MONTGOMERY COUNTY WDB
POLICIES FOR CERTIFICATION
QA COMMITTEE REPORT
September 2015

1. Certification Process

There is a *two part* process for becoming certified.

Part I: Quality Standards. **Submission of the Application based on the Quality Standards (presented to the WIB and approved early in 2015) requires three steps.** The first step is to conduct a *Self-Evaluation.* The second step is to complete and submit the *Application.* The third step is an *On-Site Review if the application meets the score threshold to trigger a site visit.*

Part II: Fiscal and Contract/Performance Integrity. **If a site 'qualifies' for certification through the review or their written application and an on-site review, then an internal review is conducted to examine the site operators standing with regard to fiscal and contract/performance integrity.**

- ♦ Meeting performance set by the WDB – inclusive of WIOA performance measures - are a condition for certification once the application and site visit criteria have been met.

- ♦ Being fiscally sound is a condition for certification once the application and site visit criteria have been met.

2. Certification Initial Implementation

Phase I: Getting Ready (September 2015 thru June 2017)

- *Build awareness among current vendors*
  - ○ QA Committee to host an overview session that covers, in general, the reason for setting standards and the framework selected:
    - ▪ How the standards will be used:
      - Initially to help organizations move toward organizational effectiveness and quality practices based on the standards
      - For improvement and organizational development
    - ▪ What is certification and when the certification process will 'kick in'
    - ▪ The implications of being certified and not being certified

- *Build capacity among current vendors and any other interested parties*
  - ○ Provide technical assistance, training and coaching
    - ▪ Conduct training on:
      - CQI processes and practices
      - The Quality Standards and key practices organizations use to meet them
      - The WDB's application process and schedule, including an overview of the indicators found in the application.
    - ▪ Offer onsite technical assistance to help any individual site:

- Facilitate their self assessment process
- Coaching on various strategies, processes and systems that may be put in place for that specific organization.

  o Each site that is interested in becoming certified creates a CQI Team (reviewed in training as part of the requirements), begins their self assessment process and creates their first CQI Plan.

Phase II: Execution (July 2017)
- First 'round' of certification – any funded sites during 2016-17 that respond to an RFP to deliver services for the program year July 2017 thru June 2018 must be certified by April/May of 2017 to receive the award. See number 4 below.
- Continue training and technical assistance
- Receive applications, review, conduct site visits when appropriate, and deliver TA reports.

3.   Benefits of being certified.

The WDB is articulating a set of organizational standards proven to assist organizations sustain quality in the delivery of their services and their outcomes. Being certified has the potential of helping agencies obtain funds from other grant making institutions. Certification holds the promise to customers of obtaining consistently high quality services at any entity that holds the WorkSource Montgomery brand.

A comprehensive technical assistance report is provided to both certified and non certified sites. This TA report provides an organization with actionable opportunities for improvements.

4.   WDB and Inc. funds will not be provided to sites that are not certified.

Beginning June 30, 2017 all vendors must be certified or become certified by June 2018 to receive funding. If a vendor wins an award from the WDB for the first time, they will have up to 12 months to become certified while they deliver services. If they are not certified within the 12 month period, their contract will not be renewed.

If the contract is awarded to a vendor who has already been under contract, their certification must be up to date at the time of the award.

If any site looses certification during a program year (July thru June of any year) they may deliver services thru the end of the program year (June) and then they become ineligible for any contract renewal or to respond to any new RFP.

The name WorkSource Montgomery will become an identifying "good housekeeping seal of quality" and may only be displayed by certified centers and sites. Only certified sites and organizations can wear the brand name to build customer recognition of the level of quality certified by the Workforce Development Board (WDB).

4.   Certification Scores

To become certified, an organization or a center will meet the 65%[1] minimum passing score on all Quality Standards and Indicators within the application and at the site visit. If the site has met the quality standards at the 65% minimum score, then an internal review is conducted by staff and the certification consultant (See #1 above). If there are formal findings in this part of the certification process, a site will be given up to 45 days to resolve them. If they cannot be resolved within that timeframe, the site will not be certified.

5.   Certification Schedule

The WDB will set a submission schedule. The WDB will accept applications quarterly. All reviews will be conducted in the quarter immediately after the submission of the application (the submission quarter). To ensure that the review process is conducted during the quarter immediately after submission (the review quarter), any application must be received on or before the date specified by the WDB. An application review will be completed within the quarter after submission.

It is the site's responsibility to ensure they renew their certification in a timely fashion, e.g. that the application is submitted to ensure that their current certification does not expire prior to receiving a new 'license to operate' as a Montgomery WorkSource site.

A sample of a submission schedule:

Review Quarter 2014-2016	*Application Submission Deadline**	*Review of Applications Received by the Deadline*
July – September 2014	June 20, 2014	Begins in July 2014
October – December 2014	September 12, 2014	Begins in October 2014
January – March 2015	**December 12, 2014**	**Begins in January 2015**
April – June 2015	March 13, 2015	Begins in April 2015
July – September 2015	June 12, 2015	Begins in July 2015
October – December 2015	September 11, 2015	Begins in October 2015
January –March 2016	**December 11, 2015**	**Begins in January 2016**
April – June 2016	March 11, 2016	Begins in April 2016

*Applications are accepted at any time. This is the deadline for the *LAST DAY WITHIN A QUARTER* an application may be submitted to have the application reviewed in the quarter directly after the submission deadline.

This schedule is subject to revision for the second year of the cycle: July 2015 – June 2016.

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[1] This is the recommended **initia**l 'cut' score. Over time, the cut score increases and in WIBs across the country that use this process within the first 2 cycles (4 years) the cut score has risen to 70 or 75%.

6.   Any entity seeking certification may receive technical assistance and participate in WDB sponsored training.

The WDB will provide training and technical assistance on quality practices to interested sites through consulting services and/or trained county staff.   RFPS will also allow the sites to budget for continuous quality improvement (CQI) activities and training.

7.   Certification provides sites a license to operate for two years.

To build an infrastructure and organizational culture focused on continuous quality practices and high performance requires time and focus. The Committee is recommending starting with 2 year certifications for at least 2 cycles – 2017 thru 2021. After that, consideration should be given to increasing the expiration from 2 years to 3 years.

8.   Certification Review Process

Who: Create a Certification Subcommittee of the Quality Assurance Committee. Only individuals with no potential conflict of interest/financial stake – business and labor primarily.

Purpose: To conduct the review of certification applications when submitted and to conduct site visits when appropriate. To produce the Technical Assistance report as a result of the process. To make the certification decision based on the criteria – met the score required on each criteria and quality standard; have no outstanding fiscal or monitoring issues.

Process: The subcommittee will break into teams for each application. Teams have up to 3 individuals plus the certification consultant. A reviewer has to commit to reading an application, making the site visit, and reviewing the TA Report for the same application. A reviewer may not participate in the review if they can only do a part due to scheduling or time commitments or any other reason.

Time Commitment: About 3 hours to review and rate the application; 2 hours to participate in the consensus meeting (face to face – so factor in travel time); and up to 4 hours on site (plus travel time)if the application scores at the level to allow a site visit. Certification Consultant writes the TA Report based on the teams comments. 30 minutes to review the report and provide feedback, electronically.

Training: Must participate in a 3.5 hour training prior to becoming a reviewer.

Recruitment: Members may come from the business community and do not need to be WDB members. Individuals working in companies that have had some 'quality' experience either with an internal program, Baldrige, or ISO is useful, but not a requirement.

9. The system to become certified is 'open,' meaning the WDB provide certification as a service to customers and any entity, whether funded by the WDB or not, may submit applications.

Any organization that wants to display the brand name of the workforce system may apply to receive it through the certification process. Certification does not guarantee funding; however funding is linked to certification. An organization can be certified without being funded, however, no organization may be funded without being certified. An organization may value the process and the "label" as a marketing tool and never apply for funding to the WDB.