



Guidance

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE INVESTMENT
(502) 564-7456

GUIDANCE NAME: Kentucky Career Center Evaluation and Certification

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Applies/Of Interest to: Local Workforce Development Boards, Board Directors and Staff, Chief Local Elected Officials, KCC Operators

For further information contact: Darlene Bussell

Email: darlenek.bussell@ky.gov

PURPOSE:

In order to evaluate the workforce system's progress, WIOA in Section 121(g) directs Kentucky's state board, the KWIB, to establish "objective criteria and procedures" for the evaluation of the KCC system and the certification of KCCs. This guidance provides the procedures for evaluating and certifying Kentucky Career Centers as established by the KWIB in February 2018.

Career Center Certification is critical to the transformation of our workforce development system. The evaluation process of certification is critical for achieving our brand promise in order to achieve:

- 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.

The purpose of the evaluation is to drive integration and improvement of services, and certification is required in order for a KCC to receive infrastructure funding through agreement with the KCC Partner programs (see *Kentucky Guidance Kentucky General Guidance on Kentucky Career Center Operational Budget and Infrastructure Funding Agreements* for additional information on infrastructure funding).

POLICY:

Each KCC must be evaluated and certified on a regular basis not to exceed three years. Local boards are encouraged to establish a policy to evaluate and certify KCCs on a more frequent basis.

Through the evaluation and certification process, the Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) track the effectiveness of the KCCs in the system. Continuous improvement requires regular

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modifications based on customer feedback to improve the quality of services that are being delivered. 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 services, improving job seeker readiness and connecting the two through sector strategies and talent pipeline management.

WIOA establishes two main elements that the KWIB must establish criteria to evaluate. The first is Effectiveness, which includes customer satisfaction and physical and programmatic accessibility. The second is Continuous Improvement, which includes meeting performance standards. Those elements are discussed in greater detail in the Kentucky Guidance *Establishing Criteria for Kentucky Career Center Evaluation and Certification*.

Local Responsibility

In February 2018 the KWIB established criteria for the certification of Comprehensive Career Centers (Attachment I), Affiliate Career Centers (Attachment II), and KCC Access Points (Attachment III).

It is the responsibility of the LWDB to certify KCCs in each LWDA. Local boards must use the criteria developed by the KWIB, but may develop additional criteria related to service coordination or higher levels of service in the local certification process.

*Note: the KWIB, rather than the LWDB, which must certify any KCC where the LWDB is the KCC Operator.

The certification process gives the LWDB the opportunity to make a formal assessment of the workforce system based on the established standards in a Certification Application. Certification will help the LWDB ensure a consistent level of quality in the services provided in the LWDA and the Region.

Certification of a KCC is a requirement for that center to be eligible to receive infrastructure funding (see Kentucky Guidance *Kentucky General Guidance on Kentucky Career Center Operational Budget and Infrastructure Funding Agreements*). Once a KCC is certified, the LWDB, with the agreement of the CLEO, will also enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) agreement on partnership, governance and certification of the KCC Operator and the KCC system.

The LWDB's role is primarily one of governance, negotiation, and quality control. It is essential to remember that each KCC Operator is a reflection of the standards that have been established by the LWDB and the state.

KCC certification evaluations must be completed at least once every three years using the criteria developed by the KWIB and any additional criteria from the LWDB. If a KCC certification expires, that KCC loses its eligibility for infrastructure funding.

The Application

LWDBs should select the appropriate application for each career center according to state and local policy (see Kentucky Guidance *KCC System Design*).

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.

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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."

Review Team

The LWDB should appoint a Review Team responsible for conducting the certification application review. The responsibilities of the Review Team include:

- Review of the application and key documents;
- Selecting 1 to 3 measures from each section of the application/review form for audit during the on-site visit, auditing a total of five measures;
- Scheduling the on-site visit, allowing at least two weeks' notice, and notify the Career Center of the selected measures to be audited during the visit;
- Conducting the on-site review; and
- Submitting the letter of findings and recommendation to the LWDB, Career Center and DWI.

Local Process

The LWDB must adopt the KWIB certification criteria and may establish additional criteria for KCC certification. Once the criteria are established, the KWIB has established the following general steps for certification.

- 1) The Career Center completes the appropriate application package.

The application package consists of five key documents:

- A letter of intent to accompany the application package to the LWDB;
- The application;

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- The Partner MOU for the Career Center;
 - An Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance letter from Carol Weber (Carols.weber@ky.gov) expressing a convergence of will between the parties, and indicating an intended common line of action; and
 - The staff development plan.
- 2) The Career Center sends the letter of intent and application package to the LWDB.
 - 3) The LWDB notifies the Review Team and forwards the application package for review, including the contact name for the Career Center certification team.
 - 4) After reviewing the application documents, the Review Team contacts the Career Center to schedule an on-site visit with a minimum advance two weeks' notice.
 - 5) The Review Team conducts the on-site visit. The KCC staff should be ready to provide on-site documents and assistance to the Review Team during the visit.
 - 6) The Review Team presents findings to the Career Center and allows the Center's Operator and partners the opportunity for minor corrections.
 - 7) The Review Team sends letter to the LWDB and the Career Center with findings and recommendations, updated to reflect any corrections from step 6.
 - 8) The LWDB considers the Review Team's report and makes a decision regarding certification.

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 KCC to resolve deficiencies identified through the evaluation process.

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 and DWI of the certification and the date of certification;

*Certification not granted – The Career Center and LWDB explore solutions for meeting measures that were not met in the original application; or

*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 an acceptable center accommodations in a permanent location.

*-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.

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Reconsideration Process

- A Career Center submits a reconsideration request to the LWDB, detailing measures that have been addressed and the documentation/evidence available for review.
- The LWDB reviews the request and makes a decision regarding certification. If approved, the LWDB notifies the Career Center, the KWIB and DWI.

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
