



Local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Policy No. 2025-PL-01-Change 2

To: All Eligible Training Providers, Delegate Agencies, American Job Centers and Sector Centers

From: Signed by:

51179558385F474...
CEO, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership

Subject: TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY AND CERTIFICATION

Date: September 16, 2025

Purpose:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that all states and local workforce areas certify training programs as eligible to receive funding through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). This procedure must include a process for providers and programs to be initially certified, as well as outlining the process for continued eligibility. The purpose of this communication is to establish eligibility criteria for training providers and programs accessing funds via ITAs in Cook County. Through this policy, the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (The Partnership) seeks to promote a system of high-quality occupational skills training that both addresses business needs and prepares individuals for career opportunities.

References:

WIOA Sections 122, 134
 WIOA Implementing Rule Section 680, Subpart C and D
 Illinois Department of Commerce WIOA Policy 15-WIOA-5.3

Background:

An eligible training provider is one that has met all federal, state, and local criteria and is thereby qualified to receive WIOA ITA funds to provide occupational training to WIOA-enrolled customers. Interested training providers can review the criteria presented here and submit an application to The Partnership, which will certify providers and programs that are deemed eligible. The Partnership will add those providers and programs to the State of Illinois Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Providers of on-the-job training, customized training, incumbent worker training, internships, and paid or unpaid work experience opportunities, or transitional employment shall not be subject to the requirements of this policy letter. The approval of training providers and programs does not create or constitute any contractual or other fiduciary relationship between the training provider and The Partnership.

Initial Training Provider Eligibility Criteria:

To be considered for initial eligibility, training providers must complete the Training Provider Certification application located on The Partnership's website www.chiccookworks.org and provide all requested documentation. To be eligible to receive funds for the provision of ITA services, the provider shall:



1	Be an institution of higher education that provides a program that leads to a recognized postsecondary 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, OR 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 (SDOL), Office of Apprenticeship,¹ OR Another 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.
2	Have been open for business for at least one year prior to application.
3	Provide documentation of the following: a) Legal standing within Illinois; b) Federal Employer Identification Number; c) Accrediting body and contact information; d) Credential type; e) A copy of the current certification or note from the appropriate certification body detailing status; f) A description of current student enrollment that details sources of financial support; and g) A listing of the current Board of Directors. The Partnership reserves the right to require additional documentation.
4	Provide assurance of compliance with all non-discrimination, equal opportunity provisions and other requirements of WIOA.
5	Provide assurance of cooperation with monitoring requirements, including participation in monitoring visits conducted by The Partnership. All training providers are subject to routine programmatic and fiscal monitoring by The Partnership or other appropriate entities to ensure compliance with the requirements of this policy and related provisions of WIOA. The Partnership reserves the right to complete an onsite review of the training provider to evaluate, at a minimum, the following items: a) Physical location and facilities b) Instructional quality and programmatic accessibility c) Accessibility and ADA compliance

Initial Program Eligibility Criteria:

A training provider that is eligible based on the criteria above must also provide information on each of the programs for which it seeks initial certification. The Training Program Certification application is located on The Partnership’s website www.chicookworks.org. Each eligible training provider can submit for Partnership

¹ All Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs registered with the USDOL, Office of Apprenticeship or a recognized state apprenticeship agency are automatically eligible to be included as an eligible training provider



approval no more than three (3) training programs for each of The Partnership's 40 Target Occupations (see Attachment A). This policy was developed to align with the concept of a career pathway, and to ensure that the available training programs meet the needs of customers with a wide range of skill levels and backgrounds. It is envisioned that a provider offering more than one training program for a given occupation will offer basic or entry level, mid-level, and/or advanced programs. As outlined in the application, each program must result in the customer earning an industry-recognized credential of value, and program costs must be reasonable.

Continued Training Program Certification Criteria:

The Partnership requires that each training provider be re-evaluated and re-certified on a bi-annual basis. The re-certification request form is available on The Partnership's website www.chicookworks.org. The application asks for a summary of any changes to any of the information provided in the prior application for certification, and documentation that eligibility requirements described in this policy letter are still being met. Programs that fail to reapply for recertification will be removed from the list of eligible training providers.

As part of re-certification The Partnership will generate a report for each program of enrollees from the preceding two years, detailing completion data, placement and training-related placement rates. Training programs must meet or exceed 75% of the three-performance benchmarks identified below with a tolerance range or meeting range of 67.5-75%.

Measure	Goal	Meeting Range
WIOA Training-Related Entered Employment Rate ²	75%	67.5% - 75%
Successful Training Completion Rate ³	75%	67.5% - 75%
Credential Attainment Rate ⁴	75%	67.5% - 75%

For purposes of the performance requirements, a minimum of ten (10) program exiters are required to calculate outcomes that can be used to disqualify a program. Programs with fewer than 10 exiters are exempt from the performance requirements. If one of these performance goals falls below the meeting rate, the program will be removed from the list of eligible training providers.

Performance Data Reporting and Communication with WIOA enrolling agency:

² WIOA Training-Related Entered Employment Rate is defined as the percentage of WIOA training program participants who were employed within their field of study in relation to the total number of those participants with employment.

³ Successful Completion Rate is defined as the percent of WIOA training program participants who were issued an ITA and successfully completed the program in relation to the total WIOA participants who received an ITA and completed and/or dropped out of the program.

⁴ Credential Attainment Rate is defined as the percentage of training program participants who obtained an industry recognized credential within one year of completion of the training program to the total training program participants who exited the program.



Both the training provider and the WIOA enrolling entity are accountable for performance outcomes and share the responsibility for performance outcomes, as well as for documenting and reporting participant progress. Training providers are expected to maintain ongoing communication with the career coach at the WIOA referring entity regarding each participant's status, including progress, completions, withdrawal, credentials earned, and employment outcomes. Training providers are expected to submit and respond promptly to all documentation requests necessary to verify progress and/or achievement of WIOA benchmarks as applicable to training provider policy. This may include but not limited to the following:

- Attendance records
- Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) documents such as progress reports or grade transcripts
- Certificates of Completions
- Copies of industry-recognized credentials or diplomas
- Verification of placement and or wage information

Denial of Initial and/or Continued Eligibility:

Programs or providers that do not meet the criteria outlined in this policy will be deemed ineligible for initial certification and/or continued eligibility. Such providers may submit an appeal using the form available on the Partnership's website www.chicookworks.org. All appeals will be reviewed by a committee comprised of Partnership staff and Workforce Innovation Board Service Delivery Committee members. A determination of the appeal will be made within 45 days.

Revocation and/or Suspension of Existing Eligibility:

Programs or providers may be subject to revocation of eligibility (at any time), or denial of re-certification (upon application), if they:

1. Fail to provide correct information on the application;
2. Fail to meet the criteria or performance standards outlined in this policy letter;
3. Violate any requirement of WIOA;
4. Are the subject of disciplinary action by the Illinois Board of Higher Education or other accrediting body; or
5. Fail to comply with requirements of The Partnership ITA process.

Programs whose certifications are revoked must immediately cease enrollment of new WIOA customers. Existing enrollees shall be permitted to complete the training program; however, in the case of substantial violations, customers shall be provided assistance in enrolling in a new training program. A provider of training services whose eligibility is terminated may be liable for the repayment of funds received under WIOA.

Programs or providers whose eligibility status is revoked may submit an appeal. Once a program or provider's eligibility has been revoked, it cannot reapply for 2 years.

The ITA Certification Committee, working with The Partnership's Grievance Officer, may temporarily suspend a program and/or provider to investigate allegations of fraud, equal opportunity (EO) violations, or other complaints.



Application Process:

Those seeking to become eligible WIOA ITA training providers in Chicago and Cook County may apply for eligibility by submitting The Partnership's application packet as well as completing the required program information for each training program. The application packet, along with detailed instructions on how to complete the necessary materials, can be accessed via The Partnership's website www.chicookworks.org

The Partnership will accept requests for initial certification of new providers and programs on a quarterly basis, as follows:

- Winter (February 1st thru February 15th)
- Spring (May 1st thru May 15th)
- Summer (August 1st thru August 15th)
- Fall (November 1st thru November 15th)

As existing program certifications sunset, training providers must reapply for certification under the provisions of this policy letter. The certification committee will determine eligibility within 30 days of receipt of application. Applications are not deemed received until all required documentation is submitted. The program may then be conditionally approved pending ratification by the Chicago Cook Workforce Innovation Board.

Actions Required (UPDATED):

Current WIOA training providers seeking initial eligibility or continued certification of eligibility for one or more programs **must: (1) review this policy letter and its attachments; (2) all newly approved training providers must attend an on-boarding meeting with The Partnership to review procedures and expectations (3) review procedures, compliance and performance expectations (4) transmit this letter to all staff with responsibility for applying for re-certification of the provider and its programs for continued eligibility; and (5) provide information as required by this letter for each program for which initial eligibility or continued certification is requested.**

Inquiries:

All inquiries should be directed via email to, The Partnership's Occupational Training Department at trainingproviderapplications@chicookworks.org

Effective Date:

September 2025

Attachments:

A—Target Industries and Occupations for ITAs, Revised December 2017