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Director

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**DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE SERVICES**  
**ISSUANCE NUMBER PY 17-04**

**Daryl E. Bassett, Director**

**December 11, 2017**

**TO:** Local Workforce Development Board Members  
Local Workforce Development Board Directors  
Local Elected Officials  
Arkansas Workforce Center Partners

**SUBJECT:** Certification of Arkansas Workforce Centers

- I. **Purpose:** The purpose of this workforce system guidance is to provide instructions to local workforce development boards regarding the certification of Arkansas Workforce Centers.
- II. **General Information:** The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the State Workforce Development Board (WDB), in consultation with Chief Elected Officials and Local Workforce Development Boards, to establish objective criteria and procedures to use when certifying its American Job Centers (20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800), known in Arkansas as Arkansas Workforce Centers. The certification process establishes a minimum level of quality and consistency of services in Arkansas Workforce Centers across the State. The certification criteria allow States to set standard expectations for customer-focused seamless services from a network of employment, training, and related services that help individuals overcome barriers to obtaining and maintaining employment.

The State Workforce Development Board (WDB) must establish objective criteria and procedures for the Local WDBs to use in evaluating the effectiveness, physical and programmatic accessibility, and continuous improvement of Arkansas Workforce Centers. Local WDBs must follow procedures and criteria established by the State WDB and certify its workforce centers and its workforce center network at least once every three years (20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800); this includes comprehensive, as well as affiliate centers. Local WDBs may establish additional criteria relating to service coordination achieved by the one-stop delivery system.

- III. **Action Required:** Local Workforce Development Boards and their contractors, as well as partner agencies, should distribute this policy broadly throughout the system to ensure that workforce system staff are familiar with its content and requirements.
- IV. **Inquiries:** All questions or concerns are welcome and may be submitted to the following email:  
[wioa@arkansas.gov](mailto:wioa@arkansas.gov)

**V. Attachments:**

Appendix A: Application for Arkansas Workforce Center Certification

**VI. Expiration Date: Ongoing**



# ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS<sup>SM</sup>

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## APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION

Organization Name:		Date:	
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Contact Person/Title:	
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Phone:		Email:	
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Site to be Certified:		Address:	
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Website:	
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Hours of Operation:	
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**Type of Certification:**

- New Certification       Recertification – Date of Last Certification [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

**Level of Certification:**

- Comprehensive       Affiliate

## **Purpose of Certification**

The goal of the certification process is to develop a world-class workforce center network that meets and exceeds the minimal requirements established by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). It is critical to make the centers user friendly and attractive, creating a public image that is inviting to job seekers, education seekers, and employers seeking skills and talent in the local labor markets.

This document brings all the tools approved by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) into a single reference for Local Workforce Development Board members involved in certifying or recertifying local Arkansas Workforce Centers. It is the intent of the Arkansas WDB to provide this instrument as a guide to what is expected, not to provide the means of how it is to be accomplished. Ongoing organizing, implementation, and ensuring continuous improvement of the local certification process are the responsibility of the local WDB.

Included are minimum core standards that must be a part of the local certification/ recertification process. In a clear, concise manner this guide documents the Arkansas Workforce Centers Certification Process needed by the local WDB when conducting certification site visits. It also reviews the Quality Assurance Process to be used by the local WDB to ensure minimum standards are met and that the Arkansas Workforce Center brand name is protected. It is expected that each local workforce development area may supplement these core standards with additional locally applicable criteria and performance measures to ensure continuous improvement.

Certification is not just about a one-time designation. It is an ongoing process that keeps all parties involved and achieving at high performance levels. As such, the certification process also allows for achieving excellence standards as continuous improvement planning occurs. This certification process serves as an opportunity to continually re-examine, improve, and revise procedures to ensure that the Arkansas workforce development system is a primary asset in Arkansas's economic growth and subsequent high quality of life

## **Part I**

### **Introduction**

The following are core principles for building and continually improving the Arkansas Workforce Center system:

- High quality services to employers, with quality expectations defined by business and industry needs.
- High quality services to individuals, with quality expectations defined by system users.
- Single points of access for a wide array of integrated and coordinated publicly available services.
- Customers who are empowered by information and user-friendly system tools.
- A variety of access points and services that attract a broad range of system users.
- Coordination of funding sources aimed at addressing identified customer priorities.
- Reducing unnecessary duplication of services.
- Increased accountability at all levels.
- Infusion of continuous improvement methods throughout the system.
- Increased overall value of the system through new, creative partnerships.

## Historical Background

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the State Workforce Development Board (WDB), in consultation with Chief Elected Officials and Local Workforce Development Boards, to establish objective criteria and procedures to use when certifying its American Job Centers (20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800), known in Arkansas as Arkansas Workforce Centers. The certification process establishes a minimum level of quality and consistency of services in Arkansas Workforce Centers across the State. The certification criteria allow States to set standard expectations for customer-focused seamless services from a network of employment, training, and related services that help individuals overcome barriers to obtaining and maintaining employment.

The State Workforce Development Board (WDB) must establish objective criteria and procedures for the Local WDBs to use in evaluating the effectiveness, physical and programmatic accessibility, and continuous improvement of Arkansas Workforce Centers. Local WDBs must follow procedures and criteria established by the State WDB and certify its workforce centers and its workforce center network at least once every three years (20 CFR 678.800, 34 CFR 361.800, and 34 CFR 463.800); this includes comprehensive, as well as affiliate centers. Local WDBs may establish additional criteria relating to service coordination achieved by the one-stop delivery system.

The State of Arkansas was divided into 10 local workforce development areas based on common geographic and economic factors. Each area contains at least one comprehensive service center, and may have other affiliate centers as part of local access networks connected to the comprehensive sites.

This system provides customers a single point of contact for employment, training, education, and supportive services. Under the oversight of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, Arkansas Workforce Centers in communities throughout the State integrate multiple workforce development programs and resources, and make them available to individuals at the “street level” through a user-friendly delivery system.

It was envisioned that the local Arkansas Workforce Centers would be designed by employers for employers, to help find and train qualified workers, and assist qualified workers to find jobs in business and industry. The idea was to simplify the maze of current programs into a comprehensive, streamlined system of services for job seekers and employers, eliminating the need to visit different locations and understand multiple, complex program requirements.

A significant key to implementing the Arkansas Workforce Center system was the “no wrong door” approach to providing services that encompasses the principles of universal access, integration, co-location, collaboration, and performance as the building blocks to the system. With the “no wrong door” philosophy, when a customer approaches any Arkansas Workforce Center partner requesting assistance with employment and training needs or services in support of the customer’s job search or skill development, the customer is able to access the best mix of services from the combined menu of all partners’ resources, and gain immediate access to the appropriate next step.

The system was designed to be an open marketplace where:

- Employers define the skills and workforce levels they need.
- Job seekers are armed with information and resources to acquire and document skills they can use in the marketplace.
- Employers, through participation on workforce development boards, are able to hold the system accountable through performance standards, strategic information, and system oversight.
- The Arkansas Workforce Center brand name is widely recognized and valued.
- Public resources are targeted and coordinated toward clearly identified customer needs.

## **The Future**

Workforce development depends heavily upon the vision and leadership of our State’s employers. The Arkansas Workforce Centers will bring about the integration of federal, State, and local workforce programs, giving employers and workers a chance to connect in real or virtual communities, and access labor market information, education, and training. Progress toward complete implementation of Arkansas’s workforce development vision is ongoing. A crucial element in this is the continued involvement of business, industry, and community leaders.

Ultimately, the workforce development system is designed to increase the employment, retention, occupational skill levels, and earnings of Arkansas's workers through universal access to career management tools and high quality service, while creating a well-trained, more competitive workforce for Arkansas's employers. As a result, these systems will improve the skills of the workforce, increase worker income with resulting increases in family self-sufficiency, reduce welfare dependency, enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the State of Arkansas, and ensure a high quality of life for all Arkansans.

## **Part II**

### **The State Workforce Investment Board’s Vision, Mission, and Philosophy**

#### **Vision**

Arkansas will have a world-class workforce that is well educated, skilled, and working in order to keep Arkansas’s economy competitive in the global marketplace.

#### **Mission**

To promote and support a talent development system in Arkansas that offers employers, individuals, and communities the opportunity to achieve and sustain economic prosperity.

#### **Arkansas’s Talent Development System Philosophy**

- We believe that there must be a pipeline of skilled workers for employers and a job for every Arkansan that wants one.
- We believe that the talent development system of Arkansas must be relevant to the labor market in order to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers, and for Arkansas to compete globally.

- We believe that every Arkansan should have opportunity and access to training and education that leads to a career with gainful employment.
- We believe innovation and partnerships centered around local economic priorities maximizes effectiveness and puts the State in the best position to address local and regional workforce needs.
- We believe Arkansas's workforce system should be a viable resource for business and industry.
- We believe that in order for the talent development system to be the preferred system, the system must be accountable, flexible, and align education and training with business and industry needs.
- We believe that in order for the talent development system to be effective, we must eliminate overlap and duplication of resources and services and streamline investment of funds.

## **Vision for the Arkansas Workforce Development Delivery System**

The publicly funded workforce system envisioned by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is quality focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored to meet the needs of regional economies. It is designed to increase access to, and opportunities for, the employment, education, training, and support services that individuals need to succeed in the labor market, particularly those with barriers to employment. It aligns workforce development, education, and economic development programs with regional economic development strategies to meet the needs of local and regional employers, and provides a comprehensive, accessible and high-quality workforce development system. This is accomplished by providing all customers access to high-quality workforce development centers that connect them with the full range of services available in their communities, whether they are looking to find jobs; build basic educational or occupational skills; earn a postsecondary certificate or degree; obtain guidance on how to make career choices; or are businesses and employers seeking skilled workers.

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board adopted a vision for the Arkansas Workforce Development Delivery System at their regular quarterly meeting in October 2015. This vision provides standards for a high quality workforce center including customer service, innovation and service design, and systems integration and high-quality staffing.

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Under WIOA, partner programs and entities that are jointly responsible for workforce and economic development, educational, and other human resource programs collaborate to create a seamless customer-

focused workforce delivery system that integrates service delivery across all programs and enhances access to the programs' services. The workforce delivery system includes six core programs (Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs; Title II adult education and literacy programs; Title III Wagner-Peyser program; and Title IV vocational rehabilitation program), as well as other required and optional partners identified in WIOA. In Arkansas, these programs are administered by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services (Titles I & III), the Arkansas Department of Career Education (Title II), Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (Title IV) and Division of Services for the Blind of the Arkansas Department of Human Services (Title IV). Through the Arkansas Workforce Center network, these partner programs and their service providers ensure that businesses and job seekers—a shared client base across the multiple programs identified above—have access to information and services that lead to positive employment outcomes. Under WIOA, workforce centers and their partners:

- Provide job seekers with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with family-sustaining wages.
- Provide access and opportunities to all job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, such as individuals with disabilities, to prepare for, obtain, retain, and advance in high-quality jobs and high-demand careers.
- Enable businesses and employers to easily identify and hire skilled workers and access other supports, including education and training for their current workforce.
- Participate in rigorous evaluations that support continuous improvement of workforce centers by identifying which strategies work better for different populations.
- Ensure that high-quality integrated data inform decisions made by policy makers, employers, and job seekers.

The management of the Arkansas workforce delivery system is the shared responsibility of States, local boards, elected officials, the core WIOA partners, other required partners, and workforce center operators. The Departments encourage all of these entities to integrate the characteristics below into their work, including developing state, regional, and local strategic plans; establishing workforce center certification criteria; examining the state, regional, and local footprint of workforce centers; conducting competitions for selecting workforce center operators; developing local Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs); updating other workforce center policies and procedures; and operating and delivering services through the Arkansas Workforce Centers.

### **Characteristics of a High-Quality Arkansas Workforce Center**

The characteristics identified below, consistent with the purpose and authorized scope of each of the programs, are designed to reflect elements that contribute to a high-quality workforce delivery system. They demonstrate the spirit and intent of the WIOA, and they will strengthen the successful integration and implementation of partner programs in Arkansas Workforce Centers. For clarity and readability the characteristics have been grouped into three functional categories: (a) Customer Service; (b) Innovation and Service Design; and (c) Systems Integration and High-Quality Staffing.



## **Customer Service**

Arkansas Workforce Centers provide excellent customer service to job seekers, workers and businesses. Meeting the needs of job seekers, workers and businesses is important in developing thriving communities where all citizens succeed and businesses prosper. High-quality workforce centers:

- ***Reflect a Welcoming Environment***  
Reflect a welcoming environment to all customer groups who are served by the workforce centers. All workforce center staff are courteous, polite, responsive, and helpful to job seekers, businesses, and others who visit the workforce centers, either in person or by telephone or e-mail. Moreover, workforce center staff are sensitive to the unique needs of individuals with disabilities and are prepared to provide necessary accommodations.
- ***Provide Career Services that Empower***  
Provide career services that motivate, support and empower customers, including individuals with disabilities, to make informed decisions based on local and regional economic demand and effectively attain their personal employment and education goals.
- ***Value Skill Development***  
Value skill development by assessing and improving each individual's basic, occupational, and employability skills.
- ***Create Opportunities***  
Create opportunities for individuals at all skill levels and levels of experience by providing customers, including those with disabilities, as much timely, labor market, job-driven information and choice as possible related to education and training, careers, and service delivery options, while offering customers the opportunity to receive both skill-development and job placement services.
- ***Improve Job Seeker Skills***  
Improve the skills of job seeker and worker customers. Workforce centers offer access to education and training leading to industry-recognized credentials through the use of career pathways, apprenticeships, and other strategies that enable customers, including those with disabilities, to compete successfully in today's global economy. They provide businesses with access to the quantity and quality of talent they need and support upskill/backfill strategies that expand job opportunities in the community.
- ***Deliver Quality Business Services***  
Develop, offer, and deliver quality business services that assist specific businesses and industry sectors in overcoming the challenges of recruiting, retaining, and developing talent for the regional economy. To support area employers and industry sectors most effectively, workforce center staff identify and have a clear understanding of industry skill needs, identify appropriate strategies for assisting employers, and coordinate business services activities across workforce center partner programs, as appropriate. This includes the incorporation of an integrated and aligned business services strategy among workforce center partners to present a unified voice for the workforce

center in its communications with employers. Additionally, workforce centers use the forthcoming performance measure(s) on effectiveness in serving employers to support continuous improvement of these services.

### **Innovation and Service Design**

Arkansas Workforce Centers reflect innovative and effective service design.

- ***Integrate Intake Process***  
Use an integrated and expert intake process for all customers entering the workforce centers. Frontline staff are highly familiar with the functions and basic eligibility requirements of each program, and can appropriately assist customers and make knowledgeable referrals to partner programs, as needed and as appropriate given the authorized scope of the program.
- ***Actively Engage Industry Sectors***  
Design and implement practices that actively engage industry sectors and use economic and labor market information, sector strategies, career pathways, Registered Apprenticeships, and competency models to help drive skill-based initiatives.
- ***Use Market Driven Principles***  
Balance traditional labor exchange services with strategic talent development within a regional economy. This includes use of market-driven principles and labor market information that help to define a regional economy, its demographics, its workforce and its assets and gaps in skills and resources.
- ***Use Innovative Delivery Models***  
Incorporate innovative and evidence-based delivery models that improve the integration of education and training, create career pathways that lead to industry-recognized credentials, encourage work-based learning, and use state-of-the-art technology to accelerate learning and promote college and career success.
- ***Offer Virtual and Center-Based Services***  
Include both virtual and center-based service delivery for job seekers, workers, and employers. Both methods of delivery support the talent needs of the regional economy, although each may better serve different customers with different levels of service needs at any given time. The workforce delivery system can expand its reach by delivering robust virtual services; and increasing the accessibility of those services through community partners, such as libraries, community and faith-based organizations, and other partners.
- ***Ensure Access to All Customers***  
Ensure meaningful access to all customers. Workforce centers must be physically and programmatically accessible to all customers, including individuals with disabilities. In so doing, workforce centers use principles of universal design and human-centered design, such as flexibility in space usage; the use of pictorial, written, verbal and tactile modes to present information for customers with disabilities or limited English proficiency; providing clear lines of sight to information for seated or standing users;

providing necessary accommodations; and providing adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistants. Workforce centers use assistive technology and flexible business hours to meet the range of customer needs.

### **Systems Integration and High-Quality Staffing**

Arkansas Workforce Centers operate with integrated management systems and high-quality staffing. High-quality workforce centers:

- ***Reflect Robust Partnerships***  
Reflect the establishment of robust partnerships among partners. The workforce center operator facilitates an integrated, co-located partnership that seamlessly incorporates services of the core partners and other workforce center partners.
- ***Organize Services by Function***  
Organize and integrate services by function (rather than by program); when permitted by a program's authorizing statute and as appropriate, and by coordinating staff communication, capacity building, and training efforts. Functional alignment includes having workforce center staff who perform similar tasks serve on relevant functional teams, e.g. Skills Development Team, Business Services Team. Service integration focuses on serving all customers seamlessly (including targeted populations) by providing a full range of services staffed by cross-functional teams, consistent with the purpose, scope, and requirements of each program.
- ***Use Common Performance Indicators***  
Use common performance indicators to ensure that federal investments in employment and training programs are evidence-based, labor market driven, and accountable to participants and taxpayers. Center performance is transparent and accountable to the communities and regions served; data entry staff are trained and understand the importance of data validation, data collection processes, and the importance of accurate reporting.
- ***Offer Highly Trained Career Counselors***  
Staff the center with highly trained career counselors, skilled in advising job seekers of their options, knowledgeable about local labor market dynamics, aware of available services inside and outside the workforce center, and skilled in developing customers' skills for employment success.
- ***Implement Integrated Policies***  
Develop and implement operational policies that reflect an integrated system of performance, communication, and case management, and use technology to achieve integration and expanded service offerings.
- ***Cross-Train and Equip Center Staff***  
Train and equip workforce center staff in an ongoing learning process with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to provide superior service to job seekers, including those with disabilities, and businesses in

an integrated, regionally focused framework of service delivery. Center staff are cross-trained, as appropriate, to increase staff capacity, expertise, and efficiency. Cross-training allows staff from differing programs to understand every program and to share their expertise about the needs of specific populations so that all staff can better serve all customers. Center staff are routinely trained and are keenly aware as to how their particular function supports and contributes to the overall vision of the local board.

- ***Maintain Integrated Case Management***

Develop and maintain integrated case management systems that inform customer service throughout the customer's interaction with the integrated system and allow information collected from customers at intake to be captured once. Customer information is properly secured in accordance with personally identifiable information guidelines, and facilitated as appropriate, with the necessary memoranda of understanding or other forms of confidentiality and data sharing agreements, consistent with federal and state privacy laws and regulations. Data, however, would be shared with other programs, for those programs' purposes, within the workforce system only after the informed written consent of the individual has been obtained, where required.

## **Part III**

### **Role of the State Workforce Development Board for Certification**

The Arkansas WDB will establish and coordinate policy for use by local workforce development boards in conducting certification and recertification of Arkansas Workforce Centers. This policy will be provided to the local workforce development areas. The Arkansas WDB will ensure that the workforce centers meet the minimum criteria to be designated as a certified Arkansas Workforce Center. The Arkansas WDB will seek to ensure that other State agencies participate fully in the workforce centers, through MOUs, resource sharing, and cost allocation. If the Arkansas WDB decides that these standards are not being met, the local WDB will be notified and a corrective action plan will be requested. If the deficiencies are not corrected in a timely manner, decertification of the center will be recommended to the Governor.

### **Role of the Local Workforce Development Board for Certification**

It is the responsibility of the local WDB to select a One-Stop operator through methods described in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The local WDB is also responsible for certification and recertification of the Arkansas Workforce Centers in their area. The local WDB will use the minimum criteria provided by the Arkansas WDB. The local WDB has the authority to add criteria beyond the State minimum levels. In order to ensure quality, best practices are encouraged throughout the workforce system; any additional criteria should be shared with the other areas and the State Board. The local WDB has the responsibility to monitor the Arkansas Workforce Centers to ensure compliance with the certification/recertification process. If the local WDB determines that these standards are not being met, the One-Stop operator will be notified and a corrective action plan will be requested. The local WDB has the authority to revoke certifications and/or select new operators, if standards are not met and corrective actions of the operator are not successful. The Local WDB will seek to ensure that adequate, attractive, and functional facilities are provided.

## Part IV

### Arkansas Certification Policy

As a Statewide system, Arkansas Workforce Centers cover metropolitan areas as well as rural areas. Therefore, different types of centers are required in order to meet our customers' needs, ensure statewide coverage, and provide easy access to services. The overall Arkansas workforce development system is a combination of a wide array of public and private resources and programs. Comprehensive Arkansas Workforce Centers are the cornerstones of information and access to these resources. The comprehensive centers are complemented by affiliate centers that provide broader access but more limited on-site service offering connections back to the comprehensive sites. Centers must:

1. Be strategically located to maximize service to employers and employees.
2. Have enough traffic to warrant operations.
3. Provide on-site services (interpreter, documents, etc.) based on demographic need.
4. Have hours of operation that are based on customer needs and are customer driven.
5. Ensure that uniform procedures are in place to implement priority of service for veterans, individuals with disabilities, English-as-a-Second Language persons, and any other priority populations identified at the federal, state or local level for job placement.
6. Ensure that priority of service for job training opportunities for veterans, individuals with disabilities, English-as-a-Second Language persons, and any other priority populations identified at the federal level is clearly implemented for all U.S. DOL programs such as employment, training, and placement services.

The minimum core standard certification criteria approved by the Arkansas WDB will be used to certify comprehensive centers, as well as affiliate centers. Consistent with the State Plan, the Local WDB will certify each local workforce center. At its discretion, the local WDB may set certification requirements and/or standards that exceed the minimum criteria established by the Arkansas WDB.

As stipulated by federal law, all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance requirements must be met before a center is eligible to receive the Arkansas Workforce Center certification, or utilize the Arkansas Workforce Center name and logo.

Local WDBs will notify the Arkansas WDB when a certification is issued, renewed or revoked. Marketing activity utilizing the Arkansas Workforce Center name is allowed when the local WDB approves and issues a certification. If a certification is revoked, the affected center must cease using the Arkansas Workforce Center name in all marketing until the identified problems are addressed.

#### **One-Stop Evaluation and Certification Criteria**

LWDBs (or the SWDB in those cases where LWDBs are the one-stop operator) must use the *Application for Arkansas Workforce Certification* approved by the State WDB. The State WDB, in consultation with local Chief Elected Officials and LWDBs, must review and update the one-stop certification criteria every two years as part of the review and modification of the WIOA State Plan.

Local WDBs can establish additional criteria and set higher standards for service coordination than those set by the State. If they do, they must also review and update those additional criteria and standards every two years as part of the WIOA Local Plan update process. Additional criteria must be clearly identified in addenda to the *Application for Arkansas Workforce Center Certification*.

### **One-Stop Certification Frequency**

One-stop sites will be evaluated and certified no less than once every three years. Local WDBs (or the State WDB in those cases where Local WDBs are the one-stop operator) may conduct site evaluation and certification as determined appropriate and warranted. In support of the goal of continuous improvement, each certified site will provide an annual report to the State and Local WDB detailing the progress toward reaching higher standards set forth in the certification criteria.

### **Certification Teams**

One-stop certification teams will be established by Local WDBs (or the State WDB in those cases where Local WDBs are the one-stop operator) and are responsible for conducting independent and objective evaluations of one-stop sites and making certification recommendations to Local WDBs (or the State WDB in those cases where LWDBs are the one-stop operator).

One-stop certifications teams are comprised of Local WDB members and staff and individuals who represent local partners with specific expertise serving populations with barriers. Certification team members should be free of conflicts of interest. Certification teams may utilize experts from the state level or outside of the local area to ensure evaluations are objective. They may also utilize local experts who represent targeted populations but have no financial ties with the one-stop site.

Note: Per 20 CFR 678.800(a)(3), the State WDB, rather than local one-stop certification teams, must certify one-stop sites if Local WDBs are the one-stop operator.

### **Certification Determinations**

One-stop certification teams will render written determinations within 30 days of conducting one-stop site evaluations. There are three possible determinations: (1) certification, (2) provisional certification with a requirement that one-stop operators provide action plans and timelines for meeting certification standards, and (3) not certified or decertified.

Provisional certifications must be accompanied by detailed description of the issues/concerns identified so one-stop operators have sufficient information around which to develop required action plans and timelines. A determination to not certify a one-stop site must be accompanied by a detailed description of the deficiencies, including an explanation as to why the certification team believed the deficiencies could not be addressed or resolved provisionally.

### **Appeals**

Operators of comprehensive one-stop sites that are not certified may choose to appeal those determinations, in writing, to the Local WDB (or the State WDB in those cases where Local WDBs are the one-stop operator). Those

appeals will be subject to the processes and procedures outlined in locally-required dispute resolution and appeal policies (or WIOA Title I Policy 5410 in those cases where the State WDB is the certifying body).

### **Non-Certification**

If an existing comprehensive one-stop site is ultimately not certified following a standard or “for-cause” evaluation, the Local WDB and one-stop operator must have a plan to ensure continuity of service between the time a site is not certified and a new one-stop operator is procured.

## **Types of Centers**

WIOA Section 121 (e)(2) states that the one-stop delivery system—

(A) at a minimum, shall make each of the programs, services, and activities described in paragraph (1) accessible at not less than 1 physical center in each local area of the State; and

(B) may also make programs, services, and activities described in paragraph (1) available—

(i) through a network of affiliated sites that can provide 1 or more of the programs, services, and activities to individuals; and

(ii) through a network of eligible one-stop partners—

(I) in which each partner provides 1 or more of the programs, services, and activities to such individuals and is accessible at an affiliated site that consists of a physical location or an electronically or technologically linked access point; and

(II) that assures individuals that information on the availability of the career services will be available regardless of where the individuals initially enter the statewide workforce development system, including information made available through an access point described in subclause (I);

(C) may have specialized centers to address special needs, such as the needs of dislocated workers, youth, or key industry sectors or clusters; and

(D) as applicable and practicable, shall make programs, services, and activities accessible to individuals through electronic means in a manner that improves efficiency, coordination, and quality in the delivery of one-stop partner services.

### **Comprehensive**

- Accessible to the general public during regular business days, as well as physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities
- Portal site for electronic access
- Provider of **basic and individualized career services, and training services**
- **Provider of business services**
- Representation of **core** mandated partners (WIOA Titles I-IV)
- Additional related employment and training resources

### **Affiliate Center**

- Accessible to the general public and physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities
- Portal site for electronic access
- Provider of **basic career services**

- Representation of **one** or more mandated partners
- Additional related employment and training resources
- Established working relationship as part of an integrated system of Arkansas Workforce Center sites

#### IV. Checklist – System Requirements

The checklists below are to be used by sites and evaluators to help determine the extent to which system requirements are met and services and programs are present. Each application will vary in its responses based upon the level of certification being requested by the site and the agreements of the local partnership to best meet the needs of the locally-determined service delivery model.

	Yes	No – Provide Plan for Compliance
Compliance with AWDB Policies		
ADA Accessibility		
Use of MIS for customer tracking		
Memorandum of Understanding with Partners		
Arkansas Workforce Center and American Job Center Brands Used Appropriately		
Wagner-Peyser Services are Co-Located		

#### Required Program/Partner Checklist

- In the column named “On-Site”, indicate programs/partners that are currently located on-site.
- In the column named “Off-Site Electronic Connection”, make a check mark for the programs/partners that are off-site but their basic career services are made available to customers through an electronic connection. Note: Not all customers will be able to use the electronic connection(s) without help from workforce system staff.
- For programs/partners that are off-site but an agreement is in place to provide their basic career services in another manner, check the last column and attach a narrative explaining how this is accomplished (use a separate sheet).

Required Programs/Partners	One-Site (Average Hours/Week)	Off-Site Electronic Connection	Off-Site Basic Career Services Made Available in Another Manner
WIOA Title I Adult Services			
WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker			
WIOA Title I Youth Services			
Wagner-Peyser Title III			
Adult Education and Family Literacy Title II			
Vocational Rehabilitation – Arkansas Career			



Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services			
Vocational Rehabilitation – Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind			
Title V – Older Americans Act/Senior Community Service Employment Program			
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families			
Career and Technical Education Programs			
Trade Adjustment Assistance			
Jobs for Veterans State Grant			
Community Services Block Grant			
Housing & Urban Development Employment and Training			
Unemployment Compensation			
Second Chance Act			

**Additional Partners (not mandated)**

Required Programs/Partners	One-Site (Average Hours/Week)	Off-Site Electronic Connection	Off-Site Basic Career Services Made Available in Another Manner
Ticket to Work and Self Sufficiency			
Small Business Administration			
SNAP Employment and Training			
(Please add partners are appropriate)			

**Career Services Checklists**

In the column named “On-Site”, check the basic career, individualized career, and training services that are currently available on-site for all job seeking customers who come into the workforce center or affiliate site.

Basic Career Services	On-Site (Mark with X)
Initial assessment of skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs	
Outreach, intake and orientation to the information and other services available through the one-stop delivery system	

<b>Basic Career Services</b>	<b>On-Site (Mark with X)</b>
Eligibility determination	
Labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance, career counseling, provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations, provision of information on nontraditional employment	
Appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including small employers, which may include providing information and referral to specialized business services not traditionally offered through the one-stop delivery system	
Referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the one-stop delivery system and other workforce development programs	
Workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including job vacancy listings in labor market areas; information on job skills necessary to obtain the jobs; and information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for such occupations	
Performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services and eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities, providers of adult education, providers of career and technical education activities at the postsecondary level, and career and technical education activities available to school dropouts, and providers of vocational rehabilitation	
Information, in formats that are usable by and understandable to onestop center customers, regarding how the local area is performing on the local performance accountability measures and any additional performance information with respect to the onestop delivery system in the local area	
Information, in formats that are usable by & understandable to one Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for stop center customers, relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, including child care, child support, medical or child health assistance benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program, assistance through the earned income tax credit, assistance under State program for temporary assistance for needy families, and other supportive services and transportation provided through funds made available in the local area	
Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation	
Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs	
Translation Services	
Orientation to Arkansas Workforce Center Services	

<b>Individualized Career Services</b>	<b>On-Site (Mark with X)</b>
Comprehensive and specialized evaluation to Identify barriers to employment and employment goals	
Development of Individualized Employment Plan (IEP)	
Group Counseling	
Individual Counseling	
Career/ Vocational Planning	
Short-Term Preemployment/ Vocational Services	
Internships and work experiences	
Workforce preparation activities	
Financial literacy activities	
Out-of-Area Job Search and relocation assistance	
English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs	
Follow-up services	

**Business Services Checklist**

Check the business services that are available to employers.

<b>Business Services</b>	<b>On-Site (Mark with X)</b>
Establish and develop relationships and networks with large and small employers and their intermediaries	
Develop, convene, or implement industry or sector partnerships	

**Other Business Services (not mandatory)**

<b>Customized screening and referral of qualified participants in training services to employers</b>	<b>On-Site (Mark with X)</b>
Customized services to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations, on employment-related issues	
Customized recruitment events and related services for employers including targeted job fairs	
Human resource consultation services, e.g., writing/reviewing job descriptions and employee handbooks; Developing performance evaluation and personnel policies; Creating orientation sessions for new workers; Honing job interview techniques for efficiency and compliance; Analyzing employee turnover; or Explaining labor laws to help employers comply with	

wage/hour and safety/health regulations;	
Customized labor market information for specific employers, sectors, industries or clusters	
Customized assistance or referral for assistance in the development of a registered apprenticeship program	
Listing of Job Orders	
Applicant Referral	
Employer Needs Assessment	
Unemployment Insurance Access	
Access to Facilities	
Translation Services	
Developing and delivering innovative workforce investment services and strategies for area employers, e.g., career pathways, skills upgrading, skill standard development and certification for recognized postsecondary credential or other employer use, apprenticeship, and other effective initiatives for meeting the workforce investment needs of area employers and workers	
Assistance in managing reductions in force in coordination with rapid response activities and with strategies for the aversion of layoffs, and the delivery of employment and training activities to address risk factors	
Marketing of business services offered to appropriate area employers, including small and mid-sized employers	
Assisting employers with accessing local, State, and Federal tax credits	

## Certification Criteria

The Certification application is one step in the ongoing pursuit of growth, quality improvement, and performance excellence. Attainment of certification provides assurance to the public that the center has achieved a high standard and consistently maintains and improves upon that standard. The following quality standards are the criteria by which Arkansas’s local Workforce Development Board’s assess and certify One-Stop Centers and Affiliates Sites.

Each site is asked to work together with leadership and staff to develop responses to the following:

- I. Rank on a scale of 1 to 5, where the site believes it is in its path toward meeting, or exceeding, the stated standard.
  - 5 = achieved the standard and excelling
  - 4 = significantly meeting standard with some work yet to do
  - 3 = have some of the elements in place, some of the time
  - 2 = making progress but long way to go
  - 1 = no progress yet

These scores will be used by the Certification Team as benchmarks for the site and help point to both areas of excellence and those in need of improvement.

- II. Provide clear evidence and examples of current status and future plans with strategies and timelines to reach these standards.

<b>Functional and Programmatic Integration</b>
<p>It is critical for Arkansas Workforce Centers and its partners to think and act as an integrated system. Arkansas Workforce Center partners ensure that client services are aligned to common goals and the customer experience is seamless – regardless of funding streams. Each customer is mutually regarded as a shared customer, with all staff and programs operating at the site having a vested stake in that customer’s success. Integration of programs is incorporated into planning, intake, assessment, registration, and service processes, information sharing, resource decisions, actions, results, and analyses.</p>
<p>Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Functional and Programmatic integration.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> 5           <input type="checkbox"/> 4           <input type="checkbox"/> 3           <input type="checkbox"/> 2           <input type="checkbox"/> 1         </p>
<p>Describe your site’s approach to integrated service delivery and the use of functional teams to deliver career services to all customers.</p>
<p>Include a detailed diagram of customer flow, services available, assessment and referrals, and describe how the MIS system is used to facilitate shared customer management across partner programs. Reference it as Appendix A.</p>
<p>Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.</p>

<b>Performance Accountability</b>
<p>Results and outcomes for the public investment in Arkansas Workforce Centers are essential to the system’s relevance. The effectiveness of Arkansas Workforce Centers for employers and job seekers is evident in system performance and service delivery decisions are based on data. On an ongoing basis, customer data from one-stop partners and regional economic data is collected, analyzed, and shared with all workforce system staff and community stakeholders. Plans for improvement, enhancement, or adjustment are established and acted upon.</p>
<p>Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Performance Accountability.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> 5           <input type="checkbox"/> 4           <input type="checkbox"/> 3           <input type="checkbox"/> 2           <input type="checkbox"/> 1         </p>

Describe how you measure, analyze, review, and improve system performance through the use of data and information.

Describe how this data is shared with staff and stakeholders and what changes have resulted from use of data. How has data been used (examples) to improve services?

What methods are in place for staff to provide feedback? How do you incorporate staff feedback as part of continuous quality improvement? How are staff informed how their feedback was reviewed and any action taken from their feedback? What metrics are used to show improvement and success?

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

### **Service Provision, Universal Access, and Outreach**

Improved availability, a welcoming atmosphere, inclusive settings, and high quality customer service benefit all customers. Arkansas Workforce Centers extend services and outreach not just to individuals who walk in the door, but also to those who have become disengaged in the labor force. Integrated, quality services are provided to all customers within the center and via technology through online or phone access. Principles of universal design are considered, which designs inclusive space and materials to be available to individuals regardless of their range of abilities, mobility, age, language, learning style, intelligence, or educational level.

Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Service Provision to all customers including Services, Access, and Outreach to populations with barriers.

5

4

3

2

1

Describe how the site works cooperatively with WIOA core partners to provide quality services to all customers. Describe your outreach to populations with barriers in the community and relationship with core program and community partners to effectively serve them.

Provide evidence that basic ADA requirements have been met, including processes to provide reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

Describe initiatives or strategies in developing universal access and provide tangible evidence of implementation or solution driven plan development. Address the following four specific areas of access:

1. Physical: Architectural or building
2. Information: all paper, printed or posted materials
3. Digital: software, web-based programs and alternatives to print
4. Communication: verbal, non-verbal access for services, phone and other

Describe your wireless internet infrastructure.

How are the needs of populations with barriers met through staff-assisted and other means?

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

### Customer Satisfaction

Performance and value are ultimately judged by customers – businesses and job seekers. Customer-centered design relies upon satisfying customer needs, identifying shortcomings and responding accordingly on a timely and ongoing basis. Tools to obtain feedback are appropriate for each customer’s use and take into consideration factors including literacy levels, use of technology, disability, and language.

Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Customer Satisfaction.

5

4

3

2

1

Describe how the voice of the customer is heard and how your site incorporates both job seeker and business customer feedback as part of continuous quality improvement? How are the voices of populations with barriers heard and brought to the table when designing services and facilities? How do you inform customers of how their feedback was reviewed and any action taken from their feedback? What metrics are used to show improvement and success?

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

### **Staff Competence and Staff Training Participation**

Professional development is a key feature in order to ensure that staff are aware of the implications of recent evidence-based research and can implement the latest policies and procedures established at the local, State and Federal levels. Also of vital importance is the use of labor market information by staff to better inform customers' career and training decision-making. The investment in staff development is substantial, ongoing, and focused on cross-training with partner programs, overall skill development, and use of labor market information. Every member of the one-stop staff has the ability and authority to meet customer needs, either directly or, where appropriate, by helping the customer make the right connections to the expertise he or she seeks. Participation in one-stop-sponsored training is required.

Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Staff Competence and Staff Training Participation.

5                       4                       3                       2                       1

How are staff and leadership trained and cross-trained on an ongoing basis to stay current on programs and services? How is this tracked to ensure that all staff participate?

How do you actively engage staff of all programs – Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser, TANF, ABE, DVR, Perkins, etc. – in design of services, action planning and analysis of indicators and trends? How are all staff informed of progress towards site performance and goals?

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.



### Partnership

The one-stop system is built upon a foundation of partners linked together to deliver a comprehensive array of services and reach the shared outcomes of employment, education, skills gains, and earnings. All core and required one-stop partners are present at the site and invested in the development and implementation of service delivery to connect customers to resources.

Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Partnership.

5

4

3

2

1

Describe how the partnerships function at the site and the roles of each core partner from Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth, Title II - Adult Basic Education, Title III - Wagner-Peyser, and Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation.

Describe how the partnerships function at the site with other required partners from postsecondary Career and Technical Education (Perkins Act), CSBG, HUD, Job Corps, National Farmworker Jobs Program, Re-entry programs, SCSEP, TAA, TANF, UI, VETS, and YouthBuild.

Describe how the site is linked to other partners beyond the site to ensure alignment with community and regional strategies. Please give examples of how this functions and the results for customers.

Describe how leadership works together to set the vision and goals for the site and then implements service strategies to achieve shared objectives.

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.

### Employer Engagement

Business is one of our primary customers and one-stop partners work collaboratively to deliver value-added services and eliminate duplication. Business services staff from all one-stop partners have a comprehensive understanding of labor market conditions, economic development activities, skill needs of the workforce and are connected to regional and local business partnership activities and sector strategies. Employers' human capital needs are communicated to and acted upon by the workforce system. Business services are coordinated to the maximum extent possible to limit duplication and streamline the employer experience.

Check the box where you think the site is with regard to Employer Engagement.

5

4

3

2

1

Describe how partners work to deliver seamless business services. How do business services staff use and share labor market information? What strategies are used to involve employers in identifying skill gaps and developing solutions to meet their workforce needs?

Describe how regional and local sector strategies are used to target services and resources to focus workforce efforts on investments and improve outcomes.

How are career pathways and training modalities such as industry-recognized credentials, apprenticeship, on-the-job training, and other work-based learning opportunities aligned with employers' needs and marketed to support talent development?

Please list any best practices to highlight and share for continuous improvement.