



## GUIDANCE: 2017 One-Stop Certification Criteria

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### **Background.**

1. Congress enacted the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) on July 22, 2014.
2. The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), U.S. Department of Education (USDOE), and Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) published in the Federal Register final implementing regulations (Final Rules) on August 19, 2016.
3. WIOA and its Final Rules contain requirements with respect to the One-Stop Delivery Systems (Systems), Comprehensive One-Stop Centers (Centers), Affiliated Sites in the System, Equal Opportunity, and One-Stop Certification of Centers and Systems.
4. Under WIOA, Local Workforce Development Boards (Local Boards) are charged with oversight of the System, including the performance of One-Stop Certification at least once every three (3) years, in accordance with criteria and procedures developed by the State Workforce Development Board (State Board).
5. Under WIOA, One-Stop Certification focuses on the Center, but also includes evaluations of how well the System meets the Equal Opportunity obligations under WIOA section 188.
6. WIOA and its Final Rules require that One-Stop Certification include evaluations of effectiveness that include how well the Center:
  - a. Integrates available services for participants and businesses;
  - b. Meets the workforce development needs of participants and the employment needs of local employers;
  - c. Operates in a cost-efficient manner;
  - d. Coordinates services among the one-stop partner programs;
  - e. Provides access to partner program services to the maximum extent practicable, including providing services outside of regular business hours where there is a workforce need, as identified by the Local Board.

7. WIOA and its Final Rules require that One-Stop Certification evaluations of effectiveness take into account feedback from one-stop customers.
8. WIOA and its Final Rules require that One-Stop Certification include evaluations of the effectiveness that address how well each Center and System take actions to comply with the disability-related regulations implementing WIOA section 188, set forth at 29 C.F.R. part 38, including but not limited to:
  - a. Providing reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities;
  - b. Making reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures where necessary to avoid discrimination against people with disabilities;
  - c. Administering programs in the most integrated setting appropriate;
  - d. Communicating with people with disabilities as effectively as with others;
  - e. Providing appropriate auxiliary aids and services, including assistive technology devices and services, where necessary to afford people with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and enjoy the benefits of, the program or activity; and
  - f. Providing for the physical and programmatic accessibility of the Center to individuals with disabilities.
9. One-Stop Certification must evaluate continuous improvement, including how well the Center supports the achievement of the negotiated levels of performances for the indicators of performance for the Local Workforce Development Area (Local Area) described in WIOA section 116(b)(2) and the Final Rules. Other continuous improvement factors in One-Stop Certification may include:
  - a. Whether there is regular process for identifying and responding to technical assistance needs;
  - b. Whether there is regular system of continuing professional staff development; and
  - c. Whether there are systems in place to capture and respond to specific customer feedback.
10. WIOA requires that the State Board, in consultation with chief elected officials (CEOs) and Local Boards, develop statewide One-Stop Certification criteria and procedures.
11. Local Boards may establish additional criteria, or set higher standards for service coordination, than those set by the State Board's One-Stop Certification criteria.
12. WIOA requires Local Boards to certify Centers in order to be eligible to use infrastructure funds in the State funding mechanism under WIOA section 121(h).

13. This Guidance covers One-Stop Certification in Iowa, which must be completed by each Local Board on or before December 31, 2017.

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## **1. Territory of the Region.**

- 1) Under WIOA, the smallest organizational territory is a Local Area.
- 2) Each Local Area must have a Local Board that meets the membership requirements under WIOA section 107.
- 3) WIOA requires the designation of “Regions.” A “Region” consists of one or more Local Workforce Development Areas (Local Areas).
- 4) In Iowa, each Local Area is also a Region. Any reference to a Local Area in this Guidance is a reference to a Region and any reference to a Region is a reference to a Local Area.
- 5) Section 1 of the One-Stop Certification requires the Local Board to identify each State of Iowa county that is a part of its Region.

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## **2. The Region’s Comprehensive One-Stop Center.**

- 1) WIOA requires that each Region must have at least one Center in its System.
- 2) The Center is the focus of One-Stop Certification under WIOA and its Final Rules.
- 3) The Center is a physical location where job seeker and employer customers can access the programs, services, and activities of all one-stop partners, during the Center’s regular business hours.
- 4) The Center must provide:
  - a. Career services, described in the WIOA Final Rules;
  - b. Access to training services, described in the WIOA Final Rules;
  - c. Access to employment and training activities carried out under WIOA section 134(d);
  - d. Workforce and Labor Market information.
- 5) The Center must be physically and programmatically accessible to people with disabilities, as described in WIOA section 188 and its implementing regulations.
- 6) In Section 2, the Local Board must identify the Center in its Regional System.

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### **3. The Region's Affiliated Site(s).**

- 1) The WIOA Final Rules refer to Affiliated Sites alternatively as an Affiliate Site or "Affiliated One-Stop Center." In order to avoid unnecessary confusion, this Guidance and the One-Stop Certification criteria refer to these facilities as Affiliated Sites.
- 2) An Affiliated Site is a site that makes available to job seeker and employer customers one or more of the one-stop partners' programs, services, and activities.
- 3) An Affiliated Site does not need to provide access to every one-stop partner program.
- 4) The frequency of one-stop partner program staff's physical presence in the Affiliated Site will be determined at the local level.
- 5) Affiliated Sites are access points in addition to the Center in each Region.
- 6) If used by a Region as part of the service delivery strategy, Affiliated Sites must be implemented in a manner that supplements and enhances customer access to services.
- 7) All Affiliated Sites must be physically and programmatically accessible to people with disabilities, as described in WIOA section 188 and its implementing regulations.
- 8) In Section 3, the Local Board must identify each Affiliated Site (if any) in the Region.

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### **4. Evaluation of Effectiveness and Support of Continuous Improvement.**

- 1) Under WIOA, One-Stop Certification focuses on the Center, but also includes evaluations of how well the System meets the Equal Opportunity obligations under WIOA section 188 and its implementing regulations.
- 2) Section 4.1 through 4.7 focus on meeting the WIOA Final Rules' requirement to evaluate the Center's effectiveness and support of continuous improvement.
- 3) Section 4.8 evaluates how well the Center and Affiliated Site(s) take actions to comply with the disability-related provisions of WIOA section 188 and its implementing regulations, with a focus on the areas expressly identified in the WIOA Final Rules on One-Stop Certification.
- 4) With respect to the requirement in the WIOA Final Rules that One-Stop Certification's evaluation of continuous improvement must include how well the Center supports the achievement of the negotiated local levels of performance for the indicators of performance for the Region, the One-Stop Certification criteria in Section 4 are designed to collectively meet this requirement. The Center's score on the criteria in Section 4 will reflect how well the Center supports the achievement of the negotiated local levels of performance for the indicators of performance for the Region.

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#### **4.1. Continuous Improvement and Customer Feedback.**

- 1) This Section is intended to meet the requirements under WIOA and its Final Rules that One-Stop Certification criteria must evaluate how well the Center supports continuous improvement and how well the Center captures and responds to customer feedback.
- 2) Section 4.1.1 evaluates whether the Center meets the optional continuous improvement factors in the WIOA Final Rules on One-Stop Certification that do not include customer feedback.
- 3) Section 4.1.2 evaluates how well the Center is using customer feedback, including the optional continuous improvement factor relating to such.
- 4) Section 4.1.2 evaluates whether the One-Stop Certification took into account customer feedback, as required by the WIOA Final Rules on One-Stop Certification.

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#### **4.2. How well does the Center meet the needs of participants?**

- 1) A “participant” is a job seeker or worker who is participating in a one-stop partner program.
- 2) One goal of the Iowa WIOA Unified State Plan is that *all* Iowans will be provided access to a continuum of high-quality education, training, and career opportunities.
- 3) This Section is intended to meet the requirement under WIOA and its Final Rules that One-Stop Certification criteria must evaluate how well the Center meets the workforce development needs of participants and how well the Center supports continuous improvement.
- 4) To evaluate this, the One-Stop Certification criteria incorporate the required services that a Center must make available under WIOA and its Final Rules.
- 5) Section 4.2.1 evaluates whether the Center is making available the basic career services under WIOA and its Final Rules.
- 6) Section 4.2.2 evaluates whether the Center is making available the individualized career services required under WIOA and its Final Rules.
- 7) Section 4.2.3 evaluates whether the Center is making available the follow-up services required by required under WIOA and its Final Rules.
- 8) Section 4.2.4 evaluates whether the Center is providing access to the training services required under WIOA and its Final Rules.

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#### **4.3. How well does the Center meet the needs of local employers?**

- 1) A “local employer” is an entity within the Region that employs workers.

- 2) One goal of the Iowa WIOA Unified State Plan is that employers will have access to advanced, skilled, diverse, and Future Ready workers.
- 3) This Section is intended to meet the requirement under WIOA and its Final Rules that One-Stop Certification criteria must evaluate how well the Center meets the workforce development needs of local employers and how well the Center supports continuous improvement.
- 4) To evaluate this, the One-Stop Certification criteria incorporate the required business services that a Center must make available under WIOA and its Final Rules.
- 5) Section 4.3.1 evaluates whether the Center is making available the basic business services required under WIOA and its Final Rules.
- 6) Section 4.3.2. Evaluates whether the Center is making available the customized business services required under WIOA and its Final Rules.
- 7) Section 4.3.3 evaluates whether the Center is supporting the other business services and strategies in WIOA and its Final Rules.

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#### **4.4. How well does the Center integrate available services?**

- 1) This Section is intended to meet the requirement under WIOA and its Final Rules that One-Stop Certification criteria must evaluate how well the Center integrates available services and how well the Center supports continuous improvement.
- 2) One goal of the Iowa WIOA Unified State Plan is to align all programs and services in an accessible, seamless and integrated manner, with integration one of the plan's four themes.
- 3) Centers in Iowa have long used the "Iowa *WORKS*" brand name. WIOA requires the use of a common identifier to unite Centers and one-stop partners under a common brand across the country. Section 4.4.1 evaluates how well the Center has implemented the common identifier required by WIOA, its Final Rules, and Iowa policy: "Iowa *WORKS*: A proud partner in the American Job Center network."
- 4) Section 4.4.2 evaluates how well one-stop partner programs have implemented the "A proud partner in the American Job Center network" common identifier.
- 5) Section 4.4.3 evaluates how well the Center has integrated its web presence.
- 6) Section 4.4.4 evaluates how many one-stop partner programs are included in the Center's integrated customer intake process. An integrated intake process is an important part of the vision under WIOA of a seamless customer experience that allows for Center staff to identify programs, services, and activities that meet the participant's individual needs.

- 7) Section 4.4.5 evaluates how well the Center has integrated its delivery of the basic career services required under WIOA and its Final Rules, by identifying which one-stop partner programs are participating in the provision of each.
- 8) Section 4.4.6 evaluates how well the Center has integrated its delivery of the individualized career services required under WIOA and its Final Rules, by identifying which one-stop partner programs are participating in the provision of each.

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#### **4.5. Coordination of Services at the Center.**

- 1) This Section is intended to meet the requirement under WIOA and its Final Rules that One-Stop Certification criteria must evaluate how well the Center coordinates services among one-stop partner programs and how well the Center supports continuous improvement.
- 2) The System under WIOA includes multiple federal programs as one-stop partners. Sections 4.5.1 through 4.5.20 evaluate how well the Center coordinates each one-stop partner program with the other one-stop partner programs, including co-enrollment, referrals, coordination of services among co-enrolled participants, and standard practices.
- 3) Section 4.5.21 evaluates how well the Center's integrated business services team coordinates its services and activities with one-stop partner program staff who work with participants.

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#### **4.6. How cost-efficient are the Center's operations?**

- 1) This Section is intended to meet the requirement under WIOA and its Final Rules that One-Stop Certification criteria must evaluate how well the Center operates in a cost-efficient manner and support continuous improvement.
- 2) Section 4.6.1 evaluates the cost-efficiency of the Center's physical location by considering how its lease was procured, what the lease covers, and how many one-stop partner programs are co-located to share the costs associated with the Center's physical location.
- 3) Section 4.6.2. evaluates how cost-efficient the Center's data and case management system(s) are by evaluating how they are supported and how many one-stop partner programs use them.
- 4) Section 4.6.3 evaluates how cost-efficient the Center's personnel is by considering the share of the Center's budget that is dedicated to personnel.
- 5) Section 4.6.4 evaluates how cost-efficient the Center's one-stop operator services are by evaluating the procurement process, how the role is defined, whether the Region joined with other Regions to procure one-stop operator services, and the cost relative to the Region's available federal funding for the Title I Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker programs.
- 6) Section 4.6.5 evaluates how well the Center leverages non-federal resources.

- 7) Section 4.6.6 evaluates how efficient the Center’s use of accessible information technology (IT) is, which is a benefit of integration identified by the U.S. Departments of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services.

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#### **4.7. Access to One-Stop Partner Program Services at the Center.**

- 1) This Section is intended to meet the requirement under WIOA and its Final Rules that One-Stop Certification criteria must evaluate how well the Center provides access to one-stop partner program services to the maximum extent practicable, including providing services outside of regular business hours where there is a workforce need, as identified by the Local Board, and how well the Center supports continuous improvement.
- 2) WIOA and its Final Rules require that the Center provide “access to” all one-stop partner programs. Access to one-stop partner programs at the Center can take one or more of three alternative forms:
  - a. Having a program staff member physically present at the Center;
  - b. Having a staff member from a different partner program physically present at the Center and appropriately trained to provide information to customers about the programs, services, and activities available through all partner programs; or
  - c. Making available a direct linkage through technology to a program staff member who can provide to customers meaningful information or services.
- 3) One of the goals of the Iowa WIOA Unified State Plan is that *all* Iowans will be provided access to a continuum of high quality education, training, and career opportunities.
- 4) Section 4.7.1 evaluates whether the Center provides services outside of regular business hours where there is a workforce need.
- 5) Section 4.7.2 evaluates how well the Center provides access to the WIOA core one-stop partner programs during regular business hours. This Section uses a scoring system that rewards each of three allowable methods of providing access to a one-stop partner program under WIOA and its Final Rules.
- 6) Section 4.7.3 evaluates how well the Center provides access to each of the non-core required one-stop partner programs during regular business hours. This Section uses a scoring system that rewards each of three allowable methods of providing access to a one-stop partner program under WIOA and its Final Rules.



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## **4.8. Evaluation of Equal Opportunity in the Center and System.**

- 1) This Section is intended to meet the requirement under WIOA and its Final Rules that One-Stop Certification criteria must include evaluations of effectiveness that include how well each Center and System take actions to comply with the disability-related regulations implementing WIOA section 188, set forth at 29 C.F.R. part 38, including but not limited to:
  - a. Providing reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities;
  - b. Making reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures where necessary to avoid discrimination against people with disabilities;
  - c. Administering programs in the most integrated setting appropriate;
  - d. Communicating with people with disabilities as effectively as with others;
  - e. Providing appropriate auxiliary aids and services, including assistive technology devices and services, where necessary to afford people with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and enjoy the benefits of, the program or activity; and
  - f. Providing for the physical and programmatic accessibility of the Center to individuals with disabilities.
- 2) This Section is also intended to support continuous improvement.
- 3) One of the goals of the Iowa WIOA Unified State Plan is that Iowa employers will have access to an advanced, skilled, diverse, and Future Ready workforce. Another goal is that *all* Iowans will be provided access to a continuum of high quality education, training, and career opportunities. Accessibility was a theme of the plan.
- 4) This Section focuses on the six itemized areas of focus in the WIOA Final Rules on One-Stop Certification, recognizing that the State Equal Opportunity Officer monitoring covers this same territory and not wanting to engage in a redundant assessment. The One-Stop Certification incorporates State Equal Opportunity Officer monitoring and rewards it to reinforce the importance of that process and avoid the unnecessary duplication of efforts.
- 5) Section 4.8.1 evaluates how well the Center provides reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities, using factors that include policy, procedures, training, and standard practice.
- 6) Section 4.8.2 evaluates how well the Center takes actions to make reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures to ensure that people with disabilities enjoy the full benefit of the Center's programs, activities, and services.
- 7) Section 4.8.3 evaluates how well the Center takes actions to administer programs in the most integrated setting appropriate, using factors that include policy, procedures, and standard practice with respect to the integrated administration of programs, services, and activities, and

whether the Center, where appropriate, provides reasonable accommodations and modifications for people with disabilities that include a segregated setting where necessary to allow them to enjoy the full benefit of programs, services, and activities.

- 8) Section 4.8.4 evaluates how well the Center takes actions to communicate as effectively with people with disabilities as other people, using factors that include outreach and marketing materials, signage, electronic resources, and how the Center provides auxiliary aids and services to people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, Blind, or have a sight impairment.
- 9) Section 4.8.5 evaluates how well the Center takes actions to provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services, including assistive technology devices and services, to people with disabilities.
- 10) Section 4.8.6 evaluates how well the Center takes actions to ensure physical and programmatic accessibility by using whether the Center participated in State Equal Opportunity monitoring and whether the Local Board has established a Disability Access Committee as part of the State Board's Disability Access Initiative.
- 11) Section 4.8.7 evaluates how well Affiliated Sites provide reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities, using factors that include policy, procedures, training, and standard practice.
- 12) Section 4.8.8 evaluates how well Affiliated Sites take actions to make reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures to ensure that people with disabilities enjoy the full benefit of the Center's programs, activities, and services.
- 13) Section 4.8.9 evaluates how well Affiliated Sites take actions to administer programs in the most integrated setting appropriate, using factors that include policy, procedures, and standard practice with respect to the integrated administration of programs, services, and activities, and whether the Center, where appropriate, provides reasonable accommodations and modifications to allow people with disabilities that include a segregated setting where necessary to allow people with disabilities to enjoy the full benefit of programs, services, and activities.
- 14) Section 4.8.10 evaluates how well Affiliated Sites take actions to communicate as effectively with people with disabilities as other people, using factors that include outreach and marketing materials, signage on the interior and exterior of the Center, electronic resources, and how the Center provides auxiliary aids and services to people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, Blind, or have a sight impairment.
- 15) Section 4.8.11 evaluates how well Affiliated Sites take actions to provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services, including assistive technology devices and services, to people with disabilities.
- 16) Section 4.8.12 evaluates how well the Affiliated Sites take action to meet the physical and programmatic accessibility requirements, using the question of whether they have participated in a State Equal Opportunity monitoring within the previous three years.

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## Scoring

- 1) The One-Stop Certification criteria scoring is intended to create a point system that awards compliance with WIOA and its Final Rules and fulfillment of the WIOA vision for an integrated System with a truly comprehensive Center at its heart.
- 2) Each Region's score will set a benchmark against which the Region will be measured during the period of time between this and the next One-Stop Certification, as well as during that One-Stop Certification. This will promote continuous improvement in the areas of focus under the mandatory One-Stop Certification criteria as set forth in the WIOA Final Rules.
- 3) The State Board, Local Boards, chief elected officials, and one-stop partners will use the scores from all Regions to identify strengths, areas of opportunity, statewide staff training needs, and where to devote technical assistance resources.

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## Questions

If you have any questions, please contact:

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