



ARKANSAS
Workforce Investment Board
POLICY MANUAL

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PAGE ___ of ___
By _____ Effective: ___/___/___

SUBJECT

Definition of Credential

APPROVED

POLICY STATEMENT: Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 17-05 received from the U.S. Department of Labor requires States to measure the credential attainment rate for adults, dislocated workers and older youth who have obtained employment. TEGL 1705 replaces existing guidance with a single, unified Department of Labor document on the common measures and WIA Section 136 performance accountability system. This guidance sets forth one set of measures to be used for both common measures reporting purposes and WIA Section 136 performance accountability purposes (with certain exceptions).

In accordance with TEGL 17-05, Arkansas is defining a "credential" to be any of the following:

- A. A certificate, diploma, degree or statement of competency awarded by an eligible training provider that is on the state approved list required under Section 122 of the Workforce Investment Act.**
- Certificate – A certificate is awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or occupational skills necessary to gain employment or advance within an occupation. These technical or occupation skills are based on standards developed or endorsed by employers. Certificates awarded by workforce investment boards are not included in this definition. Work readiness certificates are also not included in this definition. A certificate is awarded in recognition of an individual's attainment of technical or occupational skills by:
 - A state educational agency or a state agency responsible for administering vocational and technical education within a state.
 - An institution of higher education described in Section 102 of the Higher Education Act (20 USC 1002) that is qualified to participate in the student financial assistance programs authorized by Title IV of that Act. This includes community colleges, proprietary schools and all other institutions of higher education that are eligible to participate in federal student financial aid programs.
 - A professional, industry, or employer organization (e.g., National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence certification, National Institute for Metalworking Skills, Inc., Machining level I credential) or a product manufacturer or developer (e.g., Microsoft Certified Database Administrator, Certified Novell Engineer, Sun Certified Java Programmer) using a valid and reliable assessment of an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities.
 - A registered apprenticeship program.
 - A public regulatory agency, upon an individual's fulfillment of educational, work experience, or skill requirements that are legally necessary for an individual to use an occupational or professional title or to practice an occupation or profession (e.g., FAA aviation mechanic certification, state certified asbestos inspector).
 - A program that has been approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs to offer education benefits to veterans and other eligible persons.
 - Job Corps centers that issue certificates.
 - Institutions of higher education that are formally controlled, or have been formally sanctioned, or chartered, by the governing body of an Indian tribe or tribes.
- B. Completion or attainment of any of the following:**
- Credential – A nationally recognized degree or certificate or state/locally recognized credential. Credentials include, but are not limited to, a high school diploma, GED, or other recognized equivalents, post-secondary degrees/certificates, recognized skill standards, and licensure or industry-recognized certificates. All recognized credentials issued by state education agencies should be included in this definition. The state will work with local workforce investment boards to encourage certificates to recognize successful completion of the training services listed above that are designed to equip individuals to enter or re-enter employment, retain employment, or advance into better employment. (Please note: this term applies to the current WIA statutory adult, dislocated worker, and older youth measures only, it does not apply to the common measures.

Attachment O-1

Arkansas Workforce Investment Board's Definition of Credential

Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 7-99 received from the U.S. Department of Labor requires States to measure the credential attainment rate for adults, dislocated workers and older youth who have obtained employment. TEGL 7-99 gives the following broad definition of "credential":

Credential - nationally recognized degree or certificate or State/locally recognized credential. Credentials include, but are not limited to, a high school diploma, GED or other recognized equivalents, post-secondary degrees/certificates, recognized skill standards, and licensure or industry-recognized certificates. States should include all State Education Agency recognized credentials. In addition, States should work with local Workforce Investment Boards to encourage certificates to recognize successful completion of the training services listed above that are designed to equip individuals to enter or re-enter employment, retain employment, or advance into better employment.

TEGL 7-99 delegates to States the responsibility to define specifically which items will be allowed to count as a credential for WIA performance. In accordance with TEGL 7-99, Arkansas is defining a "credential" to be any of the following:

- A. A certificate, diploma, degree or statement of competency awarded by an eligible training provider that is on the state approved list required under Section 122 of the Workforce Investment Act.**
- B. Completion or attainment of any of the following:**
 - High School diploma;
 - General Educational Development (GED); or
 - A certificate, diploma, associate, bachelor, graduate or higher degree issued by an institution of higher education that is legally authorized to offer postsecondary education.
- C. A locally defined and documented credential which meets the following criteria:**

A certificate or diploma awarded by a training provider (including an On-the-Job-Training [OJT] employer provider) that has undertaken the following:

- Identified the specific competencies, tasks, or skills attained by the participant. The competencies, tasks, or skills shall be identified by:
 - Employer input at the national, state, regional, or local level;
 - Reviewed on an annual basis or periodic basis that is identified;
 - Developed and implemented curriculum to support instruction of the competencies, tasks, or skills; and
 - Confirmed attainment or completion of competency, tasks, or skills through valid and reliable testing or demonstration of competence, tasks, or skills.

- Obtained endorsement of the Local Board. In endorsing the credential, the Local Board shall confirm:
 - Initial and periodic employer involvement;
 - Use of curriculum or instruction consistent with the competency, tasks, or skills for which the credential is issued; and
 - Use of testing or demonstration of competence that reasonably confirms that the competencies, tasks, or skills have been obtained.

This application of this definition will become retroactively effective to July 1, 2002, upon approval by appropriate authorities. Local areas should follow this guidance in determining whether a training certification received by a recipient of WIA (or Partner Funded) training services constitutes a credential, for the purposes of inclusion in the WIA performance measures.

The data for this credential measure will be gathered locally. Local staff will use the follow up process to find which WIA clients have attained a credential by the end of the third quarter after exit, and enter this information into AWIS.

Local Areas should attain verification of the credential and retain it in the client's file for purposes of monitoring. The Local Board has discretion, under Option C, to carefully evaluate other types of locally defined credentials on their own merit to ensure recognition of successful completion of training services by WIA participants.