



## POLICY

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<b>CATEGORY:</b>	<b>Program Operations</b>	<b>No: 4.0.109.02</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Credentials</b>	
<b>SUPERSEDES:</b>	<b>4.0.109.0 dated August 29, 2014</b>	
<b>EFFECTIVE:</b>	<b>September 18, 2020</b>	
<b>BOARD APPROVAL:</b>	<b>September 17, 2020</b>	
<b>DATE OF LAST REVIEW:</b>	<b>September 3, 2020</b>	

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### I. PURPOSE:

To establish credentialing criteria.

### II. DEFINITIONS:

#### **Credentials, Certificates, Certifications, and Licenses**

TEGL 17-05 clarifies that the term credential is all encompassing and includes degrees/diplomas and certificates

**Credential** is an all-encompassing term used to describe any type of traditional or nontraditional award within the context of education, training, workforce, and employment development. Credentials are awarded by third-party entities that have relevant authority to issue such credentials after individuals demonstrate proficiency or competency in an occupation or field. Credentials can be earned from a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, educational institutions, industry associations, and government agencies.

**Certificates** are awarded by independent education and training providers associated with specific programs of study, or educational institutions, such as universities, resulting from education focused on one topic (but separate from a degree program). Course content is developed by faculty committees, academic leaders, and instructors, or occasionally through defensible analysis of the topic area—that is, course content and subject matter that can be justified, through testing that leads to certification, and is taught by an instructor for a particular purpose or benefit to an individual. Certificate programs are generally created, taught, and assessed directly by the provider of a program. A certificate demonstrates an understanding of course content at a specific period in time, demonstrates proficiency through provider-administered exams, and is often listed on a résumé as evidence of knowledge for prospective employers. While obtaining a certificate generally signifies the end of the instructional program, earning a certificate may also provide a gateway for achieving a degree.

**Certification** is a type of nontraditional award to an individual that demonstrates proficiency and knowledge, through examination, in a specific industry or trade. Obtaining a certification award is not dependent on any actual education or training program. Instead, evaluating candidates for certification relies on independent, third-party professional and industry-based groups. These national organizations develop and maintain relevant proficiency standards that are assessed and sanctioned by industry-approved examinations facilities, independent of any educational institution or training program. Certifications often have an expiration date, requiring individuals to participate in continuing education or reexamination to stay current. Additionally, certifications are not associated in any way with higher education or degrees and typically require that the potential recipient have some level of professional experience before beginning the process.

Upon earning a certification, professionals often receive a designation to use after their names to differentiate experienced, certified professionals from their peers. After initial certification, the awarding organization requires proof of continuing education (often called continuing education units, or CEUs) to ensure that the professional standards are maintained. Examples of certifications include, but are not limited to, the following:

- professional project management;
- desktop support administration;
- personal fitness training;
- web design and development; and
- certified clinical medical assistant.

• **License** is a type of nontraditional credential that is generally awarded by a government-regulated agency. Licenses are granted by federal or state government, but usually by state government, and they are mandatory for professional practice in their jurisdiction. A license is more heavily regulated and restrictive due to its governmental association, and it signals that an individual has completed or achieved certain standards. Licenses are often required for health, public education, legal and financial careers. Some examples of occupations that require an individual to have a valid license include plumbers, electricians, real estate brokers, and nurses . .

*TWIST* – The Workforce Information System of Texas

### III. POLICY STATEMENT:

The Board shall implement a credentialing process that focuses on the attainment of measurable technical or occupational skills.

Diplomas, GEDs, or certificates may be obtained while a person is still receiving services or within 1 Year of Exit.

Locally recognized credentials must be supported by documented skill standards. Assessment tools may be used to assist employers in establishing skills standards for specific occupations.

Work readiness skills, and Work-Based Learning do not qualify as credentials.

Attainment of a credential, certificate, or diploma, whether achieved or attained during program participation as a result of receiving services, or after exiting the program must be obtained, a copy retained in the participant's case file, and documented in TWIST.

It is DOL's intent that a certificate awarded by a professional, industry, or employer organization be portable—i.e., one that is recognized statewide as well as nationally.

**IV. PROCEDURES:**

N/A

**V. RELATED POLICY INFORMATION:**

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Guidelines for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth, Effective April 3, 2020

Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 17-05, issued February 17, 2006, and entitled "Common Measures Policy for the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) Performance Accountability System and Related Performance Issues"

WD 27-07, issued August 1, 2007, and entitled "Integrated Data Collection and Performance Management

WD 37-07, Change 1, issued January 2, 2008, and entitled "Workforce Investment Act: Application of Definitions of Credential, Degree/Diploma, and Certificate: Clarification"

TA Bulletin 157, issued August 21, 2007, and entitled "Attainment of a Degree/Diploma or Certificate"

TA Bulletin 179, issued June 25, 2008, entitled "Attainment of Degree or Certificate".

**VI. RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Board Staff shall ensure that all relevant staff and service provider(s) are informed of and comply with this policy

The Contracted Service Provider(s) shall ensure that appropriate procedures are implemented, and that relevant staff receive training regarding the requirements of this policy.

**VII. FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS:**

**VIII. DISTRIBUTION:**

Board of Directors    Board Staff    Contracted Service Provider Staff

**IX. SIGNATURES:**

*Larry Peterson*  
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Reviewed by EO Officer

09/17/2020  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Ken Trevino*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
President/CEO

09/17/2020  
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Date