

ToolBank Academy - Parent FAQ Sheet

Updated for the 2027 Cohort: 10/2/26

Program Structure & Purpose

What exactly will my student be doing in this program?

ToolBank Academy is a leadership and work readiness program where students build professional skills, explore civic and community leadership, and apply what they learn through real-world experiences. Students will help plan and implement a Mini-ToolBank and participate in hands-on community projects during the program.

What makes ToolBank Academy different from other youth programs?

ToolBank Academy connects learning directly to action. Our approach is built around Access + Agency = Action: students gain access to people, resources, and opportunities; build the confidence and skills to make informed decisions; and then put those skills into action through community projects and a paid summer workforce experience.

Is the program more class instruction or hands-on?

Both. Phase 1 focuses on interactive in-class sessions, leadership development, work readiness, career exploration, and planning. Phase 2 gives students the opportunity to apply those skills through supervised, hands-on paid summer work and community-based projects.

What skills will my student develop?

Students develop skills in leadership, teamwork, communication, civic and community engagement, volunteer management, project planning, financial literacy, event planning, public engagement, tool literacy and safety, and professional work readiness.



Time Commitment & Attendance

When does Phase 1 meet?

Phase 1 takes place from January through May with weekly in-person sessions at the Cincinnati ToolBank. Students should review the official 2027 program schedule and confirm that they can meet the required time commitment before accepting a seat in the program.

How is the program structured overall?

ToolBank Academy has two required phases:

- Phase 1: Leadership and Skill-Building (January-May)
- Phase 2: Paid Summer Workforce Experience

What is the attendance expectation?

Students are expected to attend **at least 90% of the program** and should know before joining whether they can reasonably meet that commitment. Participation in required major program events is also expected. Emergencies and unavoidable conflicts must be communicated directly with the Program Coordinator as soon as possible.

Can my student participate in sports, another job, or another program?

Yes, as long as the other commitment does not prevent the student from meeting ToolBank Academy attendance, schedule, and required-event expectations. Known conflicts should be disclosed early so they can be reviewed individually.

Are both phases required?

Yes. ToolBank Academy is designed as one connected leadership and work readiness experience. Students who accept a seat are committing to both Phase 1 and the paid summer workforce phase.



Pay, Compensation & Credit

Is my student paid?

Phase 1 includes a participation incentive. Phase 2 is a paid summer workforce experience. Compensation details and employment requirements will be reviewed with students and families during the information and onboarding process.

How is pay structured?

Specific pay rates, payroll details, and employment requirements for the paid summer phase will be shared during the information and onboarding process before summer employment begins.

Does my student receive anything besides compensation?

Yes. Students receive leadership and work readiness training, real-world project experience, and opportunities to earn industry-recognized certifications such as OSHA-10 and CPR/First Aid, along with a ToolBank Academy completion certificate.

Can this experience be used like an internship?

ToolBank Academy is not formally classified as an internship, but the paid summer workforce experience includes many of the same components, including supervised work, professional expectations, skill development, and real project responsibilities. Students may describe the experience on resumes, college applications, and job applications; however, any school or outside organization determines how it will officially classify the experience.

Safety, Supervision & Support

Will staff have background checks?

Yes. All ToolBank staff who work directly with ToolBank Academy participants have completed background checks.



Who supervises students?

Students are supervised by ToolBank Academy staff and approved program partners. During hands-on activities and the paid summer workforce phase, students receive appropriate site supervision and guidance based on the activity being completed.

What safety training will students receive?

Students receive appropriate safety instruction before participating in hands-on activities. Training may include tool literacy and safety, jobsite expectations, personal protective equipment, and certification preparation such as OSHA-10 and CPR/First Aid.

Who do parents or guardians contact with questions or concerns?

Parents and guardians may contact the ToolBank Academy Program Coordinator with questions, attendance concerns, or other program-related needs.

Can ToolBank Academy count for school credit or allow my student to leave school early?

School credit and early dismissal are not guaranteed by ToolBank Academy. Those decisions are made by each student's school. ToolBank Academy can provide program information or documentation for families and schools to use when considering those requests.

Location & Transportation

Where does the program take place?

Phase 1 in-class instruction takes place at the Cincinnati ToolBank, 1682 E. Seymour Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45237. Some planning, field experiences, community projects, and Mini-ToolBank implementation activities may take place off-site at locations connected to the program.



Is transportation assistance available?

Yes. Transportation assistance is available to students who need it. ToolBank Academy can provide Metro bus passes at no cost to participating students. Students and families are responsible for confirming that the student has a reliable transportation plan for program participation.

Will students travel off-site?

Yes. Off-site learning, community engagement, worksite experiences, and Mini-ToolBank activities may be part of the program. Students will receive information about these activities in advance, and appropriate supervision and required permissions will be used.

Eligibility & Enrollment

Who is eligible to participate?

Applicants must live in Greater Cincinnati or Northern Kentucky and must be between ages 16 and 18 by the first day of paid summer employment. For the 2027 cohort, applicants must be at least 16 years old by May 31, 2027, and must meet all other program eligibility requirements.

Is there an application process?

Yes. Students must complete the ToolBank Academy application, including the required written responses, and submit a confidential recommendation from a non-family adult in a professional or community role. Applications are reviewed before students move forward in the admissions process.

What is required from a parent or guardian?

A parent or guardian must review and acknowledge the program expectations and provide required consent for applicants under age 18. Additional forms and employment paperwork may also be required after acceptance. Applicants who are 18 must provide an emergency contact.



Outcomes & Next Steps

What happens after the program ends?

Students leave ToolBank Academy with leadership and work readiness experience, real-world project responsibilities, professional skills, and certifications earned during the program. The goal is for students to be better prepared to pursue employment, postsecondary education, additional training, and continued community leadership opportunities.

Is participation in the paid summer phase guaranteed?

ToolBank Academy is a two-phase program, and students are expected to participate in both phases. Students must remain in good standing, meet attendance and program expectations, and complete all required employment and onboarding steps before beginning the paid summer workforce phase.

