



Guidance

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE INVESTMENT
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Guidance Name: Kentucky Career Center One Stop Certification

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Applies /Of Interest to: Local Workforce Development Boards, Board Directors and Staff, Chief Local Elected Officials and KY Career Center One-Stop Operators

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BACKGROUND:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires, that as a condition of being eligible to receive infrastructure funding, a local one-stop center (Kentucky Career Center or KCC) must be certified at least once every three years. To obtain certification, local workforce boards are charged with the responsibility of evaluating local one-stop centers using the objective criteria and standards established by the State Workforce Board.

The local workforce board may evaluate a KCC more frequently than once every three years and may have evaluation criteria that are in addition to the criteria established by the State Workforce Board, as per a written policy.

This guidance sets out the criteria and procedures for local workforce boards to evaluate and certify a KCC.

KCC certification is an integral component to the transformation of our workforce development system. The evaluation process of certification is critical for achieving:

- Consistent, high quality services to employers and job seekers;
 - User-friendly, customer-focused services;
 - Strategic alignment with education and economic development;
 - Accountability for services and results; and
 - Maximization of all workforce development resources.
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GUIDANCE:

Through the evaluation and certification process, the Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) should track the effectiveness of the KCCs in the system. Continuous improvement requires appropriate modifications that are a result of customer feedback to improve the quality of services that are being delivered. The KCC must have a process in place for customers to provide feedback and a protocol to review the feedback on a consistent basis. The process is designed to heighten the quality of services that are being delivered in a local area. The ultimate goal is the transformation of the workforce system – expanding employer engagement, workforce participation, connecting customers with education and training opportunities, and aligning resources amongst workforce partners.

WIOA requires two parts for the evaluation criteria. The first is Effectiveness, which includes customer satisfaction and Physical and Programmatic Accessibility. The second is Continuous Improvement, which includes meeting performance standards. The Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) has added a third part; Strategic Planning and Innovation.

Local Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the LWDB to evaluate and certify any Comprehensive Career Center, Affiliate Career Center and Access Points in its respective local area.

In those instances where the LWDB is the KCC Operator, then the KWIB will certify the KCC in that LWDA.

Through the use of a Certification Application that includes all of the criteria in this guidance, the LWDB will have the means to make a formal assessment. The main purpose of the evaluation process is to ensure that the KCC is delivering the highest level of services in a consistent manner.

The LWDB, with the agreement of the CLEO, and required KCC Partners will enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) agreement on partnership, governance and services provided in the KCC system. Once all parties have signed the MOU, the KCC's are eligible for Certification.

The LWDB's role is primarily one of governance, negotiation, and quality control through diligent oversight. It is essential to remember that each KCC Operator is a reflection of the standards that have been established by the state and the LWDB. If a KCC does not obtain certification or a certification expires, the KCC may be subject to being determined as ineligible for infrastructure funding.

The Application

LWDBs should select the appropriate application for each career center according to state and local policy. The Certification Applications are available on the KWIB Website via <https://kwib.ky.gov/Pages/One-Stop-Certification.aspx>

Each LWDA must have at least one Comprehensive Career Center with Title I staff present and access to each partner program that provides the required career services, training services and business services.

Affiliate Career Centers make available to job seekers and employers the programs, services and activities from one or more KCC partners, but not all partners. The Affiliate Career Center application may also apply to Specialized Career Centers that address specific needs of certain groups of job seekers

and/or employers, like those of dislocated workers or youth, or of key industry sectors, or clusters. This application may also be used for a network of affiliates or a network of partners with linked access to affiliates.

KCC Access Points are mobile or permanent locations with one designated point of contact. A KCC Access Point will, at a minimum, have qualified individual(s) cross-educated in all six Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core programs and will refer job seekers and employers to partner staff at Comprehensive and/or Affiliate KCCs.

In completion of the application, each section of the application contains a description area that allows the Career Center to create a narrative to summarize how the Career Center meets the standard. As an example, under "Job Seeker Services" evaluations of "Effectiveness" (E) states "The Centers has a greeter/receptionist (dedicated or rotating) who is cross-educated to be aware of the services and resources available in the Center and through partner agencies."

The Center Notes for this section might state:

"The Career Center has a full time receptionist through the Experience Works program. The receptionist hours are aligned to the Career Center hours to ensure quality service. Front line staff have participated in cross training to ensure continuous service."

One Stop Certification Process

The LWDB must adopt the KWIB certification criteria and may establish additional criteria for KCC certification. The KWIB/DWI has established the following steps for certification:

Step 1: One Stop Operator (OSO) completes application for the appropriate type of center certification: Comprehensive, Affiliate or Access Point.

Step 2: For the Comprehensive and Affiliates, the OSO obtains the following documents: 1) MOU/IFA, 2) American Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Letter and 3) Staff Development Plan. Access Points will only need to submit an ADA Compliance Letter. It is recommended that all Access Points be ADA Compliant.

Step 3: The OSO submits to the LWDB a letter of request to continue the certification process along with the appropriate application and the three documents listed in Step 2. Access Points will only need to submit an ADA Compliance Letter. Again, it is highly recommended that all Access Points be ADA Compliant.

Step 4: For Comprehensive and Affiliate sites, the LWDB chooses a minimum of a 4-member review team. The review team must consist of at least: one business representative from the LWDA (a non-board member), one LWDB member from another LWDA, and one non-core partnering entity not located at the center site and a LWDB member from the same LWDA. Access Point review teams must consist of a minimum of two, which must include the LWDB Director or their designee and LWDB member from same LWDA. Any additional review team members the LWDA would like to include should be chosen from one of the following: one business representative from the LWDA (a non-board member), one LWDB member from another LWDA, and one non-core partnering entity not located at the center site and a LWDB member from the same LWDA.

NOTE: If assistance is needed to obtain Review Team members please contact the KWIB who may provide members for a Review Team.

Step 5: A LWDB member will pull the team together and the group will choose a team leader and conduct an orientation provided by the KWIB. The orientation outlines the team's responsibilities and the process for career center certification reviews.

Step 6: The Review team selects the date for the on-site center review.

Step 7: Of the four categories on the Comprehensive or Affiliate application, each team member must select one category from the following: 1) Business/Employers Services; 2) Job Seeker Services; 3) Center Management and 4) Strategic Planning/Innovation. The review team should examine all categories and questions before and during the site visit. For the Access Point sites, review entire application as well.

Step 8: The review team conducts the review then meets with OSO and key career center staff for additional questions/discussion.

Step 9: After the review, the Review team only will have a final meeting on site to prepare a letter to the LWDB with all findings, suggestions, recommendations and include best practices, addressed to the Chair of the Board. Finalization of the letter incorporating all team members' comments and signatures can be completed electronically (i.e. Email). The letter should state whether the team's recommendation is to grant certification, not grant certification or conditionally grant certification of the career center. If the LWDB determines that certification is denied or granted conditionally, specific findings and required actions must be included in the correspondence with deadlines and/or a corrective action plan that requires full compliance prior to any further steps being taken. Letter template from Review Team to LWDB is available on KWIB website via

<https://kwib.ky.gov/Pages/Resources.aspx>

Step 10: The Review team leader presents the team's recommendation in person or through the use of technology (i.e. Zoom) to the LWDB of which the Board then makes their final determination.

Step 11: The LWDA Board will then send a letter with the Board's decision to the KWIB. With the LWDA Board letter (including an action plan to remedy unresolved ADA issues at the site if any), attach the Certification application, Staff Development Plan, ADA Compliance letter and the Review teams' recommendation letter to the LWDB. Letter template from LWDB to KWIB is available on the KWIB website via <https://kwib.ky.gov/Pages/Resources.aspx>

Step 12: The Executive Director of the KWIB presents all certifications to the KWIB at which time, the KWIB issues a Certificate of Recognition to each LWDB for all approved career center certifications in that LWDA.

Step 13: Each center site is to recertify, at a minimum every three years with no lapse between Certifications. It is recommended that the Certification process begin at least 6 months prior to the current Certification expiration date.

Step 14: If a new site is designated in a LWDA, the LWDB must notify the KWIB within 30 days of opening the center. The new site should be Certified ADA Compliant within the first month of opening

(if not before the opening). The One Stop Certification process should begin within the first 3 months of opening and be fully Certified within 6-9 months of the opening date.

*It is recommended that all Access Points be ADA compliant. All Comprehensive and Affiliate sites are required to be ADA Compliant.

*An American with Disabilities Act (ADA) letter from the EWDC Safety & ADA Coordinator outlining the changes is required (if any) to ensure the Career Center site is ADA Compliant. Otherwise, a Certified ADA Compliant letter will be issued.

The LWDB should maintain contact with the Career Center staff throughout the process to identify areas of need and assist with locating support and resources. Additionally, the LWDB should work with the OSO to resolve deficiencies identified through the evaluation process. It is suggested the LWDB review the deficiencies on an ongoing basis (30-60-90 days) until Certification is granted. The target completion date should be within 90 days of the initial review date.

Recommendation and Certification

The LWDB may make one of three recommendations resulting from the Review Team's report:

*Certification granted – the LWDB informs the Career Center, the KWIB of the certification and the date of certification. A Certification of Recognition will be presented to each LWDB by the KWIB for sites Certified.

*Certification not granted – The Career Center, OSO and LWDB must explore solutions to meet the criteria not met. An action plan must be created w/timelines including expected completion date. The review team may choose to re-review the center and/or changes made. Exceptions for Certification may be granted on a case-by-case basis for extenuating circumstances. It is suggested the LWDB review the deficiencies on an ongoing basis (30-60-90 days) until Certification is granted. The target completion date should be within 90 days of the initial review date.

*Conditional certification granted – A conditional certification is awarded to career centers in temporary locations due to an emergency situation. A conditional certification requires a plan for acceptable center accommodations in a permanent location. Exceptions for Certification may be granted on a case-by-case basis for extenuating circumstances. It is suggested the LWDB review the deficiencies on an ongoing basis (30-60-90 days) until Certification is granted. The target completion date should be within 90 days of the initial review date.

NOTE: If the LWDB grants certification conditionally or does not grant certification, the Career Center must work to resolve measures not met and may request reconsideration once the measures are resolved.

Reconsideration Process

- A Career Center submits a reconsideration request to the LWDB, detailing measures that have been addressed and provide any supporting documentation.

- The LWDB reviews the request and makes a decision regarding certification. If approved, the LWDB notifies the Career Center, the KWIB in writing. If Certification is denied, the LWDB should have a written appeal process and provide that appeal process when a denial notification is sent.

Reviewing Certification Criteria

The KWIB must review and update the KCC Certification every two years as a part of the state plan review. Similarly, each LWDB must review and update criteria every two years as a part of the local plan update.

REFERENCE:

WIOA Section 121(g); 20 CFR 678.800
