



# Maryland

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT BOARD



# Maryland American Job Center Certification Policy

Governor's Workforce Development Board  
Policy Issuance 2025-01  
December 2025

# Policy Issuance 2025-01

**TO:** Local Workforce Development Boards  
Maryland Department of Labor

**FROM:** Governor's Workforce Development Board

**DATE:** December 10, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Maryland American Job Center Certification Policy

**PURPOSE:** This policy establishes the standards and requirements for certifying comprehensive and affiliated American Job Centers in Maryland, consistent with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Certification ensures that centers are accessible, integrated, and deliver high-quality services to job seekers, workers, and employers, while advancing Maryland's workforce development goals. The Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) is responsible for setting criteria, monitoring compliance, and supporting continuous improvement of the one-stop delivery system.

Rescinds and replaces [policy issuance 2017-02](#), Final Maryland American Job Center Certification Policy (February 2017).

**ACTION:** Applicable staff at the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB), Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), and required one-stop partner agencies will ensure awareness of this policy and take necessary actions to implement certification standards, monitor compliance, and provide guidance or technical assistance, as needed

**EFFECTIVE:** December 10, 2025

**QUESTIONS:** Rachael Stephens Parker  
Executive Director  
Governor's Workforce Development Board  
[rachael.parker@maryland.gov](mailto:rachael.parker@maryland.gov)  
O: 410-767-2131  
C: 443-800-5702

Shuana Davis  
Deputy Director, Policy and Strategic Initiatives  
Governor's Workforce Development Board  
[shuana.davis@maryland.gov](mailto:shuana.davis@maryland.gov)  
C: 667-224-0264  
For general inquiries, please email [GWDB.maryland@maryland.gov](mailto:GWDB.maryland@maryland.gov).

**Contributors:** Ashley Baldwin, Manager Policy and Strategic Initiatives,  
Justin Nalley, Manager Policy and Strategic Initiatives

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# Executive Summary

## MARYLAND AMERICAN JOB CENTER CERTIFICATION POLICY

### Overview

The Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) is issuing updated standards and requirements for the certification of Comprehensive and Affiliated American Job Centers (AJCs) in Maryland. This policy ensures that Maryland's workforce system is accessible, integrated, and compliant with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

**This issuance rescinds and replaces Policy Issuance 2017-02 (February 2017).**

### Policy Purpose

The primary objective of this policy is to maintain a high-quality "one-stop" delivery system. Certification ensures that centers provide consistent, effective services to job seekers, workers, and employers. It empowers the GWDB to set criteria, monitor compliance, and support continuous improvement across the network.

### System Requirements

The policy delineates distinct requirements for the two types of centers within the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs):

#### 1. Comprehensive One-Stop Centers

Every Local Workforce Development Area must have at least one Comprehensive Center. These are "full-service" hubs that must meet the following criteria:

- **Physical Access:** Must be a physical location accessible to individuals with disabilities (compliant with WIOA Section 188).
- **Staffing:** Requires onsite staff representation from WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth), Title II (Adult Ed), Title III (Wagner-Peyser), Title IV (Vocational Rehab), and Veterans' Programs (JVSG).
- **Program Access:** Must provide access to career and training services, labor market information, and specific partner programs (e.g., Job Corps, UI, TAA, TANF). Access is defined as having staff physically present, cross-trained staff present, or a direct technological linkage.
- **Operations:** Must operate during regular business days/hours, with optional non-traditional hours to support working adults.

#### 2. Affiliated One-Stop Centers ("Satellites")

These centers extend the reach of the workforce system.

- **Partner Requirement:** Must have at least two partner programs with a physical staff



presence.

- Title I Mandate: A WIOA Title I partner should be included in all affiliated sites.
- Wagner-Peyser Restriction: Wagner-Peyser employment services cannot stand alone as an affiliated center; they must be co-located with a WIOA Title I partner present more than 50% of the time.

## Branding and Communication

To ensure a unified identity, all centers must use the common identifier:

- Comprehensive: "American Job Center"
- Affiliate: "A proud partner of the American Job Center network"
- Funding Disclosure: Public communications funded by federal grant dollars must include Stevens Amendment disclosures regarding the percentage and dollar amount of federal vs. non-governmental funding.

## The Certification Process

The policy establishes a clear workflow for certification, occurring at least once every three years:

1. Local Certification: The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) assesses its centers against GWDB criteria and certifies them.
2. Submission: LWDBs submit documentation to the GWDB within 30 days of their local certification.
3. GWDB Review & Determination: The GWDB reviews the submission and issues one of three determinations:
  - *Certified*: Meets all standards.
  - *Conditionally Certified*: Meets most standards; requires corrective action.
  - *Not Certified*: Fails minimum standards; requires a corrective action plan and resubmission.

## Strategic Impact

Approval of this policy will modernize the certification standards to align with current federal guidance (TEGL 16-16) and Maryland's workforce goals. It clarifies the "rules of the road" for partners regarding physical presence and cost-sharing (MOU), ensuring that resources are maximized to serve Marylanders effectively.

# System Requirements

## I. COMPREHENSIVE ONE-STOP CENTER REQUIREMENTS

WIOA requires under 20 CFR § 678.300 at least one comprehensive physical one-stop center in each local workforce development area. The comprehensive one-stop center must be physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities and in compliance with WIOA Section 188 and 29 CFR § Part 38.<sup>1</sup> In Maryland, a comprehensive one-stop center must meet the following requirements for certification:

1. The comprehensive one-stop center is a physical location where both job seeker and employer customers can access the programs, services, and activities, such as career services, access to training services, and workforce and labor market information of all required one-stop partners per 20 CFR § 678.305(b).
2. Include onsite staff representation under 20 CFR 678.400(b) from:
  - WIOA Title I—Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth programs
  - WIOA Title II—Adult Education and Literacy Services
  - WIOA Title III—Wagner Peyser employment services
  - WIOA Title IV—Vocational Rehabilitation Services
  - Veterans' Programs and Services (including Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff under the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSF))

Program partners are required to articulate a precise definition of their operational presence, which will be incorporated into the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs).

3. In accordance with 20 CFR § 678.400 and TEGL 16-16, the following programs must be accessible at a local one-stop center. The access strategy must be specifically addressed in the negotiated MOU regarding how individuals served at the center will be provided access:
  - Job Corps (WIOA Title I)<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 29 CFR § 38.5 General prohibitions on discrimination –No individual in the United States may, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or, for beneficiaries, applicants, and participants only, on the basis of citizenship or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity.

<sup>2</sup> If applicable.

- YouthBuild (WIOA Title I)
  - Native American Programs (WIOA Title I, sec. 166)
  - Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Programs (WIOA Title I, sec. 167)
  - Unemployment Insurance (UI) Programs
  - Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Programs
  - WIOA Rapid Response
  - Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) (Title V of the Older Americans Act)
  - Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Employment and Training Programs
  - Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Employment and Training Programs
  - Second Chance Act Programs / Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO)
  - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
  - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training
  - Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education – Post-Secondary Training
4. Each comprehensive one-stop center must provide access to career services, as described in 20 CFR § 678.430, and training services, as described in 20 CFR § 678.200. “Access” to each partner program and its services, per 20 CFR § 678.305(d), means:
- (1) having program staff physically present at the one-stop center;
  - (2) having partner program staff member physically present at the one-stop center appropriately trained to provide information to customers about the programs, services, and activities available through partner programs; or
  - (3) providing direct linkage through technology to program staff who can provide meaningful information or services.
5. Each comprehensive one-stop center must provide a full array of labor market information, including online access to tools and resources.
6. Comprehensive one-stop centers must provide access to programs, services, and activities during regular business days and hours. Comprehensive one-stop centers may remain open during non-traditional hours to help working adults access programs and resources that encourage life-long learning and improved employment and earnings opportunities.

7. Comprehensive one-stop centers must have referral processes in place for employers and job seekers to have access to specialized or other services available through partner programs and service providers.

## II. AFFILIATED ONE-STOP CENTER REQUIREMENTS

WIOA sets a minimum baseline for the requirements of affiliated one-stop centers pursuant to CFR § 678.800.

In Maryland, affiliated one-stop centers, also referred to as “satellites,” offer opportunities to expand access points for customers seeking workforce and education services. To encourage an expansive and inclusive network of physical access point locations, Maryland’s vision for affiliated sites utilizes partners’ physical infrastructure to expand the state’s one-stop center footprint by requiring the following:

1. An affiliated one-stop center must have at least two or more partner programs with a physical staff presence at the location. The frequency of the physical presence of various program staff at the affiliated one-stop center is determined by the program partners. Additionally:
  - A WIOA Title I partner should be included in all affiliated one-stop center locations, with a program partner lead designated as the primary point of contact
2. Wagner-Peyser employment services cannot be stand-alone affiliated one-stop centers. If Wagner-Peyser employment services are provided at an affiliated site, there must be at least a WIOA Title I partner at the affiliated site with staff physically present more than 50 percent of the time the center is open, in addition to any other partners. In this case, “another program partner” does not include the partner administering the Jobs for Veterans State Grant Program (JVSG) or unemployment compensation programs.

All one-stop centers in Maryland must use the common identifier on signage and materials per 20 CFR § 678.900(c). This means that the taglines “American Job Center” for comprehensive centers, or “a proud partner of the American Job Center network” for affiliate centers, shall be displayed at all one-stop centers and be included in all materials used in the one-stop delivery system.

To the extent a one-stop operator issues a public communication, material, or announcement funded in whole or in part with federal grant dollars must include the disclosure required by the Stevens Amendment.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The Stevens Amendment is a U.S. Department of Labor provision that requires recipients of its grants to disclose federal funding in public communications about projects or programs. The amendment provides, “when issuing statements, press releases, requests for proposals, bid solicitations and other documents describing projects or programs funded in whole or in part with Federal money, all grantees receiving Federal funds included in this act, shall clearly state— (1) the percentage of the total costs of the program or project which will be financed with Federal money; (2) the dollar amount of Federal



### III. PROCEDURES

All local area workforce development plans should include details of all comprehensive and affiliated one-stop centers in local workforce development areas, including all details in response to the requirements and recommendations outlined in the above policy. Arrangements are further detailed in a local Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), including the roles and responsibilities of partners and cost-sharing arrangements, including the local Resource Sharing Agreement.

Local areas requiring technical assistance should submit an official request to the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) electronically at [GWDB.maryland@maryland.gov](mailto:GWDB.maryland@maryland.gov) outlining the issue, possible resolution(s), and a specific request for assistance.

GWDB will provide technical assistance and monitor for compliance with the common identifier requirement in the WIOA regulations and this policy.

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funds for the project or program; and (3) percentage and dollar amount of the total costs of the project or program that will be financed by non-governmental sources.”

## **IV. CERTIFICATION PROCESS**

### **1. Certification Documentation**

Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) must certify all comprehensive and affiliated American Job Centers (AJCs) within its local workforce development area using the criteria established in this policy. Certification documentation must be submitted to the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) within 30 days of LWDB certification for review and acceptance.

Certification documentation must clearly demonstrate compliance with the requirements of this policy and WIOA, including:

The physical and programmatic accessibility of each AJC;

The availability and access to all required partner programs under 20 CFR § 678.400;

Evidence of continuous improvement and effectiveness of service delivery; and

Documentation of adherence to the common identifier and applicable branding standards.

Each LWDB may use a certification template provided by the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB) or a locally developed format that addresses the minimum standards required by this policy.

### **2.. Submission and Review**

LWDBs must submit certification documentation electronically to the Governor's Workforce Development Board at [GWDB.Maryland@maryland.gov](mailto:GWDB.Maryland@maryland.gov).

The GWDB will review certification documentation, verify compliance, and issue a written certification determination for each AJC:

Certified – the AJC meets all standards and requirements;

Conditionally Certified – the AJC meets most standards but requires corrective action within a defined timeframe; or

Not Certified – the AJC does not meet minimum standards and must implement a corrective action plan before resubmission.

The GWDB, in coordination with the Maryland Department of Labor and partner agencies, may provide technical assistance to LWDBs to address any findings or required corrective actions.

### **3. Certification Timeline**

LWDBs shall conduct AJC certification at least once every three years for comprehensive and affiliate centers using criteria established by the GWDB. The GWDB will update the criteria every 2 years in accordance with 20 CFR § 678.800.

LWDBs must ensure that AJC certification documentation remains current and aligned with the Local Plan. If any significant operational changes (e.g., opening of a new AJC) affect access, partnerships, or the physical or virtual delivery of services, updated certification documentation must be submitted to the GWDB within 30 days of the LWDB certification for review and acceptance.

The GWDB may, at its discretion, conduct interim reviews or monitoring visits to ensure continued compliance between certification cycles.

#### **4. Record Retention and Continuous Improvement**

LWDBs must retain all certification documentation, supporting evidence, and GWDB determinations for at least three years from the date of final certification action, in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.334.

LWDBs should integrate certification results into their continuous improvement strategies to enhance service delivery, accessibility, and customer experience at all AJCs.

The GWDB will use certification outcomes to inform technical assistance priorities, statewide system improvement, and evaluation of local area performance.

# References

## Federal Statutes

- [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\), 29 U.S.C. § 3101 et. seq \(2015\) \(Pub. L. 113-128\).](#)

## Federal Regulations

- [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; Joint Rule for Unified and Combined State Plans, Performance Accountability, and the One-Stop System Joint Provisions; Final Rule.](#) Federal Register 81, no. 161 (August 19); 55792-6070;
- [20 CFR Part 678](#) – Description of the One-Stop Delivery System under Title I of WIOA;
- [20 CFR Part 679](#) – State Workforce Development Board Provisions (including § 679.130(d)); and
- [29 CFR Part 38](#) – WIOA Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions.

## Federal Guidance

- [Training and Employment Notice \(TEN\) No. 05-14](#), “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Announcement and Initial Informational Resources,” dated July 22, 2014;
- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) No. 19-14](#), “Vision for the Workforce System and Initial Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014,” dated February 19, 2015; and
- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) No. 16-16](#), “One-Stop Operations Guidance for the American Job Center Network,” January 18, 2017.

## Other References

- [Maryland Local Workforce Development Plans](#)
- [Maryland Department of Labor Nondiscrimination Plan](#)
- [GWDB Policy Issuances](#)



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