

The Workforce Connection, Inc.
Policy Title: Eligible Training Provider Approval

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Purpose:

To provide Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requirements for Eligible Training Provider(s) (ETP) that offer approved training programs aligned with high growth/in- demand occupations in targeted industries.

References:

- Department of Commerce WIOA Policy 15-WIOA-5.3 WIOA Training Provider and Training Program Eligibility
- Demand Occupation List (to be issued by Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity)

Definitions:

- High-Growth or In-Demand Occupation – identified through verified data that an occupation has reasonable growth, full-time employment opportunities, and pays a living wage as provided in guidance from the state of Illinois and designated to each county.
- Targeted Sectors or Targeted Industries – identified through verified data, clusters of industries such as Healthcare, Manufacturing, Information Technology, Transportation/Distribution/Logistics, with substantial job openings, long-term growth.
- ETPL – Eligible Training Provider List located in the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS).

Policy/Procedures:

A. Eligibility of Training Providers: To be eligible to receive funds for provision of training services, the provider shall be:

1. An institution of higher education that provides a program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential. This may include programs receiving approval or accreditation by the U.S. Department of Education, Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois Community College Board, or Illinois State Board of Education.
2. An entity that carries out programs registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (Commonly known as the “National Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.) as recognized in Illinois by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), Office of Apprenticeship, or;
3. A public or private provider of a program of training services, which may include joint labor-management organizations; eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II if such activities are provided in combination with occupational skills training or programs that have been recognized by the industry as meeting the standards necessary for approval or accreditation, when such standards exist.
4. The Training Provider/Program must lead to placement in the Demand Occupation Training List (DOTL) for Economic Development Region 5. Exceptions to this requirement include:
 - a.) The training program, as identified on the Demand Occupation List, is intended to be a beginning step in a Career Pathway or Bridge Program that would lead to placement in a Demand Occupation.

- b.) The training provider's program provides only basic skills and/or remedial training.
5. TWC reserves the right to impose additional criteria through local policy that is unique to conditions within LWA3 and meets, at a minimum, federal and state requirements based on economic, geographic, demographic conditions in the area, and/or characteristics of the population served by the provider.
6. TWC has the authority to deny approval of a training provider or a training program. This may occur at the initial stage or where there is an option to continue eligibility. Status can be revoked and removed if a program provider cannot meet or violates any of the assurances and conditions listed in the Individual Training Agreement (ITA).

B. Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs registered with the USDOL, Office of Apprenticeship

- Registered Apprenticeship programs will be added to the ETPL list on a statewide basis

1. An RA must indicate interest in being included on the ETPL.
2. RAs may contact TWC or State of Illinois, Office of Employment and Training to indicate interest in being included on the ETPL
3. TWC will inform all RAs in the area regarding these requirements, then notify Department of Commerce in writing of all RA programs that have shown interest in being included on the ETPL.

C. Initial Eligibility

1. New training providers located geographically within LWA 3, or with a headquarter office within LWA 3 must apply for Initial Eligibility through TWC.
2. A training provider is prohibited from applying for training program eligibility through TWC when the program site is not geographically located in LWA 3, unless the LWA in which the program is located denies eligibility or fails to act on the application within 30 days of the date of application.
3. A new training provider must gather and provide all mandatory information found in Attachment A. – Requirements for Training Program Eligibility to LWA 3, as well as all other information required by TWC.
4. The Training Provider will receive instructions on how to log in and enter training programs in the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS).

D. Agreement Requirements

1. A Training Provider must provide assurances that it will comply fully with all non-discrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the laws.
2. TWC will initiate an agreement to be signed between the Training Provider and TWC once all required information has been processed.
3. Routine on-site monitoring of the training provider/program are required. When the training program is outside of LWA3, monitoring will be coordinated with the other LWA or conducted by the state.

E. Eligibility Timeline

1. TWC will accept applications to become a new program provider and to add additional training programs on a quarterly basis. These applications will be accepted the first week of each quarter. (January, April, July, and October). TWC staff will review applications to ensure all requirements are met. The application will be presented to a board committee for approval. If the program and/or training provider is approved by a board committee, it will then be sent to TWC board for final approval.

2. If determination of a program is not made within 30 days of the application or eligibility is denied, and the training program meets state criteria, the program will be placed in a “capture list” in IWDS and becomes available for another LWA to determine eligibility through their LWIB. If 120 days pass, the training program will be removed from the capture list.
3. If the Training Program does not meet all mandatory criterion for initial eligibility or is not accepted by TWC within 30 days for some other reason, the training provider can appeal in accordance with DCEO WIOA Policy 15-WIOA-5.3 - WIOA Training Provider and Training Program Eligibility (Section G.).

F. Next Eligibility Date/Review

1. Training Providers next eligibility date will be within one year from the date of initial eligibility. TWC will request that training providers submit multiple training programs in a group to streamline the process.
2. TWC may consider reciprocity agreements that support training providers being able to enroll customers into programs provided in states other than Illinois.

G. Continued Eligibility Process

1. Training providers with previously approved training programs must have approval determined at least every two years, to maintain status as eligible training programs.
2. TWC will notify training providers with a 90 day notice to continue eligibility.
3. TWC must receive the training provider’s intent to apply for continued eligibility of training programs
4. TWC will determine a schedule to issue “Training Providers Nearing Continued Eligibility Date” reports routinely throughout the year to provide Continuing Eligible Training providers with adequate time to prepare for “Pending Continuing Eligibility” requirements/processes.
5. Continued Eligibility will be granted based on the following:
 - a) A current copy of the Training Program Basic Information record from IWDS;
 - b) Identification of items that have changed since the initial eligibility or most recent continued eligibility determination;
 - c) Performance data of the training program;
 - d) Any additional information the training provider has submitted for review or TWC determines pertinent to the approval process.
6. TWC shall grant continued eligibility to a training program within 30 days based on the following:
 - a) State and local performance criteria are still being met;
 - b) One or more O*Net codes associated with the training program remain on current Demand Occupation Training list;
 - c) The training provider has maintained timely updates in IWDS on training program information;
 - d) Other conditions as deemed necessary by DCEO and TWC.
7. Training programs not deemed eligible by TWC within 30 days of receipt of the application from TWC will be removed from the approved program list and may reapply after one year.
8. Training providers may appeal the TWC decision following DCEO WIOA Policy 15-WIOA-5.3 - WIOA Training Provider and Training Program Eligibility (Section G).

H. Training Provider or Training Program Change in Information

1. Training programs shall be subject to renewal for eligibility by a board committee in accordance with the requirements of WIOA Policy 15-WIOA-5.3,

whenever significant information for the training provider and/or program(s) has changed.

Significant information includes:

- a. All of the “mandatory” fields on the Training Program Basic Information record in IWDS. Change(s) in any significant information must be entered in IWDS within ten (10) business days of the changes being entered into IWDS.
 - b. Submission of a change in significant information indicates a training provider’s intent to renew eligibility and prompts the same requirements as under the current eligibility determination.
2. Training programs will be subject to renewal of eligibility status by the TWC board committee whenever non-significant information on the training program changes prior to the continued eligibility date. Non-significant information is any information that is a “mandatory” field (but not considered “significant”) on the Training Program Basic Information application in IWDS, including O*Net codes associated with the training program. (These items are identified by a * on Attachment A – Requirements for Training Program Initial Eligibility and Continued Eligibility process in the DCEO WIOA Policy 15-WIOA-5.3 - WIOA Training Provider and Training Program Eligibility. The TWC board committee shall review the training program and all the changes to determine if the changes have affected the conditions of the program eligibility determinations. If the changes have significantly altered the training program, the committee will send the training program to TWC board for the renewal of the current eligibility approval.

I. Performance Measures

1. All eligible training providers are required to provide basic performance data, when available, on their training programs to be approved for initial or continued eligibility.
2. Specific training provider/training program performance information for ALL students of the program shall be provided, when available as outlined in the DCEO WIOA Policy 15-WIOA-5.3 - WIOA Training Provider and Training Program Eligibility.
3. Performance data required should be entered in IWDS for the most current program year, as well as the previous three program years.

J. Denial or Revocation of Eligibility

TWC has the authority to deny approval of initial or continued eligibility and can revoke the status of eligibility, and remove it from the Eligible Training Provider List for a training provider or for a training program in accordance with WIOA and DCEO WIOA Policy 15-WIOA-5.3 - WIOA Training Provider and Training Program Eligibility (Section G) under the following circumstances.

1. Its annual performance fails to meet the minimum standards set by the State of Illinois or TWC for the WIOA performance measures;
2. If it is determined at any time that the training provider intentionally supplied inaccurate information in its application for eligibility or continued eligibility;
3. The training provider substantially violated any requirement under WIOA or WIA; or
4. The training provider voluntarily chooses to cease being an eligible training provider or goes out of business.

K. Notification and Appeal Process

1. If TWC denies or revokes any initial or continued eligibility of a training provider and/or any of its programs for which it has sought approval, the affected provider must be notified in writing of TWC’s decision. The notice will include:

- a. The training program(s) being denied or revoked eligibility;
 - b. The reason(s) for the denial or revocation; and
 - c. Information about the opportunities the provider has to appeal the decision
2. The Notice shall be sent within seven (7) days of the decision to the training provider via registered mail with a copy sent to Department of Commerce, Office of Employment and Training (OET)
3. The training provider has twenty-one (21) days, from the date of receipt of the notice to file an appeal to TWC. The appeal must include the following information:
 - a. A statement that the training provider is appealing the denial or revocation of its eligibility;
 - b. The reason(s) eligibility should be granted;
 - c. Contact information for additional information; and
 - d. The signature of the chief executive of the training provider
4. The appeal must be submitted formally, in writing by email and U.S. mail no later than twenty-one (21) days from the date of receipt of the notice of denial or revocation.
5. TWC and a designated committee, will review the request for appeal within twenty-one (21) days of its receipt. If TWC determines an administrative error was made or if additional information submitted by the provider changes the basis upon which the original decision to deny or revoke eligibility was issued, the decision may be reversed and the training program(s) granted the appropriate initial or continued eligibility for inclusion on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).
6. If TWC reverses its decision, it will notify the training entity of its action in writing within seven (7) days. TWC will also forward a request to OET for inclusion on the ETPL.
7. If TWC does not reverse its decision to deny or revoke eligibility and inclusion on the ETPL, it shall notify the provider within twenty-one (21) days from the receipt of the request that the program(s) was not determined eligible. Notice will be sent in writing by email and U.S. mail. The notice will include information about the opportunities for the provider to appeal its denial of eligibility with OET. A copy of the letter will be forwarded to OET.
8. A provider shall have twenty-one (21) days from the receipt of the final decision by TWC to appeal the denial or revocation to OET.
 - a. OET will have thirty (30) days to complete its investigation into the matter, gather additional information from the affected TWC file and from the provider, and issue a final determination of eligibility.
 - b. During this time period, OET will convene a meeting with the affected parties, if requested.
 - c. The final determination will be forwarded to the training provider and TWC in writing.
 - d. If OET overturns the decision of TWC, the program(s) will be included on the statewide list within seven (7) days. OET will not make a final decision to overturn the decision made by TWC without convening a meeting with all affected parties.
9. OET has the ability to ask TWC to deny or revoke a training provider or its program(s) eligibility and have it removed from the list "for cause". If this decision is made, OET must send a formal written notice of its concerns to the affected LWB(s). The notice will require local action on the matter. TWC will have the option to provide additional information that would clarify and substantiate the provider's eligibility status or of initiating removal of the provider or its program(s) from the ETPL. Both the notice from OET and affected LWB(s) and the board's response to the notice must be sent by registered mail. TWC has twenty-one (21) days to respond in writing to the OET notice.

L. Reinstatement on the Statewide List

1. If a training provider improves upon overall performance and otherwise rectifies any other conditions of their denial or revocation, they may re-apply for eligibility after one year from its removal. The training provider must comply with the requirements for initial eligibility, demonstrate it has corrected all performance and other deficiencies which resulted in their removal from the ETPL and TWC must determine eligibility of the program and submit it for reinstatement on the ETPL.
2. A training provider that was denied continued eligibility may re-apply for initial eligibility for the training program when it can demonstrate its program quality with at least one year of performance information. The provider can re-apply no sooner than one year from the date of denial; the provider must re-apply for program eligibility subject to the policies and procedures for continuing eligibility found in Section C.3 of DCEO WIOA Policy 15-WIOA-5.3 - WIOA Training Provider and Training Program Eligibility; and if the program meets minimum state or local performance standards along with any other eligibility criteria in place at the time of re-application, TWC must determine the program is eligible and submit it for reinstatement on the statewide ETPL.
3. TWC must reaffirm that a program previously accredited by the North Central Association, the Illinois Community College Board, or the Illinois State Board of Education is still accredited or the accreditation has been renewed.

Action Required:

This information should be disseminated to all The Workforce Connection WIOA Title IB program directors/staff and training providers to assure compliance with requirements for Eligible Training Providers/Programs supported with WIOA training funds.

Inquiries:

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to The Workforce Connection Board Executive Director

Effective Date:

Immediately