

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Policy Letter No. 16-XX**

To: Chief Elected Officials, Local Workforce Development Board  
Chairpersons, Local Workforce Development Board Directors, and  
OhioMeansJobs Center Operators

From: Cynthia C. Dungey, Director

Subject: Certification of the Workforce Delivery System

**I. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the requirements for certifying the workforce delivery system in the local workforce development area.

**II. Effective Date**

Immediately

**III. Background**

The workforce delivery system is the cornerstone of the public workforce development system. It is designed to increase access to, and opportunities for the employment, education, training, and support services that individuals need to succeed in the labor market, particularly those with barriers to employment. The workforce 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 services.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the State and local workforce development areas (local areas) to create and maintain a workforce delivery system that enhances the range and quality of education and workforce development services that employers and individuals can access. The system must include at least one comprehensive physical OhioMeansJobs center in each local area. The system may also have additional arrangements to supplement the comprehensive center. These arrangements include an affiliate site, a network of affiliate sites and/or specialized centers.

Section 121(g) of WIOA and 20 CFR 678.800 requires the local workforce development board (WDB) to certify the OhioMeansJobs center every three years. Per section 121(g) of WIOA, the State, in conjunction with chief elected officials and local WDB, must establish objective criteria and procedures for local WDBs to use when certifying the OhioMeansJobs

30 East Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
jfs.ohio.gov

centers. 20 CFR 678.800 allows the local WDB to establish additional criteria, or set higher standards for service coordination, than those established by this policy. If the local WDB elects to do so, the local WDB must review and update the criteria every two years as part of the local plan update process established in WIOAPL No. 16-03, Regional and Local Planning.

The certification criteria sets standard expectations for customer-focused seamless services from a network of employment, training, and related services that help individuals overcome barriers to employment and job retention. The certification process is important in establishing a minimum level of quality and consistency of services in OhioMeansJobs centers across Ohio.

As it is the responsibility of the local WDB to certify the OhioMeansJobs centers within the local area, the local WDB must review the centers to ensure the local area's workforce system is quality-focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored to meet the needs of the local area's and planning region's economies. A high-quality workforce system is only accomplished by providing all customers access to OhioMeansJobs centers that connect them with the full range of services available in their communities, whether they are looking for jobs, building basic educational or occupational skills, earning a postsecondary certificate or degree, or obtaining guidance on how to make career choices, or if they are businesses and employers seeking skilled workers. It is the local WDB's responsibility to ensure their workforce system is of high quality. Furthermore, local WDBs must certify OhioMeansJobs centers in order to be eligible to use infrastructure funds in the state funding mechanism as outlined in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Policy Letter (WIOAPL) No. 16-06, State Mechanism for Funding OhioMeansJobs Center Infrastructure Costs.

#### IV. Definitions

Affiliate OhioMeansJobs center: A site that makes available to job seeker and employer customers one or more of the OhioMeansJobs center's partners' programs, services, and activities.

Comprehensive OhioMeansJobs center: A physical location where job seeker and employer customers can access the programs, services, and activities of all required OhioMeansJobs center partners.

OhioMeansJobs center operator: One or more entities designated or certified under section 121(d) of WIOA.

OhioMeansJobs center partner: An entity described in section 121(b)(1) or (b)(2) of WIOA who participates in the operation of the workforce delivery system.

Specialized centers: Centers that address specific needs, including those for dislocated workers, youth, or key industry sectors, or clusters.

Workforce delivery system: A system under which entities responsible for administering separate workforce development, education, and other human service programs collaborate to create a seamless system of service delivery that will enhance access to the programs' services and improve long term employment outcomes for individuals and businesses.

## V. State Requirements

### A. **Establishment of Certification Criteria**

Per section 121(g) of WIOA, the State, in conjunction with chief elected officials and local WDBs, shall establish objective criteria and procedures for local WDBs to use when certifying the OhioMeansJobs centers. The criteria must evaluate the OhioMeansJobs centers and workforce delivery system for effectiveness, including customer satisfaction, physical and programmatic accessibility, and continuous improvement.

The State has established criteria that local WDBs will use to conduct certification reviews. The criteria is based on:

1. Standards relating to service coordination among partners within the OhioMeansJobs centers and the workforce delivery system;
2. Factors relating to effectiveness, accessibility, and improvement of the workforce delivery system;
3. Achievement of performance measures;
4. Integration of available services; and
5. Meeting the needs of local employers and participants.

All OhioMeansJobs centers must comply with applicable physical and programmatic accessibility requirement, as set forth in 29 CFR part 38, the implementing regulations of section 188 of WIOA.

### B. **Phases of Certification**

The workforce delivery system and the OhioMeansJobs center certification will be conducted in three (3) phases:

1. "Must Meet" Standards;
2. Quality Assurance Review; and
3. Ongoing Continuous Improvement Review.

#### 1. Phase 1 - "Must Meet" Standards:

The certification review of the nine (9) categories of standards will be conducted using the JFS 08044, OhioMeansJobs One-Stop System Certification Phase 1 Measures Checklist. The standards are applied to one comprehensive center in each local workforce development area. These standards include:

- American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, including completion of the ADA checklist and the OhioMeansJobs center operator's attendance at the "Windmills" training;
- Postings and plans, including Civil Rights postings, Emergency Action plan, and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan;
- The physical site of the OhioMeansJobs center and its staff;
- The functionality of the resource room;
- OhioMeansJobs center branding;
- Operations of the center, including registration and referral process, accessibility, and employer services team;
- Coordination with partner programs;
- Customer services, including center hours of operation, customer feedback process, and website; and
- Notification, identification, and accessibility of Veteran programs.

For the comprehensive center to be certified, all standards must have been met.

## 2. Phase 2 - Quality Assurance Review:

### **Comprehensive OhioMeansJobs Center(s)**

Benchmarks for critical success factors are used to review the quality of the OhioMeansJobs system for each comprehensive OhioMeansJobs center in the local area. These benchmarks support the certification criteria. The comprehensive center(s) within the local area must meet a certain level of excellence to attain phase two certification. The benchmarks include:

- OhioMeansJobs Center Provides Excellent Customer Service to Job Seekers, Workers, and Businesses.
  1. Reflects a welcoming environment to all customer groups who are serviced by the OhioMeansJobs centers;
  2. Develops, offers, and delivers quality business services;
  3. Improves the skills of the job seeker and worker customers;
  4. Creates opportunities for individuals at all skill levels and levels of experience;
  5. Provides career services that motivate, support, and empower customers; and
  6. Values skill development.
- OhioMeansJobs Center Reflects Innovative and Effective Service Design.
  1. Utilizes an integrated and expert intake process for all customers entering the OhioMeansJobs centers;
  2. Designs and implements practices that actively engage industry sectors;

3. Balances traditional labor exchange services with strategic talent development;
  4. Ensures meaning full access to all customers;
  5. Includes both virtual and center-based service delivery for job seekers, workers, and employers; and
  6. Incorporates innovative and evidence-based delivery models.
- OhioMeansJobs Center Operates with Integrated Management Systems and High-Quality Staffing.
    1. Reflects the establishment of robust partnerships among partners;
    2. Organizes and integrates services by function;
    3. Develops and maintains integrated case management systems;
    4. Develops and implements operational policies;
    5. Uses common performance indicators; and
    6. Trains and equips OhioMeansJobs center staff.

Within each of the 18 benchmarks are a total of 33 critical success factors. The JFS 0XXXX, OhioMeansJobs System Certification Benchmarks Metrics, will be used to score the center against the 18 benchmarks and 33 critical success factors.

In order for the local WDB to certify the comprehensive OhioMeansJobs center, the center must have attained a score of 64 on the JFS 0XXXX, meaning the center meets at least 80% of the critical success factors.

#### **Affiliate OhioMeansJobs Center(s)**

Also part of this certification phase, a review of all affiliate OhioMeansJobs centers in the local area will be conducted using the JFS 08044. The center(s) must meet all the standards.

### **3. Phase 3 – Ongoing Continuous Improvement:**

#### **Comprehensive OhioMeansJobs Center(s)**

The "OhioMeansJobs System Balanced Scorecard" is used to monitor progress for quality assurance and continuous improvement.

Therefore, the certification review team will use the previous balanced scorecard and corrective action plan, if one was completed, to monitor progress on addressing the deficiencies identified in the previous certification for each comprehensive OhioMeansJobs center in the local area.

Additionally, the certification review team will review the 18 benchmarks and 33 critical success factors using the JFS 0XXXX. In

order to be certified, the comprehensive center must have attained a score of 64 on the JFS 0XXXX.

If the minimum score is not obtained, the comprehensive center is not certified, and the local WDB must develop a corrective action plan to identify issues and timelines for meeting requirements.

#### **Affiliate OhioMeansJobs Center(s)**

The certification review team will also review all affiliate OhioMeansJobs centers in the local area by using the JFS 08044. The center(s) must meet all the standards. Any center not meeting these standards will not be recognized as an OhioMeansJobs center within the Ohio workforce delivery system.

### **C. Tools Provided for Assistance in the Certification Process**

Due to the comprehensive nature of phases 2 and 3, and in the interest of ensuring all OhioMeansJobs center partners have input, the following tools will be made available to the local WDBs for use in gathering and receiving data pertinent to the JFS 0XXXX.

- Mystery Shopping: ODJFS will coordinate random mystery shopping training and activities around the state. The shoppers will come from partner agencies, third party entities, and available staff. For reference the Mystery Shopping standard feedback form can be found at: <http://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/WIOA/implementation.stm>. This activity will be an ongoing effort and results will be distributed quarterly to those local areas affected.
- Partner Assessment: A partner assessment feedback document is available for use by state and local partner agencies to solicit anonymous feedback from staff to share with local areas throughout phase 2 and 3 certification periods. The partner assessment can be downloaded from <http://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/WIOA/implementation.stm>. The certification review team may use this qualitative information when rating the JFS 0XXXX.
- Website Review: A review of each OhioMeansJobs center website(s) in the local area should be conducted. Items to be reviewed include, but are not limited to, whether the website:
  1. Contains updated information;
  2. Is easy to navigate;
  3. Has proper branding per WIOAPL No. 16-08, OhioMeansJobs and American Job Center Branding;

4. Adheres to WIOAPL No. 16-XX, Mandated Use of OhioMeansJobs.com for Labor Exchange Activities;
5. Includes all required information pertaining to the provision of services to veterans per WIOAPL No. 15-20, Priority of Services for Veterans and Eligible Spouses; and
6. Contains information on all programs.

A standard website review tool is available at:

<http://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/WIOA/implementation.stm> for use by review teams. This tool is also being planned to be used by state partners to provide feedback to the local areas.

## **VI. Local Workforce Development Area Requirements**

### **A. Certification Review Team**

Each local WDBs will each establish a certification review team that is comprised of members from the local workforce development community.

This certification review team is responsible for managing the certification process through desk and on-site reviews of the local system and making a recommendation to the local board regarding certification. The local WDB has the discretion in forming the review team as far as size and membership. Suggestions for a review team composition are:

1. Selecting individuals with the following backgrounds:
  - a. A representative from the local WDB;
  - b. A workforce professional in the local area;
  - c. A business representative from the local WDB; and
  - d. A peer workforce professional reviewer from another local area; or
2. Contracting with an independent third party with workforce development knowledge and experience.

The OhioMeansJobs center operator shall not be a member of the certification review team. As the contracted overseeing entity of the OhioMeansJobs center, it would be a conflict of interest to serve on the review team or participate in any part of the certification review process.

A representative from the local WDB should be identified as the primary contact person for the OhioMeansJobs center operator to coordinate certification activities and lead the review team.

OhioMeansJobs center partner programs may participate in the certification process by providing relevant data and activities to be used by the local certification review teams.

## **B. Phases of Certification**

The workforce delivery system and the OhioMeansJobs center certification will be conducted in three (3) phases.

### 1. Phase 1 – "Must Meet" Standards:

Each local WDB and the certification review team must conduct a review of nine (9) categories of standards using the JFS 08044. All standards must be met to pass certification. This review will be conducted for at least one comprehensive OhioMeansJobs center in the local area.

The phase one review was due by June 30, 2016 and has been completed by all local WDBs.

### 2. Phase 2 – Quality Assurance Review:

#### **Comprehensive Center(s)**

The local WDB and the certification review team conducts a review of each comprehensive OhioMeansJobs center in the local area using benchmarks for critical success factors established by the State.

Prior to the on-site review of the comprehensive OhioMeansJobs center(s), the certification review team may conduct the following activities as part of the quality assurance review:

- A desk review of initial materials prior to the on-site visit; and
- Review of information from the additional tools as provided by the State.

During the on-site visits, the certification review team will review benchmarks and critical success factors used to review the quality of the OhioMeansJobs center. The JFS 0XXXX will be used to score the center against these benchmarks and critical success factors.

The certification review team will also complete the "OhioMeansJobs System Balanced Scorecard." This balanced scorecard summarizes the ratings of the benchmarks and critical success factors that were analyzed during the on-site visit.

In order for the local WDB to certify the comprehensive OhioMeansJobs center, the center must have attained a score of 64



on the JFS 0XXXX, meaning the center meets at least 80% of the critical success factors.

If the minimum score is not obtained, the comprehensive center is not certified, and the local WDB must develop a corrective action plan to identify issues and timelines for meeting requirements.

#### **Affiliate Center(s)**

The certification review team will also review of all affiliate OhioMeansJobs centers in the local area by using the JFS 08044. The center(s) must meet all the standards. Any center not meeting these standards will not be recognized as an OhioMeansJobs center within the Ohio workforce delivery system.

The local WDB and the certification review team must take into consideration the number of OhioMeansJobs center in the local area. For those local areas with a large number of centers, the quality assurance review will take more time to complete. Local WDBs may resolve this issue with the establishment of multiple certification review teams or staggering the on-site reviews over a period of time.

Phase two (2) certification must be completed by June 30, 2019.

### 3. Phase 3 – Ongoing Continuous Improvement:

#### **Comprehensive Center(s)**

The "OhioMeansJobs System Balanced Scorecard," the JFS 0XXXX, and corrective action plan, if previously completed, are used to monitor progress on addressing any deficiencies identified in the previous certification. They are also used to assess progress for quality assurance and continuous improvement for each comprehensive OhioMeansJobs center in the local area.

The JFS 0XXXX and "OhioMeansJobs System Balanced Scorecard" will be completed summarizing the ratings of the benchmarks and critical success factors for this certification period. In order to be certified, the comprehensive center must have attained a score of 64 on the JFS 0XXXX.

If the minimum score is not obtained, the comprehensive center is not certified, and the local WDB must develop a corrective action plan to identify issues and timelines for meeting requirements.

#### **Affiliate Center(s)**

The certification review team will also review of all affiliate OhioMeansJobs centers in the local area by using the JFS 08044. The center(s) must meet all the standards.

Phase three (3) certification must be completed by June 30, 2022 and every three years thereafter.

**C. Certification by the Local Workforce Development Board**

The local WDB will review and approve (if deemed appropriate by the WDB) the recommendation from the certification review team regarding certification of the comprehensive center(s) and affiliate center(s).

Once the comprehensive and/or affiliate center is certified, the local WDB will issue a written notice to the OhioMeansJobs center operator(s) of meeting certification.

If either a comprehensive or an affiliate OhioMeansJobs center is not certified by the local WDB, the local WDB will issue a written reason for non-certification and the actions expected from the OhioMeansJobs center operator(s) to become certified. The certification review team will follow up with the OhioMeansJobs center operator(s) to ensure activities are completed to become certified and report results back to the local WDB.

**D. Submission of Certification to the State**

The local WDB notifies the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services upon completion of each certification phase by sending the complete balanced scorecard for the comprehensive center(s), the JFS 08044 for the affiliate center(s), and documentation of the local WDB's approval of the review to [OWDPOLICY@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:OWDPOLICY@jfs.ohio.gov).

The balanced scorecard for each comprehensive center in each local area will be posted on the Office of Workforce Development (OWD) website to provide customers with information and to track certification progress.

If an affiliate center is not certified, OWD will indicate such and will not recognize the center on the OWD website.

**E. Changes in the location of the OhioMeansJobs center**

The local WDB and the certification review team must conduct a review of the OhioMeansJobs center using the JFS 08044 if there is any changes to location of the OhioMeansJobs center regardless of the certification phase and the type of center.

The local WDB will submit the JFS 08044 and documentation of local WDB approval to OWD at [OWDPOLICY@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:OWDPOLICY@jfs.ohio.gov).

**VII. Technical Assistance**

Ongoing support, guidance, training and technical assistance on the development of the workforce system as well as the maintenance of this system and the certification of the system are available to all local areas.

Requests for technical assistance may be sent to ODJFS, Office of Workforce Development: [WIOAQNA@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:WIOAQNA@jfs.ohio.gov).

**VIII. References**

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, §106, Public Law 113-128.

20 C.F.R. §§ 678.300-440.

20 C.F.R. §§ 678.600-635.

20 C.F.R. § 679.800.

20 CFR 683.295.

2 CFR parts 200 and 2900.

USDOL, Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 4-15, Vision for the One-Stop Delivery System under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, (August 13, 2015).

ODJFS, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Policy Letter (WIOAPL) No. 15-20, Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses, (December 21, 2015).

ODJFS, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Policy Letter (WIOAPL) No. 16-03, Regional and Local Planning, (October 21, 2016).

ODJFS, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Policy Letter (WIOAPL) No. 16-06, State Mechanism for Funding OhioMeansJobs Center Infrastructure Costs, (November 10, 2016).

ODJFS, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Policy Letter (WIOAPL) No. 16-07, OhioMeansJobs and American Jobs Center Branding, (November 14, 2016).

ODJFS, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Policy Letter (WIOAPL) No. 16-XX, Mandate Use of OhioMeansJobs.com for Labor Exchange Activities, (publication date).

Attachment A: Phase One Instructions and JFS 08044, Phase 1 Measures Checklist

Attachment B: Phase Two Instructions and JFS 0XXXX, OhioMeansJobs System Certification Benchmark Metrics

Attachment C: OhioMeansJobs System Balanced Scorecard

DRAFT