

NCWorks Certified Work Ready Communities Initiative

A talent pipeline with the necessary foundational and technical skills for success is a primary goal for education and workforce professionals. In 2011, the NC Eastern Region began a pilot program to certify counties as NC Work Ready. This pilot is the model for the statewide NCWorks Certified Work Ready Communities initiative. The partnership among the Office of the Governor, the North Carolina Chamber Foundation, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, the North Carolina Community College System Office, the North Carolina Department of Commerce, and local workforce development boards create a seamless framework for communities to become certified as work ready.

High school seniors in public schools who have a CTE concentration take the ACT WorkKeys® assessments needed to earn an ACT National Career Readiness Certificate™ (ACT NCRC®). Community colleges, public schools, and NCWorks Career Centers throughout the state serve as testing centers for adults and transitioning youth. The North Carolina Chamber Foundation serves as the final certifying body to designate a NC Works Certified Work Ready Community.

Requirements

In order to be certified as NCWorks Work Ready, a community must meet each of the following criteria:

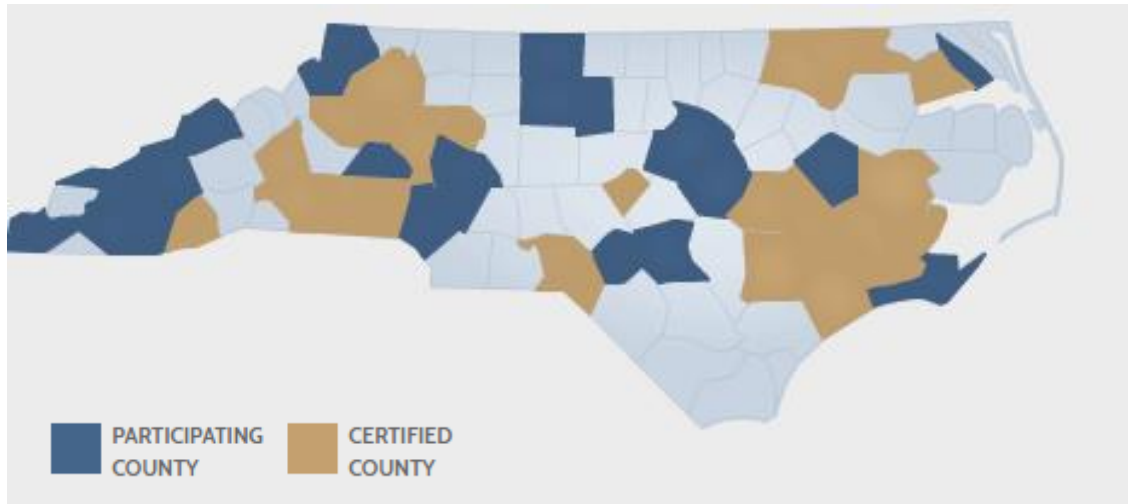
- A **letter of commitment** to workforce excellence from county leaders;
- Progress in the **high school graduation rate** toward the goal of 94 percent;
- Achieve **the number of National Career Readiness Certificates** (NCRC) indicated in the common criteria (based upon size of county and workforce status); and
- Gain **commitment from employers** to recognize the NCRC.

Benefits

This initiative supports economic development in the state by providing a workforce with documented foundational skills. It also provides counties with data, processes, and tools that help drive economic growth. Other stated benefits include helping:

- **Business and industry** know exactly which foundational skills they need for a productive workforce – and to easily communicate their needs;
- **Individuals** understand which skills are required by employers – and how to prepare themselves for success;
- **Policymakers** consistently measure the skills gap;
- **Educators** close the skills gap via tools integrated into career pathways with stackable industry-recognized credentials; and
- **Economic developers** use an on-demand reporting tool to market the quality of their workforce.

North Carolina's NCWorks Certified Work Ready Communities



Certified Counties

▲ ▼	▲ ▼
• Wayne	Apr, 2015
• Lenoir	Apr, 2015
• Craven	Aug, 2015
• Gaston	Aug, 2015
• Greene	Aug, 2015
• Jones	Aug, 2015
• Pamlico	Aug, 2015
• McDowell	Dec, 2015
• Cleveland	Dec, 2015
• Rutherford	Dec, 2015
• Chowan	Apr, 2016
• Duplin	Apr, 2016
• Onslow	Apr, 2016
• Alexander	Sep, 2016
• Caldwell	Sep, 2016
• Halifax	Sep, 2016
• Hertford	Sep, 2016
• Lincoln	Sep, 2016

• Richmond	Sep, 2016
• Iredell	Dec, 2016
• Lee	Dec, 2016
• Wilkes	Dec, 2016
• Beaufort	Apr, 2017
• Davie	Apr, 2017
• Northampton	Apr, 2017
• Perquimans	Apr, 2017
• Scotland	Apr, 2017
• Transylvania	Apr, 2017

