

**THE OREGON CONSORTIUM & OREGON WORKFORCE ALLIANCE  
WORKSOURCE OREGON ONE STOP CERTIFICATION  
OWA Business & Industry Committee  
February 13, 2009**

- ACTION 1:** Recommend to OWA the adoption of a policy framework for the development of operational guidance supporting certification of one-stop service delivery centers.
- ACTION 2:** Recommend to OWA and the chief elected official of the local area (Chair of the TOC Executive Board) acceptance of the operational guidance for one-certification.

**BACKGROUND**

Under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and through state guidance, WorkSource Oregon career centers are chartered or certified by the Local Workforce Investment Board. Guidance suggests that career centers are to be businesslike places where every service is focused on the end goal of assuring that businesses receive the best possible applicants for their job openings and related business needs. WSO Centers utilize the resources of the partners on site and throughout the community to better understand the workforce needs of businesses, to provide qualified applicants, and to improve the ability of applicants to compete for jobs.

The Act (WIA) requires that each local workforce area provide at least one certified one-stop career center. The Governor of Oregon has required that each of the nine workforce regions within The Oregon Consortium have at least one *certified* WorkSource Oregon (WSO) one-stop career center. Through the new integrated services initiative, the Commissioner of the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD) and the Director of the Oregon Employment Department (OED) required that all sites where Wagner-Peyser or WIA 1B services are available meet certain criteria.

The Oregon Workforce Investment Board (OWIB) developed initial guidance for one-stop certification with input from the Oregon Workforce Partnership and local and state workforce partners. The certification minimums under the Act, promulgated by OWIB and articulated through integrated services are intended to:

1. Assure consistency among WorkSource Oregon (WSO) Centers throughout Oregon, so that customers can expect the same basic types of services regardless of which WorkSource Oregon Center they visit;
2. Better define the goals, purposes, functions and services of WSO Centers; and,
3. Provide baseline criteria for LWIB chartering/certifying of WSO Centers.

Under initial OWIB policy and the initial process adopted by OWA, only those centers which meet the certification criteria would be *certified* as WSO one-stop career center,

and only one center in each region was required to meet standards. Under OED and CCWD joint guidance related to integrated services, all service delivery sites where of Wagner-Peyser and WIA 1B services are available are now required to meet certain minimum standards. The broader application of standards to all Wagner-Peyser and WIA 1B service delivery sites in the local area is significant.

The requirements articulated in the Act, by OWIB and through the OED/CCWD joint guidance on integrated services raise real questions and concerns related to the:

- Minimum level of resources necessary to establish and operate WSO one-stop career centers with the staff capacity to fully deliver on established standards of service;
- Appropriate allocation of resources necessary to address skill enhancement, employment, and business services goals and objectives;
- Support and flexibility of system and center partners to jointly allocate resources, budget, and share costs to the benefit of common customers, goals and outcomes; and,
- Ability to sustain compliant full service centers with broad geographic dispersion of sites.

New requirements as well as changes in how requirements are now articulated, new or newer levels of partnership, changes in resources, and the availability of new tools and technologies provide an opportunity for OWA to re-visit and re-establish a one-stop certification process and for OWA to begin to work through associated questions and concerns. The inherent opportunities in adopting new standards provides for:

- Establishing new base-line criteria the meets federal, state and OWA minimums;
- Assisting all service delivery sites to address standards through appropriate resource allocation, resource sharing, partnership and oversight;
- Assuring that staffing and service delivery focus of each site is in alignment with federal, state and OWA goals and objectives; and,
- Gathering consistent data and information related to budgeting, use of resources, and customer access and results, supporting the refinement of standards to better focus the system and individual centers on key deliverables.

Based on the articulation of the new standards and in support of the opportunities this provides, staff is recommending that OWA adopt new policy and operational guidance supporting the certification of one-stop service delivery centers in the local workforce investment area.

## **OREGON WORKFORCE ALLIANCE POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the responsibility of the Oregon Workforce Alliance, in consultation with the chief local elected official of the local area (the chair of The Oregon Consortium Executive Board), to establish minimum one-stop certification standards for the local area workforce system. It is the goal of the Oregon Workforce Alliance to establish a certification process that provides for the creation and maintenance of a relevant and well integrated, cost effective and efficient, service delivery system that connects workers with employment opportunities and the skills necessary for employment in a family wage job, employers with a skilled workforce and services supporting business success and growth, and provides support for economic growth and general prosperity of our communities. It is the policy of the Oregon Workforce Alliance to comply with the minimum federal and state standards for the certification of one-stop service delivery centers to assure consistent and compliant service delivery while working to build appropriate partnerships and to continually improve customer access and service and system efficiency and performance.

The Oregon Workforce Alliance recognizes that certification standards are not static and will regularly need to change and evolve. Change factors include federal and state direction and guidance, and prospects for new partnership opportunities, resources availability, tools and technologies, specific OWA goals and objectives, as well as the progression of system integration and continual improvement. These factors result in a need for regular review and refinement of certification standards. As such, the Oregon Workforce Alliance directs staff to:

- Articulate guidance to the local area workforce system establishing certification standards and a certification process;
- Promulgate standards that address federal and state certification standards and that support the goals articulated by the Oregon Workforce Alliance for a well integrated and high performing workforce system;
- Engage business and system partners including labor in the development of standards and the continual improvement of the system;
- Provide for a process that will allow the waiver of requirements, should that be deemed appropriate based on community needs and resources;
- Include in the certification process an opportunity for a center that applies for but is not recommended for certification to appeal that recommendation.

Through the certification process, recommendations will be made to the Oregon Workforce Alliance for certification of those centers that are determined to meet standards. Those centers where a waiver of requirements was applied will be clearly identified. In the case of a request for waiver, a recommendation for certification will be accompanied by a corrective action plan detailing the steps and time lines for bringing the center into compliance with certification standards or a clear explanation of why it is to the benefit of customers and the community that specified standards should not be applied. The Oregon Workforce Alliance will not certify and brand a WSO Center that does not meet these minimum criteria unless there is an appropriate development plan in place that will bring the center into compliance on a reasonable time line or the unique needs of the community in which the WSO career center is located exhibit circumstance that merit special provision.

## **WSO ONE-STOP CERTIFICATION**

The criteria articulated here represent the minimum standards for the certification of a WorkSource Oregon One-Stop service delivery center. These standards are focused on supporting the integrated services initiative and the partnership between the Wagner-Peyser and the WIA 1B programs. An effective partnership between the Wagner-Peyser and WIA 1B program is fundamental to the mission and focus of the WSO One-Stop system. There are many other private and public partners beyond Wagner-Peyser and WIA 1B that contribute significant resources and support for the delivery of critical services. The intent of this guidance is not to exclude those partners but rather to establish a base line system into which the contributions of these partners can be better integrated and made available to the range of customers accessing the system. By clearly articulating for each service center a leadership and management model and standards for service delivery processes, and a standard and comprehensive menu of resources and services, all prospective partners are provided an opportunity to evaluate how their targeted service populations and the range of services supported by their program can best be integrated or aligned.

Integration beyond the base lines expressed in this guidance is currently in place at many service locations, and continues to be actively encouraged and supported. For partners wishing to further explore such opportunities and for those partners seeking closer working relationships or better integration, regional and center leadership teams and management provide for a clear initial point of contact. Each WSO One-Stop service delivery center has in place well articulated and documented customer flow and service processes providing for a clear framework for the evaluation of how best to effect customer outreach and connection to appropriate services. For partners not able to engage and contribute to the general service delivery process or for whom this is not appropriate, the structure provided by a base line menu of resources and services provides an opportunity to provide outreach and connect customers to services and to establish effective referral processes.

By working together, the partners in the workforce system are able to more effectively leverage scarce resources to the benefit of customers and desired outcomes. The primary focus of the WSO One-Stop service delivery system is to provide employer and job seeking customers with the following opportunities.

<b>Employers:</b>	<b>Job Seekers:</b>
Know the skills of their workforce;	Know their skills;
Develop the skills of their workforce; and,	Develop their skills; and,
Get the best possible job candidate match for their skills needs.	Get the best possible job with their skills.

As customers work through the barriers that may impede engagement in these opportunities, the assistance, services and support provided through the WSO One-Stop system and other partners may be critical to their success. By engaging in this system and by working together to effectively and strategically leverage resources the partners in the system are able to better assure that every customer that leaves a One-Stop center is a better job candidate than when they arrived.

## **WSO ONE-STOP CERTIFICATION CRITERIA**

### **1. Facilities, a WSO Center is a physical location where:**

- a. Wagner-Peyser and WIA 1B services are available<sup>1</sup>. To the extent reasonable and possible centers are encouraged to co-locate additional partner services on site<sup>2</sup>, provide customer access to partner service through the Menu of Resources and Services and have well articulated referral processes in place.
- b. External signage clearly identifies the location as a WorkSource Oregon Center. External signage will utilize the generic WSO logo rather than a version that identifies the location as the site of a single partner<sup>3</sup>.
- c. An environment is maintained that is businesslike and is focused on needs of the customer and the business community, and the importance of preparing individuals to become successful employees and acquiring the skills necessary to employers and for career advancement<sup>4</sup>.
- d. There is accessibility for all populations (this includes access to ADA accommodations, appropriate signage, the availability of materials in languages that are predominant in the community, etc)<sup>5</sup>.
- e. There is an a phone system that is either integrated or is that is supported by a well articulated referral process and trained staff so that call-in customers can efficiently access information and services<sup>6</sup>.
- f. Staff is provided the basic equipment, software and technologies congruent with the successful completion of their defined roles and responsibilities<sup>7</sup>.
- g. Appropriate space, equipment and environment are provided in support of customer engagement in skill review, skill enhancement and job search processes and activities<sup>8</sup>.
- h. A resource room or area is available to customers that includes at least the following:
  - i. Telephone(s);
  - ii. Internet access with sufficient bandwidth;
  - iii. Computers;
  - iv. Printer(s);
  - v. Fax(es);
  - vi. Copier(s); and,
  - vii. Appropriate printed/hard copy resource information<sup>9</sup>.
- i. Private meeting space(s) are available to facilitate the sharing of confidential information when needed (e.g. employer interviews, Vocational Rehabilitation staff consultation with customers, etc)<sup>10</sup>.
- j. Minimum hours of operation are clearly posted and consistently followed to provide customers with access services as conveniently as possible<sup>11</sup>.

## 2. Management, a WSO Center:

- a. Has a leadership, management or similar organizational structure in place with written and clearly articulated roles and responsibilities<sup>12</sup>. All partners and staff on site, regardless of program or employer of record, recognize and are committed to actively supporting the organizational structure and service model and processes that are in place.
- b. Has clearly articulated service and performance goals, as well as training and staffing plans that support the successful attainment of those goals. At minimum center goals will include:
  - i. Percent of participants who have completed the initial skill review at the time of registration;
  - ii. Percent of participants who complete the common intake registration and access services from the menu of resources and services; and,
  - iii. Percent of participants who complete the common intake registration and access a skill development service from the menu of resources and services.

The primary goals of a WorkSource Oregon center are a requirement of OED and CCWD through the integrated services initiative<sup>13</sup>. These goals are focused on providing customers with the opportunity to: know their skills; develop their skills; and get the best possible job with their skills<sup>14</sup>.

These goals provide for the development of a skilled workforce, improvement of a customer's prospects for self-sufficiency and support for employer needs for a skilled workforce. A center may add additional goals (to the extent that they are complimentary to these primary goals) which are relevant to the operation of the center, the partners on-site, or the local community.

- c. Promotes and utilizes a team approach, as opposed to a funding or programmatic alignment of staff, as the core of its service delivery strategy<sup>15</sup>.
- d. Has a well articulated service delivery model in place and clearly articulated staff or team roles and responsibilities, including:
  - i. A written Welcome Process, addressing integrated service minimum requirements, identifying staff roles and responsibilities, and providing for common intake and registration of customers and appropriate customer attestations and staff verifications of customer information supporting program eligibility determination, and promotion of the WIN initial skills review and a standard menu of resources and services as appropriate to the customer and to the goals of the center<sup>16</sup>.
  - ii. A written Skills Enhancements Process, addressing integrated service minimum requirements, identifying staff roles and responsibilities, and providing for promotion and connection of customers to skills and training services appropriate to the customer<sup>17</sup>.

- iii. A written Employer Services Process, addressing integrated service minimum requirements, identifying staff roles and responsibilities, and providing for promotion of services to the employer community and the connection customers to placement opportunities<sup>18</sup>.
- iv. Training for staff on requirements, goals, processes, and roles and responsibilities<sup>19</sup>.
- e. Has in the standard customer tracking and management information systems that track and monitor customer utilization of services and provide information to manage and improve the delivery of services and performance outcomes<sup>20</sup>.
- f. Has in place the standard customer feedback process providing information in support of a well defined continuous improvement process<sup>21</sup>.
- g. Is adequately staffed to deliver services to the community based on customer need<sup>22</sup>.
- h. Actively uses customer feedback, staff experience, and management information system data to continually improve service delivery, effectiveness and outcomes<sup>23</sup>.

**3. Staffing, at a WSO Center staff:**

- a. Assists customers to know their skills, enhance their skills, and connect customers to appropriate partner, skill enhancement and employment services<sup>24</sup>.
- b. Roles and responsibilities are clearly articulated and staff is trained, knowledgeable and actively supports well defined welcome, skill enhancement and employer services processes, center goals and the skills enhancement and employment focus of the center<sup>25</sup>.
- c. Are identifiable to customers through standard name tags or other standard identification<sup>26</sup>.
- d. Staff reflects the demographics of the community to the greatest degree possible<sup>27</sup>.
- e. Uses and actively promotes customer registration through the WorkSource Oregon Registration Process (WORP) common intake system to complete customer intake and register customers for program eligibility and performance<sup>28</sup>.
- f. Uses and actively promotes customer completion of the WIN initial skills review<sup>29</sup>.

- g. Assists customers in evaluating initial skills review results, and customer knowledge, skills and abilities related to employment and career advancement opportunities and goals<sup>30</sup>.
- h. Actively promote to customers an array of skills enhancement tools, materials and services, and training opportunities that are appropriate to the employment and career goals of the customer and to employment opportunities in the local and state labor market<sup>31</sup>.
- i. Are knowledgeable and trained and actively promote, make available and support customer access and use of the standard Menu of Resources and Services<sup>32</sup>.
- j. Refer and connect customers to partner services<sup>33</sup>.
- k. Are knowledgeable and trained and actively promote to employers on-site, by phone or by referral an array of employer services, materials, and opportunities that are appropriate to the needs of the employer<sup>34</sup>.

#### 4. Menu of Resources and Services:

All WorkSource Oregon centers will make available and support the state Menu of Resources and Services<sup>35</sup>, this includes but is not limited to:

- a. **Self-assisted** resources and services available on-site in support of customer responsibility and ability to assist themselves in the attainment of their individual skill, employment and career goals. Self-assisted services will include but may not limited to:
  - i. **Common intake and registration**, using the WorkSource Oregon Registration Process (WORP) and system<sup>36</sup>;
  - ii. **Orientation** or introductory workshop or other mechanism to introduce customers to services available at the center and through referral<sup>37</sup>;
  - iii. **Unemployment information** by internet, telephone or other means<sup>38</sup>;
  - iv. **Labor market information**, including but not limited to listings of high growth, demand and wage jobs available in the regional and state labor market, skill requirements and current average wages information<sup>39</sup>;
  - v. **Labor exchange** through iMatchSkills, and other systems or publications<sup>40</sup>;
  - vi. **Job search assistance**, including computers and software, video tutorials, publications, workshops and staff assistance supporting customer success<sup>41</sup>;
  - vii. **Information and referral to partner services** including information about partner services and self-referral to partnering programs.
  - viii. **Self-assessment** tools, assisting customers in knowing their skills, including the standard WIN self-assessment system<sup>42</sup>;
  - ix. **Skill enhancement and training information** on the availability of opportunities, and cost and performance information of the providers in support of customer selection of a program<sup>43</sup>;
  - x. **Skill enhancement tools** delivered through computer, on-line, or publication based<sup>44</sup>;

- xi. **Performance information** related to outcomes from the WSO one-stop system<sup>45</sup>; and,
  - xii. **Support service information** related to the availability of support services through the WIA 1B, partner, or community resources<sup>46</sup>.
- b. **Staff-assisted** resources and services available on-site in support of the availability and delivery of skill enhancement and employer services and the attainment of individual customer skill, employment and career goals. Staff-assisted services will include but may not limited to:
- i. **Eligibility determination** for Wagner-Peyser and WIA 1B services, and as appropriate other partner services<sup>47</sup>;
  - ii. **Initial assessment** to evaluate job readiness based on literacy, job skills, experience, aptitudes, interests or abilities of a customer<sup>48</sup>;
  - iii. **Job counseling and job search assistance** to inform and educate the customer in regard to the best use of information and resources related to their job search<sup>49</sup>;
  - iv. **Staff assisted workshops and job clubs** to inform, educate and build the skills necessary for successful job search<sup>50</sup>;
  - v. **Job referral and placement** providing for appropriate referral to available jobs and posting of resumes or applications<sup>51</sup>;
  - vi. **Assessment and referral** to provide a value added referral to partnering programs or services<sup>52</sup>;
  - vii. **Comprehensive assessment** to evaluate using standard assessment tools the literacy, job readiness, experience, aptitudes, interests or abilities of a customer<sup>53</sup>;
  - viii. **Career Guidance** individualized staff assistance in support of the skill development and employment goals of the customer<sup>54</sup>;
  - ix. **Case Coordination** supporting the coordination of partner services focused on the skill development or employment goals of the customer<sup>55</sup>; and,
  - x. **Occupational skills training** including skills up-grading and re-training, and on-the-job training supporting customer acquisition of skills and knowledge necessary to enter, retain or regain employment<sup>56</sup>.
- c. **Business services** and resources available on-site or by phone or referral in support of the evaluation of skill needs and workforce skill assessment, skill development, and recruitment of an appropriate employer workforce. These services include but may not limited to:
- i. **Evaluation of occupational skill requirements** in support of assisting the employer to prepare an appropriate job posting or in the evaluation of workforce skill needs<sup>57</sup>;
  - ii. **Labor exchange**, Job postings, job match and referral in support of connecting an employer with appropriate job candidates<sup>58</sup>;
  - iii. **Assistance with worker recruitment** focused on assisting the employer with outreach and recruitment of an appropriate workforce<sup>59</sup>;
  - iv. **Skill assessment** to evaluate using standard assessment tools the literacy, knowledge and skills of a worker delivered individually or in a group setting (requires a matching commitment from the employer)<sup>60</sup>;

- v. **Customized training**, in a group setting or through individualized on-the-job training, supporting the development of a workforce that meets the needs of the employer and supports economic self-sufficiency or the workforce and prosperity of the local community (requires a matching commitment from the employer)<sup>61</sup>;
- vi. **Rapid Response** services focused on providing employer assistance and early intervention to prevent a worker layoff, business down-sizing or closure and employer and worker assistance when such events do occur<sup>62</sup>; and,
- vii. **Information and referral to partner services** supporting the connection of the employer to appropriate public services related to their workforce, employment and business needs<sup>63</sup>.

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DRAFT

## REFERENCES

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- 1 OED/CCWD – Integrated Services Standards.
- 2 OWIB – WorkSource Oregon Definitions and Center Certification.
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