



Missouri Division of Workforce Development
DWD Issuance 28-2017

Issued: June 05, 2018
Effective: June 05, 2018

Subject: Credential Attainment Policy

1. Purpose: This Issuance clarifies the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)¹ Credential Attainment performance measure by defining what constitutes a “recognized postsecondary credential.” It supersedes and rescinds previous Division of Workforce Development (DWD) guidance² on credentials, certificates, and diplomas.

2. Background: WIOA requires each state to collect and report information on six primary indicators of performance for the WIOA Title I Adult program, the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker program, the WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, and the WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation program. Together, these indicators evaluate statewide positive outcomes for individuals and employers served by those WIOA core programs. One of the six indicators is “Credential Attainment.” It is also one of the separate set of primary indicators of performance for the WIOA Title I Youth program.

DWD calculates the State indicators of performance using information entered into the statewide electronic case management system. There are no separate Local Workforce Development Area calculation requirements for these measures. However, for calculations to accurately portray statewide service to customers, Credential Attainment must be recorded accurately in each participant’s record.

3. Substance: Credential Attainment is the **percentage** of those participants³ in an included education or training program who:

1. Obtain a “recognized postsecondary credential” while participating in, or within one year after exit from, that program; **or**
2. Obtain a secondary school diploma—or its recognized equivalent—while participating in, or within one year after exit from, that program. That group of participants is reduced further to include only those that entered employment, or enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential, within one year after exit from that program. That is, those who obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent are only counted in the percentage if they represent a *successful outcome*: They entered employment; or they entered a postsecondary credential program.

¹ Pub. L. 113-128 [[29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.](#)].

² DWD Issuance 03-2006, “Change in Participant Outcome Reporting,” August 1, 2006 [*herein rescinded*].

³ WIOA Sec. 116(b)(2)(A)(i)(IV) [[29 U.S.C. 3141\(b\)\(2\)\(A\)\(i\)\(IV\)](#)].

The U.S. Departments of Labor and Education, in their joint commentary⁴ on their WIOA Final Rules, stipulate that the employment or enrollment in an education or training program “only needs to be for some period during the four quarters after exit, not for the entire one year period after exit.”

Calculations for the Credential Attainment rate indicator do not include participants in On-the-Job Training,⁵ customized training,⁶ or WIOA Title III Employment Service (Wagner-Peyser) education or training programs.

3. Substance:

Recognized Postsecondary Credential

WIOA defines⁷ a “recognized postsecondary credential” as an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State or federal government, or an Associate or Bachelor’s degree. Graduate degrees (Master or Doctorate) are not included in this definition except for participants in Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

The credential must be specific to an industry or occupation and be based generally on standards developed or endorsed by employers or trade/professional associations connected with that industry or occupation.

Recognized Postsecondary Credentials may include:⁸

- An Associate’s degree;
- A Bachelor’s degree;
- An Occupational certificate/certification, including Registered Apprenticeship and Career and Technical Education;
- Occupations that require a certification before a participant is able to begin employment;
- Occupational licensure for occupations that require a license before a participant is able to begin employment; or
- Other recognized certificates for specific industry/occupation skills sufficient to qualify for entry-level or advancement in employment.

Secondary School Diploma or Its Recognized Equivalent

A “diploma” must be recognized by the State and included for accountability purposes under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act.⁹ This type of credential signifies that a student has completed the requirements for a high school education.

For the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs, there is a two-step test before the participant who attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is included in the Credential Attainment percentage. First, the diploma or equivalent

⁴ *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Joint Rule for Unified and Combined State Plans, Performance Accountability, and the One-Stop System Joint Provisions; Final Rule*, ETA Docket 2015-0002, August 19, 2016, at 81 FR 55841.

⁵ WIOA Sec. 3(44) [[29 U.S.C. 3102\(44\)](#)].

⁶ WIOA Sec. 3(14) [[29 U.S.C. 3102\(14\)](#)].

⁷ WIOA Sec. 3(52) [[29 U.S.C. 3102\(52\)](#)].

⁸ U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Training and Employment Guidance Letter ([TEGL No. 10-16, Change 1](#)), “Performance Accountability Guidance for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Title II, Title III, and Title IV Core Programs,” August 23, 2017.

⁹ [20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.](#)

must be obtained during program participation or within one year after exit from the program. Second, the participant must have a *successful outcome* from obtaining the diploma or equivalent—defined as entering employment or enrolling in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within a year from program exit. Both these conditions must be met before the participant is included in the performance measure calculations.

For the WIOA Title I Youth program, there is an additional restriction before counting Out-of-School Youth (OSY). All In-School Youth are automatically included in the Credential Attainment indicator because they are, by definition, attending secondary or postsecondary school. For OSY, however, there must be participation in **at least one** of the following before the OSY can be included in the Credential Attainment indicator:

- The program element, “occupational skills training;”
- Secondary education at or above the ninth grade level during participation in the Title I Youth Program;
- Postsecondary education during participation in the Title I Youth Program;
- Title II-funded adult education at or above the ninth grade level during participation in the title I Youth program;
- YouthBuild during participation in the Title I Youth program; or
- Job Corps during participation in the Title I Youth program.

Certificates awarded by Local Workforce Development Boards and work readiness certificates (e.g., the National Career Readiness Certificate) are **not** included in this definition and do not count. Additionally, certificates for general or soft skills related to safety, hygiene, etc., are **not allowed** for this performance measure (even if such general skills certificates are broadly required to qualify for entry level employment or advancement in employment).

4. Action: This policy is effective immediately. All frontline Missouri Job Center staff within the State workforce system must accurately complete the credential link in the statewide electronic case management system, which creates the raw data to perform the statewide Credential Attainment calculation.

5. Contact: Please direct questions regarding this Issuance to dwdpolicy@ded.mo.gov.

6. References: WIOA Sec. 116, “Performance Accountability System” [[29 U.S.C. 3141](#)].

U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Training and Guidance Letter ([TEGL](#)) [10-16, Change 1](#), “Performance Accountability Guidance for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Title II, Title III and Title IV Core Programs,” August 23, 2017.

20 CFR Part 677,—Performance Accountability under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, [Subpart A—State Indicators of Performance for Core Programs](#).

7. Rescissions: This Issuance supersedes and rescinds DWD Issuance 03-2006, “Change in Participant Outcome Reporting,” dated August 01, 2006.

8. Attachments: None.

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Mardy Leathers
Director
Missouri Division of Workforce Development