

ACT® Certified Work Ready Communities Common Criteria

Our nation’s skills gap isn’t going to close itself. We need real solutions – process, data and tools – that will link, align and match our workforce to the needs of industry in a sustainable infrastructure for all 50 states and 3141 counties. This solution requires a *process* – a new community-based framework for workforce and economic development that certifies counties as “work ready” when established goals have been met. This process is supported by meaningful, consistent workforce skills *data*, updated monthly and drilled down to the county level across the current, emerging and transitioning workforce and *tools* to drive success.

States are partnering with ACT to develop a framework that “on-boards” counties to become certified work ready communities. The first step in building this framework is establishing goals based on the proven CWRC common criteria for all counties. Then individuals across the county workforce earn an industry-recognized skill credential – the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) – and local employers recognize, prefer or recommend the NCRC as a part of their hiring process. The common criteria for counties to be certified are outlined below. The county goals are calculated by applying the criteria to population and labor force data provided by the state.

Workforce current status categories:

Current Workforce	Currently employed private or non-profit Currently employed local, state or federal government
Transitioning Workforce	Currently unemployed GED and adult education participant Current or recent active duty military
Emerging Workforce	High school junior, senior or recent graduate College student or recent graduate

How we “size up” communities

Based on 2011 U.S. Census population data

Small Counties	Up to 29,999
Medium Counties	30,000 – 99,999
Large Counties	100,000 – 499,999
Very Large Counties	500,000 – 999,999
Mega Counties Over	Over 1,000,000

How we calculate county goals

Workforce and business goals...

County Size	Current Workforce	Transitioning Workforce	Emerging Workforce	Business Supporting
Small	0.25%	15%	25%	5%
Medium	0.15%	12%	25%	5%
Large	0.5%	10%	15%	2.5%
Very Large	0.025%	5%	5%	1%
Mega	0.01%	2.5%	2.5%	0.5%

Counties should achieve goals within two years of signing up as part of a state CWRC initiative, and counties will have the opportunity to maintain their status after their initial certification. These aggressive – but achievable – common criteria may be supplemented by additional unique state criteria.

For more information, visit: <http://www.workreadycommunities.org>

