

Southwest Georgia

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## **SOUTHWEST GEORGIA LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT REGION 10/AREA 17**

### **One-Stop Certification Guidelines PY24-25**

**Policy #WIOA-063**

**WDB Approval Date 6/4/24 to Adopt State Certification Criteria for PY24-25**

## **Background**

The American Job Center network includes the mandated programs and partners of Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth workforce services; Title II Adult Education and Carl Perkins Technical Education; Title III Wagner-Peyser, Unemployment Insurance, Veterans Services and Trade Adjustment; Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation; Community Service Block Grants; Senior Community Service Employment Program; Job Corps; YouthBuild; HUD Employment programs; and Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers. Through the one-stop system, these partners ensure employers and job seekers have access to information and services in the workforce system. The management of this network is the shared responsibility of SWDB, LWDBs, elected officials, and the partner programs.

In accordance with 20 CFR § 678.800, the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) developed the following minimum criteria for the certification of comprehensive and affiliate one-stops throughout Region 10.

The LWDB must complete one-stop certification for each location as either a comprehensive or affiliate site. Sites must be certified by the LWDB in order to utilize their locally negotiated infrastructure cost agreement.

The Region's One-Stop Certification is comprised of the following categories, which evaluate the one-stop for effectiveness:

- a. Customer Flow of Services
- c. Operational Details
- d. WorkSource Georgia Branding Identifier
- e. Customer Satisfaction
- f. Continuous Improvement
- g. Accessibility and Equal Opportunity Certification

LWDBs may include additional categories of certification criteria and/or additional criteria under existing categories. While the SWDB does not require review of LWDB added criteria, the additional criteria must be approved through a LWDB vote. OWD will review completed certification documentation after the June 30, 2024 deadline. Additionally, OWD will verify no changes to certification have occurred as part of the annual monitoring. OWD will update the monitoring tools annually to ensure accurate oversight of the established criteria.

The Southwest Georgia WDB approved and adopted the State One-Stop and Affiliate Certification criteria as stated above on June 4, 2024.

One-Stop certification criteria must be reviewed every two years. The criteria above may be used for the certification of one-stops during PY24 (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025) and PY25 (July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026).

### **Understanding the One-Stop System**

Federal service delivery requirements are different for Comprehensive and Affiliate sites; therefore, these guidelines require LWDBs to complete distinct certification tools for each type of location. Furthermore, a certification tool must be completed for each potential Comprehensive and Affiliate site. Regardless of designation, all sites must be physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities, as required by WIOA section 188 and the implementing regulations in 29 CFR part 38.

### **Memorandums of Understanding & Infrastructure Cost Agreements**

WIOA Section 121(c)(2) stipulates the requirements for developing a memorandum of understanding. Each LWDA must draft and execute an umbrella MOU or series of MOUs detailing their one-stop service delivery network. The MOU(s) must be negotiated and executed by all of the required partners present within the LWDA. When an LWDA's service delivery network includes affiliate sites, the umbrella MOU, or site-specific MOU, must address and detail the services provided at each of the affiliate sites. In the event that the LWDA uses an umbrella MOU, one option is to add an addendum or attachment to the MOU which identifies and details each of the LWDA's affiliate sites. In addition to identifying each affiliate site's location and detailing the method and type of services which will be provided, the affiliate site must address infrastructure costs. If the LWDA chooses not to utilize an umbrella MOU, it will need to create stand-alone, site specific MOUs for every affiliate site within its network.

It is important to note that while WIOA requires all of the required partner programs present within an LWDA to contribute to the comprehensive one-stop's infrastructure, only those required partners whose programs are accessible at the affiliate site must contribute to the affiliate site's infrastructure. Therefore, if only WIOA Title I services are provided at an affiliate site, then the infrastructure costs will be solely funded by WIOA Title I. When two or more required partner programs provide access to their services at the affiliate site, the infrastructure funding agreement must ensure each partner provides a fair share consistent with the program's proportionate use and relative benefit received. Furthermore, any infrastructure contribution must comply with the regulations set forth in the Uniform Administrative Guidance.

### **Comprehensive Sites**

A comprehensive site is a physical location where job seekers and employer customers can access the programs, services, and activities of all required one-stop partners, along with any additional partners as determined by the LWDB.

The comprehensive one-stop center must have:

1. At least one WIOA Title I staff person physically present, and provide career services as described in §678.430 (full listing of basic and intensive career services);
2. Access to training services described in §680.200. (Not all-inclusive, but provides listing of training services for adult and dislocated workers);

3. Access to any employment and training activities carried out under WIOA section 134(d) (listing of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities);
4. Access to programs and activities carried out by one-stop partners listed in §678.400 through §678.410 (includes full listing of required partner activities); and,
5. Workforce and labor market information.

Customers must have access to these programs, services, and activities during regular business days at a comprehensive one-stop center. The LWDB may establish other service hours outside of normal business hours to accommodate the schedules of individuals who work on regular business days. The SWDB will evaluate operational hours as part of the evaluation of effectiveness in the one-stop certification process described in §678.800(b).

#### Affiliate Sites

As described in §678.310, an affiliate site is a location that provides access to one or more of the one-stop partners' programs, services, and activities. As such, an affiliated site does not need to provide access to every required one-stop program, but should be knowledgeable about and able to make referrals as needed. The frequency of program staff's physical presence in the affiliated site will be determined at the local level, and must be formalized in the MOU. The regulations specify that affiliate sites may be established in LWDA's to enhance and broaden the impact of the LWDA's service delivery network.

When considering designation as an affiliate site, it is important to remember that Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs are considered different programs under Title I. Therefore, if providing WIOA Title I Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker programs only, the location still constitutes an affiliate. Furthermore, if only two of the above stated programs are provided, the location still constitutes an affiliate. If only one of those programs is being provided, the location may constitute an affiliate or specialized site (see next section for more information regarding specialized sites).

#### Specialized Sites

The One-Stop system may have additional sites outside of comprehensive and affiliate sites, which includes the designation of "specialized sites" to address specific needs, such as Dislocated Workers, Youth, Veterans, key industry sectors or clusters. Per §678.320, a specialized site is similar to an affiliate in that it does not need to provide access to every required partner, but should be knowledgeable about and able to make referrals as needed.

A location constitutes a specialized site if:

- Is a stand-alone partner program office (e.g. GVRA);
- Is time-limited (i.e., In response to a regional lay-off event, WARN event); OR

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- Includes only one WIOA title I program (i.e., Veteran or Youth only site) and no other partner program(s)

While not requiring full certification, specialized sites must be physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities, as required by section 188 of WIOA and its implementing regulations at 29 CFR part 38. OWD will monitor compliance with accessibility requirements through the annual monitoring process.

#### Wagner-Peyser Co-location

Per 20 CFR §678.315, if Wagner-Peyser Act employment services are provided at an affiliate site, there must be at least one or more other partner(s) in the affiliate with a physical presence of combined staff more than 50% of the time the center is open. As such, Wagner-Peyser cannot be a separate, stand-alone office. If there are any GDOL centers offering Wagner-Peyser services, these centers must meet the definition of and be certified as an affiliate site. However, the other partner **must not be** the partner administering local veterans' reemployment representatives, disabled veterans' outreach representatives, disabled veterans' outreach program specialties, or unemployment compensation programs.

#### Technical College Campus Site

Some LWDA's provide WIOA Title I-funded career services at local technical college campuses. These services are typically provided by contractors, subrecipients, or LWDA programmatic staff. Since these sites "make available to job seeker and employer customers one or more of the one-stop partners' program, services, and activities," they meet the definition of an affiliate site. Therefore, if the career services are provided out of office space that is rented or leased by a contractor or local WIOA Title I service provider for the sole purpose of providing WIOA Title I services, the location would be considered an affiliate site.

If the site is only providing Adult Education and Carl Perkins activities, OWD has determined the location does not constitute an affiliate site. Perkins dollars fund instruction, but no direct services to participants or case management is offered. However, if Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, or other partner program activities are also offered at that location, it constitutes an affiliate and must be certified as such.

If a technical college site is deemed an affiliate and needs a cost sharing structure, the LWDB should use their own discretion when determining what is the "site" (i.e., if only sharing room, single building, single office, the affiliate does not need to be the entire campus).

#### Mobile Units

Depending on its use, mobile units can be classified as either affiliate or specialized sites. When considering certification for mobile units, affiliates have

an element of permanency. If the unit essentially acts as another affiliate site that happens to travel around the LWDA's service delivery area, then it may be classified as an affiliate. If the unit changes function, it may be appropriate to classify it as a specialized site instead.

This allows LWDBs flexibility; however, LWDBs can always raise the bar and vote to certify mobile units as affiliates, even if they only meet the definition of a specialized site. Both affiliate and specialized sites must be physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities, as required by section 188 of WIOA and its implementing regulations at 29 CFR part 38, regardless of whether the site requires certification or not. OWD will monitor compliance with accessibility requirements through the annual monitoring process if the site is not certified as an affiliate.

#### What does "access" mean?

As described in § 678.305(d), the federal regulations define "access" as the following:

1. Having a program staff member physically present at the one-stop center;
2. Having a staff member from a different partner program physically present at the one-stop center appropriately trained to provide information to customer about the programs, services, and activities available through partner programs; **OR**,
3. Making available a direct linkage through technology to program staff who can provide meaningful information or services.
  - a. A "direct linkage" means providing direct connection at the one-stop center, within a reasonable time, by phone or through a real-time web-based communication to a program staff member who can provide program information or services to the customer.
  - b. A direct linkage cannot exclusively be providing a phone number and/or website, or providing information, pamphlets, and/or materials.

#### Note on "access points"

The term "access point" is used throughout federal guidance regarding the One-Stop System and certification requirements. OWD interprets this to mean that every location within the One-Stop system is an access point, and not that an "access point" is a unique type of location. All access points must be determined to be Comprehensive or Affiliate Sites and certified as such, or meet the definition of a specialized site.

#### **Certification Instructions**

Each LWDA must have at least one certified Comprehensive One-Stop and an executed MOU by June 30, 2024. The MOU, executed in accordance with 20 CFR §678.500 and §678.755 by all required partners present within the LWDA, outlines the services delivery structure, and identifies the services delivery sites,

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both potential comprehensive and affiliate sites.

Utilizing the prospective service delivery sites identified in the MOU, each LWDA must assign staff to perform certification. The steps below briefly outline how this process should occur prior to the June 30, 2024 deadline.

1. LWDBs, or an appropriate LWDB committee, must meet and vote to adopt the State's minimum criteria. If an LWDB determines additional certification criteria will be added to the mandated State criteria, the LWDB must meet and vote to add such criteria.
  2. Determine which entity will be responsible for completing certification. Per §678.800(3), "when the LWDB is the one-stop operator as described in §678.410 of this chapter, the SWDB must certify the one-stop center." Furthermore, if the local fiscal agent or programmatic administrator functions as the one-stop operator, that entity may not perform the certification either, due to the inherent conflicts of interest. In either case, the LWDB must notify OWD in writing at least one (1) month before certification is to be completed.
  3. Identify the prospective locations and schedule onsite inspections and interviews. Note that these locations should only consist of those locations identified in the proposed MOUs.
  4. Complete certification process by completing the appropriate forms for each prospective location and present to LWDB (or the appropriate LWDB committee).
    - a. Complete Partner Presence (Form A) and Accessibility & EO certification (Form B) for each site, to include those considered specialized.
    - b. Depending on site designation, complete either Comprehensive (Form C) or Affiliate (Form D) Certification.
  5. LWDB, or appropriate LWDB committee, shall review the tools and vote on whether to certify sites prior to the June 30, 2024 deadline.
  6. Provide OWD with an executed certification packet for each site the LWDB votes to certify within 10 days of LWDB approval. An executed certification packet should include completed tools for each site, not just the signature pages, and LWDB minutes verifying the vote.
    - a. Completed packets should be submitted to [WIOAcompliance@tcsge.edu](mailto:WIOAcompliance@tcsge.edu).
  7. If a prospective location identified in the MOU is not certified, the LWDB shall provide an explanation and justification as to why. The LWDB shall also include the completed tools for the location that failed certification, so that OWD may provide technical assistance to remedy the failed certification.
7. Reference Attachments per State TCSG-OWD Workforce Implementation Guidance Letter [WIG LS-19-015R]  
Attachment 1: Form A - Partner Presence  
Attachment 2: Form B -Accessibility & Equal Opportunity Certification  
Attachment 3: Form C - Comprehensive One-Stop Certification  
Attachment 4: Form D -Affiliate One-Stop Certification