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|  CONSULTATION PAPER | | POLICY NUMBER |
| TITLE: | One-Stop Staff Credentialing Requirements | |
| RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: | Workforce Services, One-Stop and Program Support | |
| EFFECTIVE: | | |

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

Frontline staff who serve customers directly are to meet minimum credentialing requirements on an annual basis, which includes the completion of the Tier One program within the first six months of hire, as well as the completion of 15 Continuing Education Units or CEUs each year thereafter.

II. PURPOSE/SCOPE

This Consultation Paper addresses the minimum credentialing standards required for career center staff. The Consultation Paper is designed for dissemination, review and comment through February 15, 2015 to Erica.Liem@deo.myflorida.com.

III. INTRODUCTION

In December 2011, CareerSource Florida established a workgroup to review the procedures associated with the delivery of minimum training requirements for front-line staff, including the Tier One Certificate Program. The objective of the workgroup was to find a cost effective manner to develop and implement training and certify that staff are proficient in materials recognized as critical to the operation of local career centers. A workgroup of CareerSource Florida staff members, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) staff members and RWB leaders met to analyze the then-existing training process for new front-line staff, including an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) associated with securing and retaining front-line staff. The workgroup recognized the need to ensure that workforce staff members are recognized as the talent of the workforce system, and that workforce staff

members secure minimum competency skills to effectively engage workforce system customers seeking work or career advancement. Equally important is the need for workforce staff members to engage in continual training to learn new skills and improve existing skills.

The workgroup determined the basic competency training and examination process, also known as “Tier One Certificate Program”, should:

- Be developed and facilitated through a workforce-based learning management system;
- Be designed to provide a cost savings for the State of Florida on the Tier One Certificate Program;
- Provide a basic orientation to Workforce Services and Programs for front-line staff;
- Maximize the use of technology; and
- Ensure consistency in basic and programmatic training provided through the State.

The Tier One Certificate Program curriculum, existing prior to the workgroup, was updated and will be continually reviewed and updated as necessary. The workgroup also worked diligently to ensure DEO, in collaboration with RWB partners, creates and distributes a Tier One Certificate Exam.

DEO also created a Tier Two program, which is not a mandatory component of the credentialing requirements, but the lessons can be used to gain the Continuing Education Units (CEUs) each year. The Tier Two materials are posted in the learning management system and requires users to self-enroll in a category of lessons through the Training Catalog. Categories include the Migrant Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Trade Assistance, Wagner-Peyser (WP), Welfare Transition (WT), and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs.

IV. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this document is to ensure all frontline staff members engaging customers directly receive a minimum amount of basic workforce training, as well as ensure the standard of training to engage workforce customers. The goal is to ensure staff have a clear understanding of the history of the workforce system, how the workforce system works in the State of Florida and customer service elements associated with serving workforce service customers. The State of Florida has established a minimum credentialing requirement associated with the engagement of workforce system staff members to ensure they meet the minimum training threshold.

V. HISTORY

This document supersedes guidance contained in AWI FG 02-032 and the [memorandum](#) issued February 2, 2005 (subject: One-Stop Credentialing-Second Year Requirements).

VI. AUTHORITY

- Workforce Investment Act of 1998
- Workforce Innovation Act of 2000
- Florida Statutes s. 445.009
- Florida Americans with Disabilities Accessibility Implementation Act
- TEIN 16-99, subject: Workforce Investment Act of 1998 Section 188 Interim Final Rule and Accessibility Checklists for One-Stop Delivery Systems; ETA, USDOL; April 2000
- United States Department of Labor (USDOL) [Testing and Assessment: An Employer's Guide to Good Practices](#) and [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures](#)

VII. DEFINITIONS

- **Continuing Education Units (CEUs):** a CEU is equal to one hour of training.
- **Front-line staff:** staff members who work with job seekers, employers or other workforce customers.
- **Tier One:** materials focused on ensuring staff members have gained knowledge related to basic competencies needed to work in Florida's workforce system.
- **Tier Two:** materials focused on ensuring staff members learn "the basics" of various workforce programs, such as the WP and WIA programs. The curriculum made up of many lessons are called categories: WIA is a program category; and, there are many lessons that make up the WIA program category.

VIII. POLICY and PROCEDURES

A. Minimum skills requirements for front-line staff

1. Workforce development professional staff members should have basic skills related to customer service, helping job seekers find and keep a job, and helping them assess and complete a career development plan; have knowledge of labor market information; and have knowledge of how to access and use Florida's job matching and case management computer systems.
2. Workforce development professional staff members should also have a basic orientation to the various workforce programs that make up Florida's Workforce System structure. The Tier Two program can provide such information to front-line staff. The Tier Two program offers basic

programmatic training in a variety of categories, including MSFW, SNAP, Trade Assistance, WP, WT, and WIA programs.

3. All workforce development professional staff members must complete Florida's Workforce Professional Tier One Certificate Program and pass the Tier One Certificate Exam within six months of the staff member's hire date.
 - An individual who completes the Tier One Certificate Program but does not pass the Tier One Certificate Exam after two attempts within six months of his/her hire date may still remain employed if job performance standards are met or exceeded. The RWB must document that the staff member meets or exceeds job performance standards through a job performance evaluation.
 - Documentation that the individual successfully passed the Tier One Certificate Exam or documentation of successful job performance (i.e. employee performance evaluation or other similar document) must be retained by the RWB.
 - If the staff member does not pass the Tier One Certificate Exam, the evaluation of job performance must be on file and available for inspection. The completion of the job performance evaluation should be done within 30 days of the six month anniversary of the hire date.
4. Subsequent to the attainment of the initial certification or the six months hire date, staff must annually complete at least 15 hours of CEUs. The first annual time period shall begin one year after the employee's hire date. Courses that may be considered for workforce development professional CEUs are fairly broad and may include both in-person and online training. For example, the Tier Two program can serve as a learning program: hours completed watching the Tier Two videos can count for CEUs.

The Tier Two program offers a variety of specific content information for staff members who must meet credentialing requirements every year. Staff members can log into Adobe Connect, self-enroll in the category and complete the lessons all via the internet. Staff members can enroll in lessons to learn about the programs they work in or programs that they are interested in working in. Staff can also take Tier Two lessons to cross-train and learn about other programs operating in the workforce system.

The training may be provided by a contracted training provider, an RWB, a partner, DEO, CareerSource Florida, etc. The objectives of the CEU requirements are to ensure the staff member:

- Obtains information on current labor market trends;

- Obtains information on current programmatic trends, including best practices;
 - Acquires knowledge in specific content areas;
 - Masters new skills and techniques;
 - Expands and upgrades knowledge and skills; and
 - Develops critical inquiry and evaluation skills.
5. All of the 15 hours are “clock hours” or hours spent in actual training activities. It does not include designated breaks, registration time, visiting exhibits at conferences, or meals when attending a conference. Time outside of the actual training or training environment does not count as CEU time. Time spent in sessions and activities must be documented to count as CEUs. One hour of training equals one CEU.
 6. College classes can count towards CEUs if the RWB determines that the coursework is related to the staff member’s job or future career in the workforce system. Time spent in classes or lab activities must be documented and meet all other requirements.
 7. Support for hours spent in training for all CEU hours is required. The key element is retaining data and/or documentation to support time spent in the actual training activity.

B. Tier One Certificate Exam Process

1. The RWB must do everything in its power to
 - provide adequate time for the staff member to prepare for the exam, as well as offer access to training materials along with a date/time of the exam in advance so the learner can prepare to take the exam on a set date.
 - require the staff member complete the Tier One Certificate Program training materials prior to being registered for the Tier One Certificate Exam.
 - allow only proctors and/or regionally designated training coordinators to receive and handle the password for the Tier One Certificate Exam.
 - require training coordinators/proctors to review the Tier One Examination Administration Form with the learner prior to taking the test. The form is to be retained by the RWB.
 - ensure the staff member is informed she/he cannot use any printed or electronic materials during the completion of the exam.
 - ensure that the staff member is informed that the Tier One Certificate Exam is not timed (in an effort to reduce test-taking anxiety and ensure that those with a hidden disability are not negatively impacted by a time limit).

- notify staff that failure to maintain confidentiality of the exam or failure to complete the exam without unauthorized aids (not including aids for individuals with disabilities) may lead to disciplinary action, up to or including termination.
 - give an opportunity to go back through the training materials to learn the information if the staff member fails the exam the first time. The [learning management system](#) allows the learner to go back through the system to review materials, and the materials are available on the DEO [website](#).
2. A staff member who does not pass the exam the first time should be given a second opportunity to take the exam.
 3. The staff member should not test sooner than two weeks from the first fail date. The staff member must be registered again to take the exam using the [Tier One Certificate Exam Request Form](#). A staff member who fails twice may take the exam for the third time four months after the second failure date.
 4. The staff member should be given a date/time when she/he will take the test again so she/he can prepare to take the exam.

IX. FORMS

- [Tier One Certificate Exam Request Form](#)
- [Training Request Form](#)
- Tier One Examination Administration Form (attachment)
- [Adobe Connect Access Request Form](#)

X. RESOURCES

- For questions related to serving or testing individuals with disabilities, you may contact the [DEO OCR](#). Technical assistance is also available via the telephone or Internet through the Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center, Southeast Region (phone 1-800-949-4232, website <http://www.adasoutheast.org/>) and the Job Accommodation Network (phone 1-800-526-7234, website <http://askian.org/>).
- [One-Stop Credentialing Quality Assurance Review Tool](#)
- [A Guide to Accessing the Adobe Connect System](#)
- One-Stop Credentialing Questions and Answers document (attachment)
- [Tier One Certificate Exam's Proctor's Guide](#)
- [Adobe Connect System's Training Catalog \(and the Tier Two program\)](#)