



Guidance

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
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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 a local one-stop center (Kentucky Career Center or KCC) be certified at least once every three years as a condition of eligibility to receive infrastructure funding. To obtain Certification, local workforce boards are charged with 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. As per a written policy, it may have evaluation criteria that are in addition to those established by the State Workforce Board.

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

KCC certification is an integral component of 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 result from 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 goal is the transformation of the workforce system – expanding employer engagement and workforce participation, connecting customers with education and training opportunities, and aligning resources amongst workforce partners.

WIOA requires two evaluation criteria: Effectiveness, which includes customer satisfaction; Physical and Programmatic Accessibility; and 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.

By a Certification Application that includes all 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 consistently.

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

The LWDB's role is primarily to govern, negotiate, and control quality through diligent oversight. It is essential to remember that each KCC Operator reflects the standards that the state and the LWDB have established. 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/Resources.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 the 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) state, "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's hours are aligned with the Career Center's 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: The One-Stop Operator (OSO) completes the 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, 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 an LWDB member from the 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 get in touch with the KWIB, who may provide members for a Review Team.

Step 5: An LWDB member will pull the team together. 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 the entire application as well.

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

Step 9: After the review, the Review team will only have a final meeting on-site to prepare a letter to the LWDB with all findings, suggestions, and recommendations, including 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., by Email). The letter should state whether the team's recommendation is to grant Certification, not grant certification, or conditionally grant Certification to the career center. Suppose the LWDB determines that Certification is denied or granted conditionally. In that case, 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. The 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 using technology (e.g., Zoom) to the LWDB, after which the Board makes its 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 this 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 must recertify at least every three years with no lapse between Certifications. It is recommended that the Certification process begin at least six months before 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 three 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 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 that 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 and 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 with w/timelines, including the 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 that 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. It 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 that 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 providing any supporting documentation.

- The LWDB reviews the request and decides on Certification. If approved, the LWDB notifies the Career Center and 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
