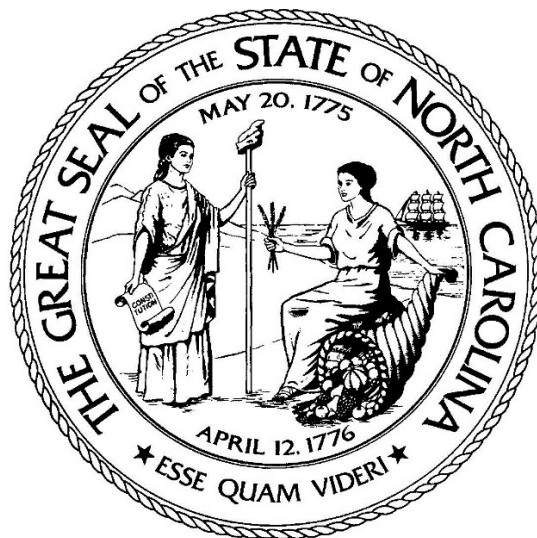


North Carolina's One-Stop Delivery System under the Workforce
Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)



NCWorks Career Center Certification *Criteria*
2022-2024

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Introduction

The one-stop delivery system brings together workforce development, educational, and other human resource services in a seamless customer-focused service delivery network that enhances access to the programs' services and improves long-term employment outcomes for individuals receiving assistance. One-stop partners administer separately funded programs as a set of integrated, streamlined services to customers.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) establishes the one-stop delivery system, identified nationwide as the American Job Center Network, and in North Carolina as the NCWorks Career Center system. WIOA requires there be at least one comprehensive physical location (Tier 1 Center) in each local workforce area. Additional arrangements may also be made to supplement the comprehensive location, including a network of affiliated sites, eligible one-stop partners, and specialized centers that address specific needs.

NCWorks Career Centers provide workforce development services as well as access to other programs and activities carried out by one-stop partners identified in WIOA. The programs identified in WIOA are listed below, yet North Carolina recognizes that not all of these programs and activities are available in all parts of the state:

- WIOA Title I
 - Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Job Corps, YouthBuild, Indian and Native American program, National Farmworker Jobs programs/Migrant & Seasonal Farmworker programs
- WIOA Title II - Adult Education and Family Literacy program
- WIOA Title III - Wagner-Peyser Employment Services program
- WIOA Title IV - Rehabilitation Act Title I Programs (Vocational Rehabilitation)
- Carl D. Perkins Career & Technical Education programs
- Community Services Block Grants
- HUD Employment and Training Programs
- Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program
- Senior Community Service Employment Program
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs
- Unemployment Compensation Programs (UI)
- Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO) - Second Chance Act programs

Each required partner must provide access to its programs or activities through the NCWorks Career Center system, in addition to any other appropriate locations. Other workforce partners, with the approval of the local workforce development board, may also carry out services through the career centers which may not be identified in WIOA.

North Carolina's state Workforce Development Board, the NCWorks Commission, works on behalf of the Governor and under the authority of WIOA, N.C. General Statute 143B-438.10 and other applicable laws, rules, regulations, and requirements to develop and oversee an effective and efficient workforce development system in North Carolina. Per WIOA sections 101 (d)(6) and 121 (g)(1), the commission, in consultation with chief elected officials and local boards, establishes criteria for assessing NCWorks Career Centers. The commission develops these criteria to ensure a consistent level of quality service delivery throughout the NCWorks Career Center system, and to ensure the physical and programmatic accessibility of services to customers.

The commission understands the importance of establishing minimum standards that allow for local flexibility, while protecting the minimum service expectations of the system brand. It is the commission's vision that these criteria move the system to higher levels of quality and seamless service, as well as to foster performance accountability and continuous improvement. The criteria are to be used to assess NCWorks Career Centers at least once every 3 years. For the 2022-24 certification cycle, the criteria have been updated to reflect the wide range of virtual services developed since the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), under WIOA and N.C. General Statute 143B-438.11, are policy, planning, and oversight entities responsible for organizing a comprehensive, community-wide response to the challenges of building a highly skilled workforce. In carrying out this responsibility, WDBs are responsible for assessing the needs of individuals and employers and determining the appropriate geographic areas where NCWorks Career Centers are needed. It is the local WDBs' responsibility to ensure that operational and service quality standards are being followed by certified centers and to help protect the system brand. Please note customers refers to both jobseekers and employers.

NCWorks Career Center System Criteria

Criteria for the NCWorks Career Center system and all centers comprising this system must address effectiveness, including customer satisfaction, physical and programmatic accessibility, and continuous improvement. Career Center certification is guided by WIOA law (**Final Rule 20 CFR 678.800 and TEGL 16-16 One-Stop Operations Guidance for the American Job Center Network**).

Based on this guidance, the NCWorks Career Center System will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Customer Centered Design and Accessibility
2. Partnerships and Integrated Services
3. Professional Staff
4. Performance and Customer Satisfaction



Tier 1 Career Center Criteria

1. Customer Centered Design and Accessibility

- Hours of operation are easily identified and clearly visible. (Up-to-date center contact information - phone number, center email address, and hours of operation are also posted in NCWorks Online.)
- Centers have a plan/process in place to offer services, as needed, during nontraditional hours to meet customers' needs.
- Centers identify virtual service availability and how virtual services can be accessed.
- Centers follow current NCWorks branding guidelines; internal and external signage clearly identifies the location as an NCWorks Career Center. Centers also incorporate the American Job Center Network brand/logo.
- Centers are professional, clean and offer an environment that provides for an integrated, functional approach to service delivery.
- Centers have a resource area that includes various local, regional, and state resources on job seeking, career development, and employability skills for customers. Staff is available to support customers who are accessing the resource center as needed.
- Centers must meet federal requirements as stated in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for programmatic and physical accessibility.
- Assistive technology is available to ensure programmatic access for those with disabilities.
- Appropriate space and equipment are provided based on customer need and traffic:
 - Access to NCWorks Online (internet access including Wi-Fi)
 - Computers/laptops for public use
 - Phone, and printer/fax/copier for public use
 - Space for workshops and/or group trainings
- Centers have a phone/voicemail system supported by trained staff so that call-in customers can quickly and efficiently receive information and services.
- Centers have a central email address monitored by trained staff, so customers can quickly and efficiently receive information and services.
- Translation services are available and provided to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations.

2. Partnerships and Integrated Services

- Centers provide available services for participants and businesses, meeting the workforce development needs of participants and the employment needs of local employers. Services are available both in-person and virtually.
- Centers use NCWorks Online to connect employers with job seekers, to enroll customers, and for client management.
- Centers offers career services according to **TEGL 16-16 and WIOA Final Rule 20 CFR 678.430** *What are career services?*
 - Basic; Individualized; and Follow-up Career Services
 - When possible, services are available in-person and virtually
- Centers offer access to training services according to **WIOA Final Rule 20 CFR 680.200** *What are training services for adults and dislocated workers?*
- Centers offer access to any employment and approved training services carried out under **Section 134(d) of WIOA**.
- Centers coordinate business services with the local workforce board and business services partners. (**TEGL 16-16 and WIOA Final Rule 20 CFR 678.435**) *What are the business services provided through the one-stop delivery system, and how are they provided?*
- Centers are engaging in integrated service delivery activities.
- Local workforce areas have active partnerships and referral processes in place with federally mandated partners and services, indicated in an MOU, per description in **TEGL 16-16**.
- Areas and their centers collaborate with the local community college(s) to address skills gaps and assist customers in pursuing career pathways.
- Areas and their centers collaborate with career development coordinators from Local Education Agencies in the service area to address skills gaps and assist students in pursuing career pathways.

3. Professional Staff

- Center staff work in the following areas (1) Customer Welcome Team, (2) Skills Development Team, (3) Employment Services, and (4) Employer Services. Center staff is cross trained on all the services provided by the center, as well as on federal, state, and local programs and services provided by WIOA partners.
- Center staff is trained in state-approved customer service, labor market information, career advising, and NCWorks Online.
- Center staff is trained to provide services virtually.
- Center staff can assist customers with disabilities.
- Center staff can provide information and guidance to customers on NCWorks Certified Career Pathways.
- Center staff complete the following trainings through NC Train:
 - [NC Commerce: Career Center Certification](#)
 - New Required Training: *The NCWorks Career Center Code of Conduct: The Role of the Career Advisor*
- Centers report on all Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion trainings (topic area and date) available to staff in the previous year (from certification application date).

4. Performance and Customer Satisfaction

- Centers utilize performance measures to track performance by center on at least a quarterly basis.
- Centers have a system/method/process in place for continuous improvement.
- Centers capture customer feedback using either a comment form/card or online form/tool to assess customer satisfaction and to meet customers' needs.
- Centers respond to customer feedback to improve service delivery.
- Centers offer services to customers in a cost-efficient manner.

Comprehensive and Affiliate Career Centers

The NCWorks Career Center system includes the following physical access points for customers:

1. Tier 1 NCWorks Career Centers – comprehensive, full-service centers open full time.
2. Tier 2 NCWorks Career Centers – affiliated sites including part-time centers.
3. Specialized NCWorks Career Centers – meeting a specific need and serving a special target population or industry such as dislocated workers, or youth, or key industry sectors.
4. NCWorks outreach staff at remote (outpost) locations – career center staff working at community locations to increase access to services in remote areas.

Tier 1 NCWorks Career Center

A Tier 1 NCWorks Career Center is a physical location, open full-time as defined by the local WDB, where job seekers and employer customers can access the programs, services, and activities of all required one-stop partners (see **TEGL 16-16, page 6**). Services must be available at Tier 1 career centers in accordance with the definition of a comprehensive center and description of what must be provided there in **WIOA Final Rule 20 CFR 678.305, *What is a comprehensive one-stop center and what must be provided there?***

Tier 2 NCWorks Career Center

A Tier 2 NCWorks Career Center is a physical location, open to the public at least 16 hours a week, and at least two paid, trained staff are available to serve customers during all hours of operation. These are locations whose primary purpose is to provide workforce services and are considered by the workforce development board to be a part of their one-stop delivery system. There must also be a demonstrated need in the community for these sites that is not being met by existing NCWorks Career Centers.

Tier 2 NCWorks Career Centers must have a relationship with the nearest Tier 1 center and adhere to all of the criteria for a Tier 1 Center, with the exception of the following. Tier 2 Centers do not need to:

- Be open full time
- Offer nontraditional hours of operation
- Offer access to all required WIOA one-stop partners, programs, and services
- Have a resource area available that includes various local, regional, and state resources on job seeking, career development, and employability skills for customers.
- Have space available for workshops and/or group trainings.

NCWorks Specialized Career Center

An NCWorks Specialized Career Center is a physical location designed to address special needs, such as the needs of dislocated workers, youth, or key industry sectors or clusters. The facility must be open at least 16 hours a week, and at least two paid, trained staff are available to serve customers during all hours of operation. These locations are designed to serve a unique need and/or target population and are not required to serve the universal customer, although they may do so as appropriate. These locations' primary purpose is to provide workforce services and are considered by the workforce development board to be a part of their one-stop delivery system. There must also be a demonstrated need in the community for these sites that is not being met by existing NCWorks Career Centers.

Specialized NCWorks Career Centers must have a relationship with the nearest Tier 1 Center and adhere to all of the criteria for a Tier 1 Center, with the exception of the following. Specialized Centers do not need to:

- Follow external signage guidelines, but still have adequate signage to identify with the NCWorks Career Center system
- Be open full time
- Offer nontraditional hours of operation
- Offer access to all required WIOA one-stop partners, programs and services
- Have a resource area available that includes various local, regional, and state resources on job seeking, career development, and employability skills for customers.
- Have space available for workshops and/or group trainings.

WIOA prohibits stand-alone Wagner-Peyser employment service centers from being affiliate sites or specialized centers.

NCWorks Outreach Staff at Remote (outpost) Locations

The NCWorks Career Center system also includes local board, contractor and/or DWS staff that work at locations other than career centers. These staff may work at a county office, community college, library, or other location to increase access to services throughout the workforce area and to better meet customers' needs. These locations must be ADA compliant and physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities.

When an NCWorks Career Center staff person is offering services at a remote location that is not a career center, hours of operation should be clearly visible and posted online. Internal signs or indicators should be clearly visible showing that staff are **NCWorks Career Advisors**, or that **NCWorks Career Services** are available at the staff person's office or cubicle.

- These staff must be trained as per the *Professional Staff* training requirements found under the NCWorks Career Center criteria.
- These staff must use NCWorks Online to connect employers with job seekers, to enroll customers, and for client management.
- Staff must offer basic career services at the location.

References

1. [WIOA Public Law, Section 101 \(d\)\(6\) and 121 \(g\)\(1\)](#)
2. [TEGL No. 16-16](#), *One-Stop Operations Guidance for the American Job Center Network*
3. [WIOA Final Rule 20 CFR 678.800](#) *How are one-stop centers and one-stop delivery systems certified for effectiveness, physical and programmatic accessibility, and continuous improvement?*
4. [WIOA Final Rule 20 CFR 678.305](#) *What is a comprehensive one-stop center and what must be provided there?*
5. [WIOA Final Rule 20 CFR 678.430](#) *What are career services?*
6. [WIOA Final Rule 20 CFR 678.435](#) *What are the business services provided through the one-stop delivery system, and how are they provided?*
7. [WIOA Final Rule 20 CFR 680.200](#) *What are training services for adults and dislocated workers?*
8. [WIOA Public Law, Section 134\(d\)](#)

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