. 320059 at page 1.

⁴⁹ Maillog No. 320004 at page 5.

⁵⁰ Maillog No. 319971 at page 8.

⁵¹ Maillog No. 320059 at page 6.

⁵² Maillog No. 319971 at page 5.

⁵³ Maillog No. 320059 at page 3.

⁵⁴ Maillog No. 320059 at page 2.

⁵⁵ Maillog No. 319971 at page 4.

that expand access to technical training and provide funding and incentives that can be applied to both registered and non-registered training programs so employers can choose the approach that works best for them.⁵⁶

IV. Conclusion

The Commission appreciates the opportunity to provide information to the General Assembly on apprenticeship and workforce development opportunities with public service companies and looks forward to continuing discussions in the future.

⁵⁶ *Id.* at page 5.