Credentials Guidance
February 2019

Purpose
To inform DVR staff about credentials, including the process for recording credentials and the importance of credentials under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Rationale
The recording and tracking of education and training that leads to a credential in IRIS is essential for accurate RSA 911 reporting. Tracking is also necessary for accurate reporting of DVR performance on the related common performance measure under WIOA 677.155(a)(1)(iv).

Definition
A credential is attained at the end of an approved education or training program that is included in the IPE (e.g., bachelor's degree, high school diploma, apprenticeship certificate, GED, etc.).

Credential Common Performance Measure
The credential common performance measure shows the percentage of DVR participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding OJT and customized training) who attain a recognized post-secondary credential or secondary school diploma, or recognized equivalent, during participation or within one year after exit from the program.

A participant who attains a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is included in the percentage of participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent only if the participant is also employed or enrolled in education or training leading to a recognized post-secondary credential within one year after exit from the program.

It is important to monitor and document each consumer's completion of necessary and appropriate training and skills development toward the achievement of their employment goal.

Procedure
DVR staff will record each consumer's enrollment in education and training toward a secondary or post-secondary credential, track skills gains made, and record the credential attainment using the Education/Training module in IRIS. The date of the most recently entered credential should be the date it was achieved. For example, if a consumer successfully completed high school on June 15, but did not provide documentation (copy of diploma or transcript indicating graduation) until July 1, the date of the credential entered in IRIS should be June 15.
In the Education/Training Module in IRIS, the enrollment date is defined as the first day that classes or training begin.

Tracked education and training includes: High school; secondary adult education; post-secondary degrees; vocational or technical programs leading to licenses and certificates; other education and training leading to an industry-recognized diploma, degree, or certificate; and apprenticeships. In addition to these trainings, staff will need to record and track OJT's and remedial training (see Measurable Skills Gains Guidance).

**NOTE**: Only training and education necessary to achieve the IPE goal, listed in the IPE, and specified below should be documented and tracked in the Education/Training module in IRIS. *This includes both education and training that DVR purchases and training/education services provided by a comparable benefit or consumer contribution.* Documentation must be attached in IRIS for the credential attained.

Staff must make multiple attempts to obtain credential documentation before case closure. 'Multiple attempts' means at least three attempts using multiple methods, including the consumer's preferred mode of contact. Staff should continue to pursue documentation until the case is closed. The expectation is for staff to request the documentation when they learn that a credential has been attained.

If staff are unable to obtain credentials documentation at that time, they should ask again at the consumer's IPE annual review, IPE amendments, and 30-day contacts. This documentation can be collected for up to one year after the case is closed.

**Types of Credentials Tracked in IRIS**

**Secondary School Credentials**: These credentials include a secondary school diploma or its equivalent recognized by the state and included for accountability under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act.

Examples of secondary school credentials include:

- High School Diploma
- High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED)
- General Education Diploma (GED)

**NOTE**: While special education certificates do not count as credentials, DVR still tracks the enrollment and attainment of these certificates.

High school must be listed on the IPE as a service for every high school student, as this is necessary for the student’s diploma to count as a credential. The activity code for this service is **Activity Code: 059 Training: Other**.
Post-Secondary Credentials: These credentials include those awarded in recognition of an individual’s attainment of measurable technical or industry/occupation-specific skills necessary to obtain employment or advance within an industry/occupation. These skills are generally based on standards developed or endorsed by employers or industry associations (e.g., degrees, occupational licensure, occupational certificates, etc.).

Examples of post-secondary credentials include:

- Associate Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Graduate Degree
- Vocational/Technical license, diploma or certificate
  - An industry-recognized certificate or certification (e.g., Microsoft Information Technology certificate, Certified Nursing Assistant, certificate in business administration, Certified Welder, Commercial Driver's License)
  - License recognized by state or federal government (e.g., Registered Nurse, Asbestos Inspector, Cosmetologist, Master Plumber, Licensed Professional Counselor)
  - Technical diploma or other education or training diploma, degree, or certificate (e.g., Job Corps certificate of completion for career technical training)
- Apprenticeship certificate or diploma (e.g., youth apprenticeship or apprenticeship)
- Business Enterprise Program (BEP) License

Examples of what would **not** count as a post-secondary credential include:

- Continuing Education Units (CEUs)
- Disability skills training (e.g., sign language, speech reading, cognitive training/retraining)
- On-the-Job Training (OJT)
- Certificates of completion (Project SEARCH, Walgreens REDI)
- Work readiness certificates (e.g., completion of soft skills training)
- Workforce Development Board-awarded certificates
- General skill certificates related to safety or hygiene (e.g., CPR, OSHA, Emergency Management)
- Credentials that are not industry-recognized or sought by employers in industry (e.g., local college certificates such as Professional Communication, Global Studies, Bi-lingual Spanish Skills)

**NOTE:** While not leading to a credential, staff must also record and track OJTs and remedial training (see Measurable Skills Gains Guidance).
Crosswalk of Education and Training Type and Credentials

The below crosswalk demonstrates what type of credential can be documented for the various education and training programs being tracked.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education/Training Leading to Credential or Employment</th>
<th>Credential Attained Drop-Down List Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary: High School Student</td>
<td>Diploma; Special Education Certificate*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary: Adult Education</td>
<td>HSED; GED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary: Associate Program</td>
<td>No drop-down list is provided for these four Programs (IRIS will keep track of the Credential Attained behind the scenes based on when the Credential Attained Date is entered).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary: Bachelor's Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary: Master's Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary: Graduate Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary: Vocational/Technical Program</td>
<td>License; Certificate/Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Education or Training (Ex. Job Corps)</td>
<td>Diploma; Degree; Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>Certificate/Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Enterprise Program (BEP)</td>
<td>License</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-the-Job Training (OJT)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remedial Training</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NOTE:* Special Education Certificates do not count as credentials. However, DVR must track them for reporting purposes for the RSA Credential Screening Process.

When a consumer is beginning an education or training program *not indicated in categories listed above*, the following process should be used to determine if it should be tracked and will count as a credential:

- Review the approved list of Wisconsin WIOA Credentials. You may need to click on "Request Access" if you do not have permission to view this SharePoint site.
- If the credential is not located in the approved list, review the Post-Secondary Credential Checklist to determine if program completion meets the requirements of a credential (see checklist on page 5 of this document).
- Once you have reviewed the checklist and determined that all criteria have been met (indicated "yes" for each checklist category), gather program documentation, consult with your local team, and submit to the Policy Analyst mailbox (DWD MB DVR Policy Analysts or dvrpolicyanalyst@dwd.wisconsin.gov) for final determination of credential status.

Resource

# Post-Secondary Credential Checklist

*This is intended as a guide. Official determinations are to be made by the programs.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>YES/NO</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is the certificate awarded for recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable technical or industrial/occupation skills? These are generally based on standards developed or endorsed by employers or industry associations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Certificate is <em>not</em> issued by a workforce development board.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Certificate is <em>not</em> a work readiness certificate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The certificate recognizes technological or industry/occupation-specific skills rather than general skills related to safety, hygiene, etc.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. The certificate was issued by one of the eight identified entities that issue recognized post-secondary credentials. <strong>NOTE:</strong> Not all awards issued by these entities meet the definition of credential.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) State educational agency or state agency responsible for administering vocational and technical education within a State.

2) Institution of higher education as described in Sec. 102 of Higher Education Act (20 USC 1002) that is qualified to participate in the student financial assistance programs authorized by Title IV of the Act. This includes community colleges, proprietary schools, and all other institutions of higher education eligible to participate in Federal student financial aid programs.

3) An institution of higher education that is formally controlled or has been formally sanctioned or chartered by the governing body of an Indian tribe or tribes.

4) Professional, industry, or employer organization, product manufacturer, or developer using a valid and reliable assessment of an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities.

5) ETA's Office of Apprenticeship or a State Apprenticeship Agency.

6) A public regulatory agency that awards a credential based on an individual's fulfillment of educational or work experience or skill requirements that are legally necessary for an individual to use an occupational or professional title or to practice an occupation or profession.

7) Program approved by the Department of Veteran's Affairs to offer education benefits to veterans and other eligible persons.

8) Job Corps, which issues certificates for completing career training programs based on industry skills standards and certification requirements.

Does the certificate meet the WIOA definition of a credential as noted in TEGL 10-16/TAC 17-01/Memo 17-02? **NOTE:** To indicate 'yes' here, the answer must be 'yes' to all five criteria above.  | YES/NO |