

CareerSource Heartland

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SECTION: Administration	PROCEDURE # A25	1 of 9
TITLE: Individual Training Accounts, Training Provider and Program Approval and Renewal	EFFECTIVE DATE 2/6/2026	
APPROVED BY: Donna Doubleday	REPLACES: 2/5/2025, 6/19/2024, 10/28/2020, 04/20/2016, 01/05/2015, 06/21/2018, PLN 01-04	

PURPOSE: To provide guidelines for determining initial and subsequent eligibility of training providers and programs for inclusion on CareerSource Heartland's (CSH) Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Approved providers and programs are eligible to receive Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds for the provision of training services in local areas.

BACKGROUND:

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I training can be provided through a variety of contract mechanisms, or it may be funded through an Individual Training Account (ITA) that is used to purchase training from an Eligible Training Provider (ETP). ETPs are postsecondary providers of training services that are eligible to receive funds from LWDBs as prescribed in Section 133(b) of WIOA. The ETPL is mandated by Section 122 of WIOA, which requires the Governor, through the state workforce development board, CareerSource Florida, Inc., to establish criteria, information requirements, and procedures on the eligibility of training providers of training services in the state. Additionally, Florida's 2021 Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act charges the Florida Department of Commerce (FloridaCommerce) with establishing ETP criteria focused on participant outcomes.

The workforce development system established under WIOA emphasizes informed consumer choices, job-driven training, provider performance, and continuous improvement. The quality and selection of training providers and programs of study are vital to achieving these core principles. Training Provider listings serve as the catalyst for establishing approved occupational training programs in DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands and Okeechobee counties.

CareerSource Heartland's Board of Directors approved the use of the State ETPL for training considerations. However, per guidance from FloridaCommerce, CSH processes for local ETPL approval must still be followed.

Note: Providers of work-based training opportunities are not required to be included on the local ETPL.

PROCEDURE

CSH utilizes Individual Training Accounts (ITA) to provide training services to eligible residents within the CSH area. ITAs are the mechanism under WIOA for providing eligible customers with the resources to access training programs through approved training providers. To be eligible for an ITA, an individual customer must, at a minimum:

- Be determined as not meeting local self-sufficiency standards, and be unable to find suitable employment with existing skills and/or academic credentials, as evidenced through unsuccessful job placement;
- Not be eligible to receive other training assistance (i.e. Pell grant) or, if received, the additional funding is not sufficient to cover training and training related support costs;
- Through assessment, be determined to be appropriate for and able to complete and benefit from the chosen employment training program and be identified by designated staff as in need of training assistance;

- Select a training program that is linked to a demand occupation in the local area and make a commitment to seek employment in the field once trained.

Priority for ITAs is given to vocational and technical programs lasting not more than twelve (12) consecutive calendar months. However, consideration is given to those programs not lasting more than twenty-four (24) consecutive months, including those instances of customers having current academic credit. In no instance will CSH fund all four (4) years of a customer's post-secondary education. Baccaalaureate level training must have prior approval by the CSH President/Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Funding for education and training beyond the baccaalaureate level is limited to certifications. Exceptions to these limitations require the prior approval of the CSH President/CEO.

All entities wishing to be added as a Training Provider to the local ETPL must complete a Training Provider Application Packet. CSH staff will review the potential Training Provider's application information to assure compliance with federal, state, and local criteria.

Training Provider Application Packet Required Documents:

- Training Provider Application (Initial or Continued Eligibility)
- Program Information/Expense Sheet
- Line-Item Detail Spreadsheet – Program performance Information
- Contact Information
- ITA Agreement
- CSH Agreement
- ITA Agreement Addendum

All training agreements must comply with contracting requirements as detailed in CareerSource Florida's (CSF) Contracting Policy.

The threshold for allowable investment is \$9,000 per customer specific to training related to CSH's Sector Strategies Advanced Manufacturing and Healthcare Initiative; \$8,000 per customer entering training in Demand Industry Occupations; and \$6,500 per customer for training in non-Demand Industry Occupations. Exceptions to this threshold may be approved by the President/CEO of CSH, upon presentation of good cause and individual need. Exceptions must be approved in advance. The thresholds do not include supportive services required for participation in training.

Short-term training opportunities may also be provided through the ITA process. Short-term training must result in a recognized credential as defined by WIOA guidelines. All approved training must be in occupations listed on the Demand Occupations List (DOL) except in circumstances surrounding special grants or involving targeted populations. All requests to fund training for occupations not listed on the DOL must be approved in advance by the CSH President/CEO.

Initial Inclusion of Training Providers

Occupational skills training providers follow a designated application process to qualify for vouchers under the ITA system. At a minimum, CSH uses the following considerations in developing a prospective vendor list for the purpose of determining an eligible occupational skills training provider:

- Effectiveness of the training provider in delivering comparable or related training based on demonstrated performance, in terms of the likelihood of meeting performance goals, cost, quality of training and service to targeted customers.
- Willingness of the training provider to enter into agreements, establish linkages with other appropriate human service agencies and provide discounted tuition or offer scholarships as evidenced by such activities as the on-site availability of no-cost mentoring, tutoring and placement services, aggressive cooperation with CSH staff to access the institution's own grants-in-aid offerings and waiving of costs associated with selected fees and similar supports.
- Availability of occupational skills training programs which provide a level of skills sufficient to meet

the demands of the local labor market.

In addition, to be approved, Providers must be:

- An institution of higher education and provide a program(s) that lead to recognized post-secondary credential; or
- An entity that carries out apprenticeship programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act (NAA); or
- Other public or private providers of training service programs which may include joint labor-management organizations, pre-apprenticeship programs and occupational/ technical training; or
- A provider of adult education and literacy under Title II if such activities are provided in combination with occupational skills training.

Only entities that carry out NAA registered apprenticeship programs are exempt from “Initial” and “Continued” eligibility application procedures. NAA programs will be included and maintained on the ETPL as long as the corresponding program remains registered or until it notifies CSH in writing that it no longer wants to be included.

New providers must apply through the “Initial Eligibility” process. “Initial Eligibility” may be received for only one year, after which these providers may seek “Continued Eligibility.” To be eligible to receive training funds, with the exception of registered apprenticeship training providers, training provider programs must be for training in occupations on the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) DOL, current at the time of training.

Note:

Out-of-state postsecondary training institutions that are not operating in Florida are not required to be licensed by the Florida Commission for Independent Education (CIE). However, out-of-state providers must provide the following information:

1. Information needed for initial eligibility or continuing eligibility determination;
2. Evidence that the institution (and applicable programs) is accredited by an accreditation agency approved by the U.S. Department of Education;
3. Evidence that the institution meets the licensing requirements of its home state; and
4. Evidence that the institution is identified as active on the ETPL in its state of origin or native state. To provide performance information for its programs, out-of-state providers are required to report their student completer data to FloridaCommerce under established reporting mechanisms.

Out-of-local area and out-of-state training providers must request an initial eligibility determination for each program of study to be included on the state ETPL. Out-of-state providers must also provide documentation, uploaded to the ETPL portal, which validates the above-referenced criteria. These training providers must contact the state ETPL Coordinator directly to request their initial eligibility and the initial eligibility of their programs of study.

Initial Eligibility

To be determined Initially Eligible to provide training services, the provider shall supply verifiable program-specific performance information to support the provider’s ability to serve participants, accompanied by relevant performance and cost information in order to maximize consumer choice as well as serve all significant population groups. Such information shall include:

- Verification of provider’s current Florida licensing, certification, or otherwise recognized accreditation authorizing the entity to provide training services in Florida

- A detailed description of each training services program the applicant intends to provide
- Information on the program costs of each program the applicant intends to provide (these costs should include all costs related to the program, including tuition, books, lab fees, supplies, application fees, exam fees, test fees, etc.)
- Information on the industry-recognized credential, including post-secondary credential, to be received upon completion for each program offered, and whether the credential can be stacked with other credentials as a career ladder/pathway sequence
- Identification of specific partnerships or collaborations the provider has established with business or industry
- Identification of the in-demand sectors and occupations which best fit with the training program
- A description of the prerequisites or skills and knowledge required prior to commencement of training
- Verification that the training program is for an occupation on the DOL
- Demonstration of a minimum of 80% completion rate for enrollees of programs submitted
- Demonstration of a minimum of 80% entered employment rate for enrollees of programs submitted
- Demonstration of a minimum entry level wage rate that exceeds Florida State Minimum Wage for participants entering employment for each program submitted
- Provision of progress and performance data for each program submitted
- Timely reporting of student data to FETPIP
- Demonstration of reasonableness of cost

Training Providers that do not meet the minimum criteria as delineated throughout this procedure will not be approved. Proposed programs that do not meet the minimum criteria as outlined in this procedure will not be approved. Training Providers are advised that the same program(s) approved for some LWDA's may be denied by other LWDA's based on local criteria or need. Only approved Training Providers and Training Provider Programs will be listed on the local ETPL.

Applications submitted by Training Providers not eligible to receive Title IV funds may be denied if the cost of submitted programs is deemed unreasonable in comparison with other locally available options.

Favorable consideration is given to institutions eligible to receive Title IV funds and/or who offer scholarships or funding waivers to WIOA participants; and to institutions who agree to provide all required supplies, uniforms, and required exams through their internal processes, and to bill CSH directly for those items, thus eliminating third party billing.

Invitations to submit Training Provider applications are sent to all current CSH providers as well as any known public or private providers located in the LWDA and surrounding counties. Training Providers may apply at any time by request.

Favorable consideration is given to programs in which the majority of enrollees complete training, earn a credential, and enter training related employment; and to programs in which participants entering employment earn equal to or higher than the locally adjusted Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL).

FETPIP data is required on all programs that have been in active operation for a duration long enough to require such reporting. However, the Training Provider may also provide internally collected program performance data if such is available.

Once an application has been received from the potential provider, it will be reviewed by CareerSource Heartland staff to ensure documentation requirements are met and notify the State ETPL Coordinator via email at ETPL@commerce.fl.gov that a determination of initial eligibility request has been submitted.

The State ETPL Coordinator will approve or deny the application and notify the training provider of the determination through Employ Florida or the training provider's preferred mode of communication as indicated in the application. If approved, the ETP will be added to the state ETPL.

Alternatively, training providers may directly contact the State ETPL Coordinator at ETPL@commerce.fl.gov to request an initial eligibility determination. The State ETPL Coordinator will review the application to ensure that all documentation requirements are met. The State ETPL Coordinator will follow the aforementioned process for determining eligibility and providing notification to the training provider for approval or denial of the initial eligibility request.

Continued Eligibility

All Training Providers who have completed the "Initial Eligibility" for at least one year or who were eligible to provide training services prior to the effective date of this procedure may apply for "Continued Eligibility." All eligible Training Providers under this category must submit applications every two years to maintain their eligibility. With the exception of the initial implementation of this procedure, applications for "Continued Eligibility" must be submitted three months before eligibility expires. Removal from the ETPL for a short period of time will not return the Training Provider to "Initial Eligibility" status unless the Training Provider was removed for cause (see Enforcement section).

"Continued Eligibility" applicants must supply the following information:

- Verification of provider's current Florida licensing, certification, or otherwise recognized accreditation authorizing the entity to provide training services in Florida. (A Training Provider eligible to provide training services prior to the effective date of this procedure is exempt from providing this verification unless its license, certification, or authorization status has changed since last application).
- For each program the applicant intends to provide/has been providing:
 - a. The total number of persons enrolled in the program;
 - b. The total number of WIOA participants enrolled in the program;
 - c. The total number of persons completing the program;
 - d. The total number of WIOA participants completing the program;
 - e. Quality of the program of study including a program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential;
 - f. Provider's ability to offer industry-recognized certificates and credentials;
 - g. The total number of persons awarded a Recognized Postsecondary Credential (or other credential, if applicable);
 - h. The total number of WIOA participants awarded a Recognized Postsecondary Credential (or other credential, if applicable);
 - i. The total number of persons employed after completing the program;
 - j. The total number of WIOA participants employed after completing the program;
 - k. Data identifying the cost of attendance and costs of tuition and fees for WIOA participants completing the program;
 - l. Information on recognized post-secondary credentials (or other credential, if applicable) received by WIOA participants;
 - m. Whether the credential can be used in conjunction with other credentials as part of a sequence to move an individual along a career pathway or up a career ladder;
 - n. Description of how the provider will ensure access to programs of study throughout the state, including in rural areas, and using technology (as applicable);
 - o. Description of provider's ability to provide trainings that are physically and programmatically accessible for individuals who are employed and individuals with

- barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities;
- p. Information reported to state agencies with respect to federal and state programs of study (other than the program carried out under WIOA), including one-stop partner programs;
- q. Performance on WIOA performance indicators;
- r. The degree to which programs of study relate to in-demand industry sectors and occupations in the state;
- s. Timeliness and accuracy of ETP's performance reports; and
- t. Any additional factors that are determined appropriate within the parameters of WIOA and statutes.

CSH will use this information to ensure provider accountability and informed consumer choice; to ensure that Training Providers and programs are meeting the needs of local businesses and residents; and to evaluate performance.

CSH requires the following for continued program eligibility. Training Providers and programs will be evaluated separately. Training Providers may receive approval for "Continued Eligibility" status while all programs submitted may not be approved. For program approval, CSH will consider the following:

- Information on the program costs of each program the applicant intends to provide (these costs should include all costs related to the program, including tuition, books, lab fees, supplies, application fees, exam fees, test fees, etc.)
- Information on the industry-recognized credential, including post-secondary credential, to be received upon completion for each program offered, and whether the credential can be stacked with other credentials as a career ladder/pathway sequence
- Identification of specific partnerships or collaborations the provider has established with business or industry
- Identification of the in-demand sectors and occupations which best fit with the training program
- Prerequisites or skills and knowledge required prior to commencement of training
- Verification that the training program is for an occupation on the local TOL
- Demonstration of a minimum of 80% completion rate for enrollees of programs submitted
- Demonstration of a minimum of 80% entered employment rate for enrollees of programs submitted
- Demonstration of a minimum entry level wage rate that exceeds Florida State Minimum Wage. for participants entering employment for each program submitted
- Provision of progress and performance data for each program submitted
- Timely reporting of student data to FETPIP
- Demonstration of reasonableness of costs submitted
- Percentage of program participants who enter unsubsidized employment in an occupation related to their training
- Percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second and fourth quarters after exit from the program
- Median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after program exit
- Percentage of program participants who obtain an industry or post-secondary recognized credential (or a secondary school diploma if same participants have obtained or retained employment or are in an education/training program leading to a post-secondary credential within one year after program exit)

Concerning provision of information on program outcomes for approved programs, Training Providers

receiving approval for “Continued Eligibility” status are subject to all requirements for the programs approved even after “Continued Eligibility” expires (to report outcomes for the approved program year(s)).

Registered Apprenticeship Programs

In accordance with the National Apprenticeship Act (NAA) (50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.), entities that carry out RAPs are exempt from the initial and continued eligibility requirements described in this policy. RAPs must be included and maintained on the ETPL until:

1. The RAP notifies FloridaCommerce it no longer wants to be included on the list;
2. The program becomes deregistered under the National Apprenticeship Act;
3. The program is determined to have intentionally supplied inaccurate information; or
4. A determination is made by FloridaCommerce that the RAP substantially violated any provision of Title I of WIOA or the WIOA regulations, including 29 CFR part 38.

Because RAPs are exempt from all initial and continued eligibility requirements, CSH will not impose additional criteria or information requirements for RAP sponsors except as outlined in Training and Employment Guidance Letter Nos. 08-19 and 08-19, Change 1, and TEGl No. 13-16, Change 1.

A RAP is an ETP if it is registered with DOE, Office of Apprenticeship (OA), or any other state’s State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA). Although they are automatically eligible for ETPL inclusion, RAP sponsors seeking to have their apprenticeship programs listed on the ETPL must still “opt-in” by informing the State ETPL Coordinator at ETPL@commerce.fl.gov. RAPs opting-in may be referred to the State ETPL Coordinator by CareerSource Florida, LWDBs, or DOE. If a RAP expresses interest in being on the state ETPL, the ETPL Coordinator must request the RAPs provide the following information:

1. Occupations included in the RAP;
2. The name and address of the RAP sponsor;
3. The name and address of the Related Technical Instruction provider and the location of instruction if different from the program sponsor’s address;
4. The method and length of instruction; and
5. The number of active apprentices.

RAPs on the state ETPL must be included on all local ETPLs in the state and shall remain on the ETPLs until removed or upon written request for removal by the RAP sponsor to the ETPL Coordinator at ETPL@commerce.fl.gov.

FloridaCommerce will regularly coordinate with USDOL, CareerSource Florida and DOE to ensure that necessary updates are made to any information previously provided by RAP sponsors or training providers. FloridaCommerce will also coordinate with DOE to ensure that RAPs registered with the DOE are made aware that they are eligible for placement on the ETPL, and that DOE is informed when a RAP that is registered with USDOL’s OA or another state’s SAA contacts FloridaCommerce to opt-in to inclusion on the ETPL.

Apprenticeship programs that are not registered with DOE, OA, or another state’s SAA are not considered RAPs and must complete the initial eligibility and continued eligibility procedures. Pre-apprenticeships, including quality registered pre-apprenticeships leading to RAPs, are not automatically approved for inclusion on the ETPL and are not exempt from requirements outlined in this policy. Other programs of training services offered by a RAP sponsor or a RAP’s provider of related instruction are likewise not automatically eligible.

Exceptions

Exceptions to the required use of the ETPL for ITA funded training include work-based training (on-the-job, employed worker, customized, incumbent worker, internships, paid or unpaid work experience, and

transitional employment) opportunities. Although an additional exception can be made where a local board determines there is insufficient number of eligible providers to accomplish the purpose of an ITA, at this time this is not appropriate for CSH. For work-based training, a contract will be used to provide training.

Under the circumstances of youth contracts, special grant funding, or due to local economic climate and jobs availability, CSH President/CEO may waive the credential, entered employment, completion, DOL, and/or employment wage rate requirements. Waivers must be granted in advance.

Enforcement

As CSH is made aware of issues or possible issues occurring in reference to a Training Provider, due diligence will be used to verify the validity and potential impacts. Depending on the nature and/or number of concerns brought to our attention, further action may be taken, up to and including, removal of the Training Provider from the EPTL.

Training Providers will be removed from the local ETPL for failure to comply with this procedure, CSF's Administrative Policy number 90, WIOA, State of Florida and/or local area requirements, when the training program is no longer needed or desired, or for "cause". "Cause" shall include, but not be limited to, engaging in fraud or other criminal acts, incapacity, unfitness, neglect, incompetence, irresponsibility, misfeasance, malfeasance, nonfeasance, or lack of performance.

Training Providers will be also removed from the local ETPL for supplying inaccurate information, for offering unlawful remuneration to attract participants, and upon determination that the Provider substantially violated a requirement of this or any related Federal, State, or local area requirements. "Substantial violation" may be construed to be one or more egregious violations in a short period of time, or numerous minor violations over a longer time period.

Training Providers who are removed from the local ETPL for "Enforcement" reasons shall be terminated from the ETPL and ineligible to receive funds under Chapter 3 (section 122(f)(1)(B) WIOA) for a period of not less than two years. A Provider removed for "Enforcement" reasons shall lose "Continued Eligibility" status and will need to reapply for "Initial Eligibility" before being allowed to provide services. In this instance, the Provider will need to supply additional information verifying correction of the issue(s) that caused removal.

A Provider whose eligibility is terminated shall be liable for the repayment of funds received under Chapter 3 (section 122(f)(1)(C) WIOA) during the period of violation.

Remedies and penalties described herein shall not supplant civil and criminal remedies specified in other provisions of law.

A Training Provider determined no longer eligible for inclusion on the local ETPL listing will be notified within ten (10) working days of the decision. In an effort to minimize any negative impact to individuals approved for and participating in training at the time of this decision, CSH will continue to provide previously agreed upon ITA funds through their program completion. However, no new students will be approved for enrollment.

Local Approval Process

The local process for approving Training Providers and programs is posted to the CSH website for public review. Updates will be made to the website as changes to processes occur.

Once an application has been received from the potential provider, it will be reviewed by CareerSource Heartland staff to ensure documentation requirements are met and notify the State ETPL Coordinator via email at ETPL@commerce.fl.gov that a determination of initial eligibility request has been submitted.

The State ETPL Coordinator will approve or deny the application and notify the training provider of the determination through Employ Florida or the training provider's preferred mode of communication as indicated in the application. If approved, the ETP will be added to the state ETPL.

Alternatively, training providers may directly contact the State ETPL Coordinator at ETPL@commerce.fl.gov to request an initial eligibility determination. The State ETPL Coordinator will review the application to ensure that all documentation requirements are met. The State ETPL Coordinator will follow the aforementioned process for determining eligibility and providing notification to the training provider for approval or denial of the initial eligibility request.

In an effort to minimize any negative impact to individuals approved for and participating in training at the time of this decision, CSH will continue to provide previously agreed upon ITA funds through their program completion. However, no new students will be approved for enrollment if training provider application is denied.

ETPL Portal

The state ETPL is managed by FloridaCommerce and maintained in Employ Florida, the state's online labor exchange and case management system. Employ Florida connects employers and job seekers and provides information about training opportunities available in the state, including training program services eligible for funding under WIOA Section 133(b).

The ETPL portal is the platform used to maintain ETPLs and record consumer information, including, but not limited to, cost and performance information for each approved program of study. The ETPL portal is the mechanism used by FloridaCommerce to manage the ETPL process, and by LWDBs and training providers to apply for initial eligibility and re-apply for continued eligibility.

The ETPL portal supports WIOA participants in making informed choices about ETPs and programs of study and allows FloridaCommerce to disseminate state and local ETPLs to employers, training providers, workforce staff, One-Stop career center partners, and the public, including individuals with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency. Consumer choice is ensured by making the state and local ETPLs, accompanied by performance and cost information, widely available and easily accessible. ETPLs must be disseminated in a format that facilitates comparison between programs of study and is searchable, user-friendly, and easily understood by individuals seeking information on training outcomes.

ANNUAL REPORTING

No later than Aug. 31 of each year, training providers must upload information into the ETPL portal on all enrolled and completer individuals for each program of study being considered for continued eligibility. This student data must be submitted each year for each program of study and must include the social security numbers for each enrolled and completer individual to allow for the calculation of minimum performance levels as required in 20 CFR 680.460(g).

The ETPL portal provides a secure solution for the transmission of Personally Identifiable Information (PII). ETPs, excluding RAP sponsors, must upload student data including the social security numbers and completed training of all individuals enrolled during a specific timeframe as determined by policy. Any transmission of PII shall occur in accordance with FloridaCommerce security policies and any disclosure of PII from an education record must be carried out in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including provisions related to prior written consent. As allowed pursuant to 34 CFR 99.31, DOE has designated FloridaCommerce as an authorized representative to enforce or comply with federal legal requirements relating to WIOA.