

Verdugo Workforce Development Board

Serving Burbank, Glendale and La Cañada Flintridge

Verdugo Workforce Development Board Certification Process for Comprehensive America's Job Centers of California Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014

PURPOSE

This process establishes the Verdugo Workforce Development Board's (VWDB) policy and procedures for certification of the comprehensive America's Job Centers California (AJCC) located in the Verdugo Consortium. This process meets all related federal and state laws, regulations and directives.

BACKGROUND

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that the State Board, in consultation with chief local elected officials and local boards, establish objective criteria and procedures for use by local boards in assessing at least once every three years the following factors: effectiveness; physical and programmatic accessibility (WIOA §188) if applicable, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 [42 United States Code (USC) 12101 et seq.]; and continuous improvement of one-stop centers and the one-stop delivery system [WIOA §101(d)(6)]. In addition, WIOA also requires that one-stop centers be certified in order to be eligible to receive infrastructure funding.

To implement the certification requirements in California, the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB), as the State Board, in consultation with an AJCC Certification Workgroup comprised of state-level partners and Local Board representatives, developed objective criteria and procedures for Local Boards to use when certifying the AJCCs within their Local Workforce Development Areas (Local Area). California's certification process is centered on the key requirements as stipulated in WIOA and the Final Rule of: physical and programmatic accessibility for individuals with disabilities, and continuous improvement. Further, the CWDB sets a statewide standard of service delivery that ensures all customers consistently receive a high-quality level of service.

To ensure that their workforce development systems meet the statewide standard of service delivery, CWDB requires that Local Boards conduct an independent and objective evaluation of their comprehensive AJCCs **once every three years** using the criteria and procedures set forth by the State Board [WIOA §121(g)]. Other requirements established by CWDB consist of the following:

1. The initial certification process will be conducted during Program Year (PY) 2017-2018 and take effect PY 2018-2019.
2. Local Boards are only required to certify their comprehensive centers. Local

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Boards will be required to certify their affiliate and specialized AJCCs beginning PY 2018-2019.

3. The CWDB holds the responsibility for the decision whether or not the certification process is sufficient.

The CWDB established statewide standard of service delivery can be demonstrated through two certification levels for AJCCs: **Baseline** and **Hallmarks of Excellence**.

Baseline Certification

The Baseline AJCC Certification is an evaluation to ensure that the comprehensive AJCC is in compliance with key WIOA statutory and regulatory requirements. In order to receive Baseline AJCC Certification, an AJCC must meet all of the following requirements:

1. The Local Board has implemented a signed MOU with all the required AJCC partners.
2. This includes both Phase I and Phase II of the MOU process.
3. The AJCC has implemented the board-defined roles and responsibilities of the AJCC Operator and Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Services Provider (i.e., an AJCC Operator and Career Services Provider is in place and functioning within the AJCC).
4. The AJCC meets all regulatory requirements to be considered a comprehensive AJCC as identified in the WIOA Joint Final Rule Section 678.305.
5. The AJCC ensures equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in accordance with the ADA, WIOA Section 188, and all other applicable federal and state guidance.

The CWDB has adopted specific criteria requirements that will verify that the overall Baseline requirements (1-5) have been met. These requirements are delineated in a matrix issued by the CWDB to the Local Boards (Attachment I).

Not Yet Able to Certify

If a Local Board is not able to verify that an AJCC meets **all** of the Baseline AJCC Certification criteria by December 31, 2017, it will be deemed as “not yet able to certify.” In this instance, the Local Board must submit a corrective action plan along with their Baseline AJCC Certification matrix to their Regional Advisor by December 31, 2017. The corrective action plan must outline how the Local Board will work with the comprehensive AJCC to bring the AJCC into compliance by April 1, 2018. The deadline to meet Baseline AJCC Certification was set at April 1, 2018 to allow time for Local Boards to meet the Hallmarks of Excellence AJCC Certification criteria by June 30, 2018.

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Hallmarks of Excellence AJCC Certification

The purpose of the Hallmarks of Excellence AJCC Certification is to encourage continuous improvement by identifying areas where an AJCC may be exceeding quality expectations, as well as areas where improvement is needed. The Hallmarks of Excellence were developed in alignment with TEGL 4-15, the State Plan, and the AJCC Certification Workgroup's vision for California's One-Stop delivery system.

The CWDB defined eight Hallmarks of Excellence to identify areas where AJCCs can continuously improve their service delivery. The evaluation consists of ranking the AJCC against each Hallmark on a scale of 1-5. In order to receive a Hallmarks of Excellence AJCC Certification, an AJCC must meet Baseline AJCC Certification and receive a ranking of at least "3" for **each** of the following:

1. The AJCC physical location enhances the customer experience.
2. The AJCC ensures universal access, with an emphasis on individuals with barriers to employment.
3. The AJCC actively supports the One-Stop system through effective partnerships.
4. The AJCC provides integrated, customer-centered services.
5. The AJCC is an on-ramp for skill development and the attainment of industry-recognized credentials which meet the needs of targeted regional sectors and pathways.
6. The AJCC actively engages industry and labor and supports regional sector strategies through an integrated business service strategy that focuses on quality jobs.
7. The AJCC has high-quality, well-informed, and cross-trained staff.
8. The AJCC achieves business results through data-driven continuous improvement.

The CWDB has adopted specific criteria requirements that will verify that the eight Hallmarks of Excellence have been met. These requirements are delineated in a matrix issued by the CWDB to the Local Boards (Attachment II).

Continuous Improvement Plan

The goal of the Hallmarks of Excellence approach for certification is for Local Boards to work with each of their AJCCs to continually improve and progress within each Hallmark. To this end, all Local Boards must also develop a continuous improvement plan, with target dates, for each AJCC that outlines how they will increase their ranking for each Hallmark of Excellence or maintain their ranking for any Hallmark of Excellence in which they have already achieved a ranking of "5".

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VWDB POLICY FOR AJCC CERTIFICATION

The VWDB sets forth this policy to ensure that all customers served by the Verdugo Jobs Center (VJC), a proud member of the AJCC, and the workforce development system in the Verdugo Local Area, consistently receive exceptional service in their pursuit and achievement of their career goal or, as a business, addressing their human capital needs.

PROCESS

In order for the VWDB to implement the CWDB's AJCC Certification and its criteria requirements, a comprehensive evaluation process was established. The process is specific to the two certification levels through the following phases: Self-Assessment, Baseline Certification Evaluation and Hallmarks of Excellence Certification Evaluation. In accordance with WSD 16-20, the VWDB will conduct the AJCC Certification process, which includes the two certification levels, every three years. This does not preclude or replace the external and internal audits and monitoring reviews or procurement that are conducted throughout each year.

Self-Assessment

The VJC staff, which includes partners, will complete a self-assessment using the Baseline Criteria Matrix (Attachment I) and the Hallmarks of Excellence Matrix (Attachment II). This allows the VJC to identify opportunities for excellence (OFE) and implement improvements in preparation for the external objective evaluation that will be conducted to determine its eligibility for certification. In order to encourage an accurate self-assessment and promote organizational learning and improvement, the self-assessment results will remain confidential and will not be shared with the Certification Evaluators.

Process for Baseline Certification Evaluation

1. Evaluators:

The Baseline Certification Evaluation will be conducted by a minimum of three VWDB representatives. Eligibility for Evaluators has been developed to ensure that the firewall between administration and operations is maintained and ensuring the integrity of the evaluation process. Therefore, only the following representatives are eligible to serve as Evaluators:

- Board Members or
- administrative staff to the VWDB or
- VJC Operator (if not providing career services) or
- Procured certification contractor or
- Peer reviewers from other Local Workforce Areas or
- a combination of any of the above

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Evaluators may **not** include any of the following to ensure objectivity in this process:

- VJC staff operating Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Services or
- VJC program partner staff or
- AJCC Operator (only provides career services)

2. Conflict of Interest:

The VWDB AJCC certification process takes into account the role of the evaluator to ensure that individuals in this role are objective in their assessment of the AJCC. Since the VWDB was approved to act as the Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Services Provider, only local board administration staff, among others listed in the Evaluator section, would be able to conduct on-site evaluations as opposed to AJCC program staff.

All Evaluators will complete a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form and signatures will be required to confirm the absence of conflict of interest, prior to the evaluation process. This Disclosure Form shall serve as further documentation that the firewall and integrity of the evaluation process is maintained.

3. Training:

The designated Baseline Certification Evaluators will receive comprehensive, estimated four-hour training, on the evaluation process and the principles of objective evaluation based on the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP) principles and protocols. The BPEP operates the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) using the Baldrige Framework for Performance Excellence. The MBNQA is the internationally recognized hallmark for performance excellence; a recognized world-class practice for the VWDB to emulate in its certification process. The training will be led by VWDB staff, a nationally certified Baldrige Examiner at the Senior Alumni level with 14 years' experience at the national level and 16 years at the state level. The training will include a review of the Baseline criteria, developing interview questions to gather information to make fact-based decisions and determination regarding compliance, conducting interviews, code of conduct for Evaluators, documentation and feedback report writing.

All VJC staff and leaders will be invited to participate in the Evaluator training. In alignment with the principles of BPEP and demonstrated through its more than 25 years of experience, it is critical to the objective process that those being evaluated receive the same training as those conducting the evaluation in order to ensure an open process that promotes organizational learning and improvement.

4. Site Visit:

The Baseline Evaluation will be conducted by designated Evaluators through a comprehensive site visit scheduled with the VJC, with advance notification in order to avoid interruption of customer services and events. The Site Visit will consist of the following events:

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Event	Estimated Duration
Opening Meeting Including initial interview of VJC leaders to determine how the center is in compliance with Baseline Criteria	One hour
Tour of VJC The tour allows Evaluators to access evidence that will verify compliance to Baseline Criteria	One hour
Review of Documents Documents gathered through the tour or provided to Evaluators to demonstrate compliance will be reviewed	One hour
Leader and Staff Interview The interview will allow Evaluators to clarify information and ascertain strengths as well as opportunities for improvement. This will also allow further opportunity to provide documented or other evidence of compliance	One hour
Closing Meeting The closing meeting allows the Evaluators to thank the VJC staff and leaders and gather any final information	15 minutes

All questions and requests for documents will be directly related to the Baseline Criteria and for the purpose of determining compliance. Evaluators will not request information or documents that will violate regulations including customer confidentiality.

Evaluators will not provide feedback to the VJC during the Site Visit. Evaluators must complete the entire evaluation process before it can provide feedback and outcome of their evaluation process. As such, any feedback prior to completion of the process may be inaccurate or misleading.

5. Independent Review:

During the Site Visit, the Evaluators will take notes to record their observations and learnings. They will take notes during the interviews as well as the tour to document any practices or methods that demonstrate compliance to the Criteria. Once they complete the Site Visit Events, they will complete their independent review using their notes and recording their observations and findings by completing the checklist on the Baseline Criteria Matrix.

6. Consensus Review:

Once the Evaluators have completed their Independent Review, they will share their findings and observations as well as their completed Matrix with the other Evaluators. Together they will reach consensus on the outcome per Criteria requirement, noting strengths and opportunities for excellence (OFE) that are based on findings and observations that support the checklist results. Once the checklist has been completed and certification verified, the Evaluators will complete a certification letter reporting the outcome of the Baseline Evaluation and confirming certification. This process will occur immediately following the Site Visit, before the Evaluators adjourn their evaluation.

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7. Feedback:

The completed consented Matrix and the notification summarizing results of the assessment will be submitted to the VWDB Chair for validation and confirmation of Baseline Certification. This letter and completed Matrix will be submitted to the VWDB Executive Director and VJC Manager no later than two weeks following the completion of the Site Visit.

8. Not Yet Able to Certify

The VWDB has adopted the CWDB's process for "Not Yet Able to Certify". If the VWDB is not able to verify that the VJC meets **all** of the Baseline AJCC Certification criteria by December 31, 2017, it will be deemed as "not yet able to certify." In this instance, the VWDB will submit a corrective action plan along with their Baseline AJCC Certification matrix to the Regional Advisor by December 31, 2017. The corrective action plan must outline how the VWDB will work with the VJC to bring it into compliance by April 1, 2018. The deadline to meet Baseline AJCC Certification is set at April 1, 2018 to allow time for Local Boards to meet the Hallmarks of Excellence AJCC Certification criteria by June 30, 2018.

Process for Hallmarks of Excellence Certification Evaluation

1. Evaluators:

The Hallmarks of Excellence Certification Evaluation will be conducted by a minimum of three VWDB representatives; however, at least one representative must be a member of the Board. Eligibility for Evaluators has been developed to ensure that the firewall between administration and operations is maintained and ensuring the integrity of the evaluation process. Therefore, only the following representatives are eligible to serve as Evaluators:

- At a minimum, one Evaluator will be a Board Member and
- administrative staff to the VWDB or
- VJC Operator (if not providing career services) or
- Procured certification contractor or
- Peer reviewers from other Local Workforce Areas or
- a combination of any of the above

Evaluators may **not** include any of the following:

- VJC staff operating Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Services or
- VJC program partner staff
- AJCC Operator (only provides career services)

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2. Conflict of Interest:

All Evaluators will complete a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form and signatures will be required to confirm the absence of conflict of interest, prior to the evaluation process. This Disclosure Form shall serve as further documentation that the firewall and integrity of the evaluation process is maintained.

3. Training:

The designated Hallmarks of Excellence Certification Evaluators will receive a comprehensive, estimated two-hour training, on the evaluation process and the principles of objective evaluation based on the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP) principles and protocols. The training will include a review of the Hallmarks of Excellence criteria, developing interview questions to gather information to make fact-based decisions and determination regarding compliance, conducting interviews, code of conduct for Evaluators, documentation and feedback report writing.

All VJC staff and leaders will be invited to participate in the Evaluator training for Hallmarks of Excellence Certification. Similar to the Baseline Certification process, it is critical to the objective process that those being evaluated receive the same training as those conducting the evaluation in order to ensure an open process that promotes organizational learning and improvement and is not a punitive or secretive process.

4. Site Visit:

The Hallmarks of Excellence Certification will be conducted by the Evaluators through a comprehensive site visit scheduled with the VJC, with advance notification in order to avoid interruption of customer services and events. The Site Visit will consist of the following events:

Event	Estimated Duration
Opening Meeting Including initial interview of VJC leaders to determine how the center is in compliance with Hallmarks of Excellence Criteria	One hour
Tour of VJC The tour allows Evaluators to access evidence that will verify compliance to Hallmarks of Excellence Criteria	One hour
Review of Documents Documents gathered through the tour or provided to Evaluators to demonstrate compliance will be reviewed	One hour
Leader and Staff Interview The interview will allow Evaluators to clarify information and ascertain strengths as well as opportunities for improvement. This will also allow further opportunity to provide documented or other evidence of compliance	1.5 hours
Closing Meeting The closing meeting allows the Evaluators to thank the VJC staff and leaders and gather any final information	15 minutes

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All questions and requests for documents will be directly related to the Hallmarks of Excellence Criteria and for the purpose of determining compliance. Evaluators will not request information or documents that will violate regulations including customer confidentiality.

Evaluators will not provide feedback to the VJC during the Site Visit. Evaluators must complete the entire evaluation process before it can provide feedback and outcome of their evaluation process. As such, any feedback prior to completion of the process may be inaccurate or misleading.

5. Independent Review:

During the Site Visit, the Evaluators will take notes to record their observations and learnings. They will take notes during the interviews as well as the tour to document any practices or methods that demonstrate compliance to the Criteria. Once they return they complete the Site Visit Events, they will complete their independent review using their notes and recording their observations and findings by completing the Hallmarks of Excellence Criteria Matrix, fully documenting strengths and OFE's to support the assigned score for each criteria requirement.

6. Consensus Review:

Once the Evaluators have completed their Independent Review, they will share their findings and observations as well as their completed Matrix with the other Evaluators. Together they will reach consensus on the outcome per Criteria requirements, noting strengths and OFEs that are based on findings and observations that support the assigned scores. Strengths and OFEs must be fully documented to assist the VJC in developing its continuous improvement plan based on this feedback.

The VJC must score a minimum rating of "3" in each criteria requirement in order to earn certification. Once the matrix has been completed and certification verified, the Evaluators will complete a certification letter reporting the outcome of the Hallmarks of Excellence Certification Evaluation and confirming certification. This process will occur immediately following the Site Visit, before the Evaluators adjourn their evaluation.

7. VWDB Certification:

The outcome of the Certification Evaluation, including the feedback report and outcome letter will be presented to the VWDB to officially certify the VJC. Any additional feedback from the VWDB will be incorporated into the outcome letter.

8. Feedback:

The completed Matrix and the Award letter will be submitted to the VWDB Executive Director and VJC Manager no later than two weeks following the action taken by the VWDB.

9. Continuous Improvement Plan

The VWDB, in partnership with the VJC, will develop a continuous improvement plan with target dates for each area that did not score a rating of "5". The plan will also include how

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the VWDB and VJC will maintain any areas that achieved the highest score of “5”. All certification documents and continuous improvement plan will be submitted to the assigned Regional Advisor.

Modifications

This certification process for Comprehensive AJCCs can be modified as needed to ensure continuous improvement. All modifications must be in writing and approved by the VWDB. Once approved, the modified process must be submitted to the CWDB for approval. Verbal modifications of the process are not valid.

Baseline Certification Evaluation	
Task	Due Date
1. VWDB submits an outline of its certification process	September 30, 2017
2. Regional Advisors provide approval decision from CWDB	November 1, 2017
3. VWDB notifies VJC of Baseline Certification Site Visit and Evaluation	November 5, 2017
4. Baseline Certification Training is held	November 30, 2017
5. Baseline Certification Evaluation and Site Visit is conducted a. Matrix is completed with documentation of findings and outcome letter is developed	December 5, 2017
6. Baseline Certification Evaluation Matrix and outcome letter is submitted to VWDB Chair for approval and signature	December 15, 2017
7. Baseline Certification Evaluation Matrix and outcome letter is submitted to Executive Director and VJC Manager	December 19, 2017
8. VWDB submits Baseline Criteria Matrix and applicable corrective action plans for the VJC (comprehensive AJCC)	December 31, 2017
9. If VJC is deemed “not yet able to certify”, VWDB submits and updated Baseline Criteria Matrix	April 1, 2018

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Hallmarks of Excellence Certification Evaluation	
Task	Due Date
1. VWDB notifies VJC of Hallmarks of Excellence Certification Site Visit and Evaluation	March 12, 2018
2. Hallmarks of Excellence Training is held	April 5, 2018
3. Hallmarks of Excellence Evaluation and Site Visit is conducted a. Matrix is completed with documentation of findings b. Outcome letter is developed	April 12, 2018
4. Hallmarks of Excellence Evaluation Matrix and outcome letter is submitted to the VWDB for approval and signature	May 8, 2018
5. Hallmarks of Excellence Evaluation Matrix and outcome letter is submitted to Executive Director and VJC Manager	May 22, 2018
6. VWDB and VJC develop continuous improvement plan	June 15, 2018
7. VWDB submits Hallmarks of Excellence Criteria Matrix and continuous improvement plans for the VJC	June 30, 2018

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REFERENCES

- State of California Employment Development Department, *Certification Process for Comprehensive AJCCs*, Workforce Services Directive (WSD) 16-20
- *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA) (Public Law 113-128) Sections 121(g) and 188
- *Americans with Disability Act Amendment Act of 2008* (ADA) (Public Law 110-325)
- Title 20 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR), “WIOA Department of Labor (DOL); Final Rule” (WIOA DOL Final Rule)
- Title 34 CFR “WIOA, Joint Rule for Unified and Combined State Plans, Performance Accountability, and the One-Stop System Joint Provisions” (WIOA Joint Final Rule)
- Title 29 CFR Part 38 “Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the WIOA”
- DOL Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 16-16, “One-Stop Operations
- Guidance for the American Job Center Network” (January 18, 2017)
- DOL TEGL 4-15, “Vision for the One-Stop Delivery System Under the WIOA” (August 13, 2015)
- *California's Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan 2016-2020* (State Plan)
- Workforce Services Directive WSD16-14, Subject: *Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers* (December 19, 2016)

ATTACHMENT I

Comprehensive AJCC Certification Matrix

ATTACHMENT I

Comprehensive AJCC Certification Matrix Baseline Criteria

The Baseline America’s Job Center of CaliforniaSM (AJCC) Certification is intended to ensure that every comprehensive AJCC is in compliance with key *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA) statutory and regulatory requirements. If an AJCC does not meet one or more of the criteria, they will be considered “not yet able to certify.” In this instance, the Local Workforce Development Board (Local Board) must develop a corrective action plan that outlines how they will bring the AJCC into compliance by April 1, 2018.

Local Boards must submit a completed matrix and, if needed, a corrective action plan to their Regional Advisor for each comprehensive AJCC by December 31, 2017.

Name of Local Board _____

Name of AJCC _____

Baseline Criteria	Yes	No
Implements the signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOU)		
A Memorandum of Understanding (meeting the Phase I and Phase II requirements in Workforce Services Directive WSD15-12 and WSD16-09) has been signed by all the required AJCC partners.		
The signed MOU identifies the AJCC as a comprehensive center.		
The AJCC is implementing the MOU specifications applicable to comprehensive centers.		
Implements the Local Board defined roles and responsibilities of the AJCC Operator and Career Services Provider		
AJCC Operator selected in compliance with WSD16-14.		
Roles and responsibilities of AJCC Operator are clearly identified.		
Career Services Provider selected in compliance with WSD16-14.		
Roles and responsibilities of the Career Services Provider within the AJCC are clearly identified.		

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Meets all regulatory requirements to be a comprehensive AJCC (WIOA Joint Final Rule Section 678.305)		
AJCC has least one Title I staff person physically present.		
AJCC provides access to all basic and individualized career services identified in WIOA Joint Final Rule Section 678.430.		
AJCC provides access to training services identified in WIOA Joint Final Rule Section 680.200.		
AJCC provides access to any employment and training activities carried out under WIOA Section 134(d).		
AJCC provides access to programs, services, and activities of all required AJCC partners by having partner staff physically co-located at the AJCC, having a staff person at the AJCC who has been cross-trained to provide information about partner programs, or having direct linkage through technology to staff who can provide meaningful information or services.		
AJCC provides workforce and labor market information.		
AJCC provides customers with access programs, services, and activities during regular business hours.		
Ensures Equal Opportunity for Individuals With Disabilities		
<p>The AJCC is physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities, as described in WIOA Section 188 and Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations Part 38.</p> <p>Americans with Disabilities Act Title V provides that state requirements may supersede the ADA when state requirements provide greater or equal protection for the rights of individuals with disabilities. Therefore, the AJCC must also be in compliance with following California guidance related to equal access for individuals with disabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair Employment and Housing Act (California Government Code Section 12900-12996) • Unruh Civil Rights Act (California Civil Code Section 51-52) • Disabled Persons Act (California Civil Code Section 54-55) • California Building Code Title 24 Chapter 11B • California Government Code 7405 • California Government Code 11135 <p>Such requirements include, but are limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities • Making reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures where necessary to avoid discrimination against persons with disabilities • Administering programs in the most integrated setting appropriate 		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicating with persons with disabilities as effectively as with others• Providing appropriate auxiliary aids and services, including assistive technology devices and services, where necessary to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, the program or activity• Providing for the physical accessibility of the AJCC to individuals with disabilities		
The AJCC meets all Baseline Criteria for Baseline AJCC Certification		

The Local Board Chair must attest the Local Board’s certification decision by signing below.

Signature

Name

Title

ATTACHMENT II

Comprehensive AJCC Certification Matrix Hallmarks of Excellence

ATTACHMENT II

Comprehensive AJCC Certification Matrix Hallmarks of Excellence

The Hallmarks of Excellence America's Job Center of CaliforniaSM (AJCC) Certification is intended to encourage continuous improvement by identifying areas where an AJCC may be exceeding quality expectations, as well as areas where improvement is needed. These were developed in alignment with Training and Employment and Guidance Letter 4-15, California's Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan (State Plan), and the AJCC Certification Workgroup's vision for California's One-Stop delivery system.

Hallmarks of Excellence Ranking

Each individual Hallmark of Excellence is ranked on a scale of 1 to 5:

1. No progress on the hallmark at this time.
2. Have started progress on the hallmark but not yet satisfactory.
3. Have a satisfactory amount of the hallmark in place the majority of the time.
4. Significantly meeting the hallmark with room for improvement.
5. Achieving and excelling at the hallmark.

In order to receive a Hallmarks of Excellence AJCC Certification, an AJCC must have first met Baseline AJCC Certification and then receive a ranking of a least 3 for each of the Hallmarks of Excellence.

The matrix below describes each Hallmark of Excellence and provides associated quality indicators that should be used by the evaluator when documenting the rationale for each ranking. The evaluator must also provide continuous improvement goals and recommendations that Local Boards can use as they work with each comprehensive AJCC to develop a separate continuous improvement plan with target dates.

Local Boards must submit a completed matrix and continuous improvement plan to their Regional Advisor for each comprehensive AJCC by June 30, 2018.

Name of Local Board _____

Name of AJCC _____

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Hallmark of Excellence #1

The AJCC physical location and facility enhances the customer experience

Characteristics of a High Quality AJCC

- a. The physical layout of the AJCC must inform and engage customers in staff-supported activities and allow for workshops, group meetings and a robust basic career services, rather than moving all customers to the AJCC resource room computers to conduct a job search.

California State Plan Vision and Strategies

- a. The vision for the AJCC system in California, is to provide seamless customer-centered services focused on demand driven skills attainment and upward mobility for all Californians. The services should be delivered by aligning, coordinating, and integrating the programs and services of required and optional partners.
- b. AJCCs must be a professional and clean, environment where customers are greeted as they enter the AJCC. Information should be readily available about all partner program services, including how to access them.

Quality Indicators

- a. The location of the AJCC is convenient for customers (including those with barriers to employment). It has adequate parking and is accessible by public transportation (where available).
- b. External signage clearly identifies the location as an AJCC and meets the branding requirements of Workforce Services Information Notice 12-43.
- c. The AJCC is clean with a professional appearance.
- d. The AJCC is designed so that it is easy for customers to access services, resources, and staff assistance.
- e. The AJCC's resource area is neat, has adequate workstations to meet customer demand, and the equipment is in working order.
- f. The AJCC has adequate space available for customer reception, workshops, on-site employer recruitment events, itinerate partners, and job center staff.
- g. The AJCC has internal signage to help customers easily navigate the AJCC.
- h. Emergency evacuation procedures are in place and those procedures address the needs of individuals with disabilities.
- i. Adequate safety and security precautions are in place to protect both customers and staff.

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Hallmark of Excellence #1

Assessment of the AJCC’s Strengths and Continuous Improvement Opportunities:

Hallmark of Excellence #1 Ranking (1-5) : _____

Rationale for This Ranking:

Hallmark of Excellence #1

Continuous Improvement Goals and Recommendations:

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Hallmark of Excellence #2

The AJCC ensures universal access, with an emphasis on individuals with barriers to employment.

US DOL Characteristics of a High Quality AJCC

- a. Reflect a welcoming environment to all customer groups who are served by the AJCC. All AJCC staff are courteous, polite, responsive, and helpful to job seekers, businesses, and others who visit the AJCC. Staff are sensitive to the unique needs of individuals with disabilities and are prepared to provide necessary accommodations.
- b. Ensure meaningful access to all customers. AJCCs must be physically and programmatically accessible to all customers, including individuals with disabilities. In so doing, AJCCs use principles of universal design and human-centered design, such as flexibility in space usage, the use of pictorial, written, verbal and tactile modes to present information for customers with disabilities or limited English proficiency; providing clear lines of sight to information for seated or standing users; providing necessary accommodations; and providing adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistants. AJCCs use assistive technology and flexible business hours to meet the range of customer needs.
- c. Include both virtual and center-based service delivery for job seekers, workers, and employers. Both methods of delivery support the talent needs of the regional economy, although each may better serve different customers with different levels of service needs at any given time. The system can expand its reach by delivering robust virtual services; and increasing the accessibility of those services through community partners, such as libraries, community and faith-based organizations, and other partners.

California State Plan Vision and Strategies

- a. Enabling upward mobility for all Californians including populations with barriers to employment. Workforce and education programs need to be accessible for all Californians and ensure that everyone has access to a marketable set of skills and is able to access the level of education necessary to ensure economic self-sufficiency and security.

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Hallmark of Excellence #2

Quality Indicators

- a. All AJCC staff honor and accommodate diversity and are comfortable and adept in working with all types of individuals, including those with disabilities, cultural differences, and all individuals with barriers to employment.
- b. The local Equal Opportunity Officer periodically reviews the AJCC's policies, procedures, and facility for accessibility and equal opportunity and then provides recommendations and staff training, where needed.
- c. The AJCC has a Limited English Proficiency Plan to provide meaningful access for individuals that do not speak English as their primary language and who have limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English.
- d. The AJCC uses the principles of universal and customer-centered design to ensure inclusive space and materials are available to individuals regardless of their range of abilities, mobility, age, language, learning style, intelligence, or educational level.
- e. The AJCC implements the veteran's preference and priority of service requirements.
- f. The AJCC provides services outside of regular business hours where there is a workforce need as defined by the Local Board.
- g. The AJCC delivers both AJCC-based and virtual services.
- h. The AJCC ensures that individuals with disabilities are able to access virtual services in a manner that is comparable to the access available to others.

Assessment of the AJCC's Strengths and Continuous Improvement Opportunities:

Verdugo Workforce Development Board

Serving Burbank, Glendale and La Cañada Flintridge

Hallmark of Excellence #2

Hallmark of Excellence #2 Ranking (1-5) : _____

Rationale for This Ranking:

Continuous Improvement Goals and Recommendations:

Verdugo Workforce Development Board

Serving Burbank, Glendale and La Cañada Flintridge

Hallmark of Excellence #3	
The AJCC actively supports the One-Stop system through effective partnerships	
<p>US DOL Characteristics of a High Quality AJCC</p> <p>a. Reflect the establishment of robust partnerships among partners. The AJCC operator facilitates an integrated, collocated partnership that seamlessly incorporates the services of all the AJCC partners.</p>	<p>California State Plan Vision and Strategies</p> <p>a. Aligning, coordinating, and integrating programs and services to economize limited resources while also providing the right services to clients, based on each client’s particular and potentially unique needs so as to facilitate skills-attainment.</p>
<p><u>Quality Indicators</u></p> <p>a. A system is in place to assess the satisfaction of both co-located and non-co-located partners with the AJCC and its services.</p> <p>b. Both co-located and non-co-located partners believe that the AJCC adds value to their program and their customers.</p> <p>c. The required AJCC partners meet on a regular basis to discuss the One-Stop system and the AJCC’s contribution to the system and make recommendations for continuous improvement.</p> <p>d. The AJCC actively outreaches and provides access to non-co-located partner customers to participate in AJCC-based services, such as workshops and recruitment events.</p> <p>e. An inventory and overview of all partner services is available to all AJCC staff and all AJCC staff has received an orientation to all partner programs and services.</p> <p>f. One-Stop system marketing materials have been developed that overview all partner services for distribution to customers at the AJCC and at all non-co-located partner locations.</p> <p>g. The AJCC’s partner referral process (as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding) is being implemented with a focus on quality referrals that are likely to convert to service.</p> <p>h. Referrals are recorded and a system is in place for partners to follow-through and report progress on referrals made.</p> <p>i. The AJCC connects to the community through multiple community partnerships and community access points.</p>	

Verdugo Workforce Development Board

Serving Burbank, Glendale and La Cañada Flintridge

Hallmark of Excellence #3

Assessment of the AJCC’s Strengths and Continuous Improvement Opportunities:

Hallmark of Excellence #3 Ranking (1-5) : _____

Rationale for This Ranking:

Hallmark of Excellence #3

Continuous Improvement Goals and Recommendations:

Hallmark of Excellence #4	
The AJCC provides integrated, customer-centered services	
<p>US DOL Characteristics of a High Quality AJCC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Organize and integrate services by function (rather than by program); when permitted by a program’s authorizing statute and as appropriate, and by coordinating staff communication, capacity building, and training efforts. Functional alignment includes having AJCC staff who perform similar tasks serve on relevant functional teams, e.g. skills development team. Service integration focuses on serving all customers seamlessly (including targeted populations) by providing a full range of services staffed by cross-functional teams, consistent with the purpose, scope, and requirements of each program. b. Use an integrated and expert intake process for all customers entering the AJCCs. Frontline staff are highly familiar with the functions and basic eligibility requirements of each program, and can appropriately assist customers and make knowledgeable referrals to partner programs, as needed and as appropriate given the authorized scope of the program. c. Develop and maintain integrated case management systems that inform customer service throughout the customer’s interaction with the integrated system and allows information collected from customers at intake to be captured. Customer information is properly secured in accordance with personally identifiable information guidelines, and facilitated as appropriate, with the necessary MOU or other forms of confidentiality and data sharing agreements. Data, however, would be shared with other programs, within the One-Stop system only after the informed written consent of the individual has been obtained, where required. 	<p>California State Plan Vision and Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Integrated Service Delivery: braiding resources and coordinating services at the local level to meet client needs. b. Customer-Centered Service Design: use of customer centered design to involve frontline staff and customers in the development, prototyping and evaluation of AJCC services, resources, tools, and systems.

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Hallmark of Excellence #4

Quality Indicators

- a. AJCC staff identifies with the AJCC system (and not just their specific program), believes that all AJCC customers are shared customers, and contributes to providing a positive AJCC experience for every AJCC customer.
- b. AJCC staff have received customer service and customer-centered design training
- c. AJCC staff is cross-trained in program partner eligibility and services, so they have the capacity to functionally serve customers well.
- d. The AJCC has clearly identified the roles, responsibilities, and authorities of both functional leaders and the supervisors of program partners and the AJCC has an integrated functional organizational chart.
- e. The AJCC has a system in place to promptly greet all AJCC customers, identify the reason for their visit and their needs, and connect them to appropriate services as quickly as possible
- f. The AJCC has developed integrated customer flow procedures that respond to customer need and moves customers seamlessly between AJCC entry and service delivery with as few hand-offs as possible.
- g. All AJCC collocated partners have identified the Career Services that are applicable to their program and the AJCC has developed methods to align/integrate the delivery of those services.
- h. The AJCC has establish protocols to co-enroll customers in more than one partner program when there is value to customers and has a strategy for effectively sharing case management when customers are co-enrolled.

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Assessment of the AJCC’s Strengths and Continuous Improvement Opportunities:

Hallmark of Excellence #4

Hallmark of Excellence #4 Ranking (1-5) : _____

Rationale for This Ranking:

Continuous Improvement Goals and Recommendations:

Verdugo Workforce Development Board

Serving Burbank, Glendale and La Cañada Flintridge

Hallmark of Excellence #5

The AJCC is an on-ramp for skill development and the attainment of industry-recognized credentials which meet the needs of targeted regional sectors and pathways.

US DOL Characteristics of a High Quality AJCC

- a. Improve the skills of job seeker and worker customers. AJCCs offer access to education and training leading to industry-recognized credentials through the use of career pathways, apprenticeships, and other strategies that enable customers to compete successfully in today’s global economy.
- b. Value skill development by assessing and improving each individual’s basic, occupational, and employability skills.
- c. Balance traditional labor exchange services with strategic talent development within a regional economy.
- d. Create opportunities for individuals at all skill levels and levels of experience by providing customers as much timely, labor market, job-driven information and, choice as possible related to education and training, careers, and service delivery options, while offering customers the opportunity to receive both skill-development and job placement services.

California State Plan Vision and Strategies

- a. Career Pathways: enabling of progressive skills development through education and training programs, using multiple entry and exit points, so that each level of skills development corresponds with a labor market payoff for those being trained or educated and results in industry-recognized credentials.
- b. Earn and Learn: using training and education best practices that combine applied learning opportunities with material compensation while facilitating skills development in the context of actual labor market participation.
- c. Supportive Services: providing ancillary services like childcare, transportation, and counseling to facilitate program completion by those enrolled in training and education courses.
- d. AJCCs as an access point for programs that provide for “demand-driven skills attainment.” From this perspective, AJCCs will be operated as an “on ramp” or “gateway” to the “Regional Sector Pathways” programs either built-out or identified through the regional planning process described above.
- e. AJCCs will continue to provide the full array of Career Services and function as labor exchanges but there will be much greater emphasis on treating AJCCs as an access point for education and training services for those who want and need it.

Hallmark of Excellence #5

Quality Indicators

- a. All AJCC staff (i.e., the staff of all collocated partners regardless of staff position or program) value both skill development and employment outcomes and know how they can promote and contribute to both.
- b. All AJCC staff knows the regional target sectors, can identify regional sector career pathways, and can understand what those mean in terms of providing services to customers.
- c. The AJCC has skill development and training opportunities for customers at all skill and experience levels.
- d. The AJCC has robust training services and staff assists customers in accessing and enrolling in these services, including career pathways, integrated education and training, workforce preparation, work-based learning, and apprenticeship.
- e. AJCC staff are committed to and competent in helping customers navigate career pathways that result in industry-recognized credentials.
- f. The AJCC does not implement a “sequence of service requirement” for training and does not have cumbersome entry steps that prohibit easy access to education and training that leads to industry-recognized credentials.
- g. The AJCC ensures that supportive services are available to customers, as appropriate, to facilitate participation in training services.
- h. The AJCC strives to increase the number and percentage of all AJCC customers receiving skill development and training services resulting in industry recognized credentials.

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Hallmark of Excellence #5

Assessment of the AJCC’s Strengths and Continuous Improvement Opportunities:

Hallmark of Excellence #5 Ranking (1-5) : _____

Rationale for This Ranking:

Hallmark of Excellence #5

Continuous Improvement Goals and Recommendations:

Verdugo Workforce Development Board

Serving Burbank, Glendale and La Cañada Flintridge

Hallmark of Excellence #6

The AJCC actively engages industry and labor and supports regional sector strategies through an integrated business service strategy that focuses on quality jobs.

US DOL Characteristics of a High Quality AJCC

- a. Design and implement practices that actively engage industry sectors and use economic and labor market information, sector strategies, career pathways, registered apprenticeships, and competency models to help drive skill-based initiatives.
- b. Develop, offer, and deliver quality business services that assist specific businesses and industry sectors in overcoming the challenges of recruiting, retaining, and developing talent for the regional economy.

To support area employers and industry sectors most effectively, AJCC staff identify and have a clear understanding of industry skill needs, identify appropriate strategies for assisting employers, and coordinate business services activities across AJCC partner programs, as appropriate.

This includes the incorporation of an integrated and aligned business services strategy among AJCC partners to present a unified voice for the AJCC in its communications with employers.

Additionally, AJCCs use the forthcoming performance measure(s) on effectiveness in serving employers to support continuous improvement of these services.

California State Plan Vision and Strategies

- a. Regional partnerships: building partnerships between industry leaders, workforce professionals, education and training providers, and economic development leaders to develop workforce and education policies that increase job quality and support regional economic growth.
- b. Sector strategies: aligning workforce and education programs with leading and emergent industry sectors' skills needs.
- c. Fostering demand-driven skills attainment: workforce and education programs need to align program content with the state's industry sector needs so as to provide California's high road employers and businesses with the skilled workforce it needs to compete in the global economy.

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Hallmark of Excellence #6

Quality Indicators

- a. All AJCC staff has high-knowledge of the regional economy, labor market conditions, business talent supply chains, and the needs of high-growth sectors and high road employers.
- b. The AJCC focuses on quality jobs by actively promoting targeted sector opportunities and high-demand occupations to all AJCC customers
- c. The AJCC promotes systems and partnerships that connect workers to high-quality jobs or entry-level work with clear routes to advancement.
- d. The AJCC has a defined strategy in place to regularly seek and capture employer advice in the design and delivery of demand-driven services for job seekers.
- e. The AJCC is an integral partner in the implementation of the Local Board's integrated business services strategy and seeks to minimize redundant employer contacts while maximizing access to system-wide, integrated business services.
- f. The AJCC offers a wide range of AJCC-based services for employers including referral of qualified candidates, on-site recruitment, pre-employment testing, skill verification, and hiring and training subsidies.
- g. The AJCC consistently seeks feedback and satisfaction data from businesses on the delivery of business services and applies the learning for continuous improvement.

Assessment of the AJCC's Strengths and Continuous Improvement Opportunities:

Verdugo Workforce Development Board

Serving Burbank, Glendale and La Cañada Flintridge

Hallmark of Excellence #6

Hallmark of Excellence #6 Ranking (1-5) : _____

Rationale for This Ranking:

Continuous Improvement Goals and Recommendations:

Verdugo Workforce Development Board

Serving Burbank, Glendale and La Cañada Flintridge

Hallmark of Excellence #7

The AJCC has high-quality, well-informed, and cross-trained staffing

US DOL Characteristics of a High Quality AJCC

- a. Train and equip AJCC staff in an ongoing learning process with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to provide superior service to job seekers, including those with disabilities, and businesses in an integrated, regionally focused framework of service delivery. Center staff are cross-trained, as appropriate, to increase staff capacity, expertise, and efficiency. Cross training allows staff from differing programs to understand every program and to share their expertise about the needs of specific populations so that all staff can better serve all customers. Center staff are routinely trained and are keenly aware as to how their particular function supports and contributes to the overall vision of the local board.
- b. Staff the center with highly trained career counselors, skilled in advising job seekers of their options, knowledgeable about local labor market dynamics, aware of available services inside and outside the AJCC.

California State Plan Vision and Strategies

- a. Certification criteria will include an assessment of professional development and staff capacity building.

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Hallmark of Excellence 7

Quality Indicators

- a. The AJCC has regular staff meetings with all AJCC staff (i.e. the staff of all collocated partners regardless of program) to build relationships, provide updates on center activities, and discuss strategies for AJCC improvement.
- b. Partners have agreed to provide training to all AJCC staff on a regular basis.
- c. There is a capacity building and/or professional development plan for staff and partners.
- d. All AJCC staff has received training on the services of One-Stop partners, eligibility for those services, and the process for referring customers to partners.
- e. All AJCC staff has received training on how to use labor market information to help customers identify career pathways and develop in-demand skills and credentials and find jobs.
- f. All AJCC staff has received training in how to effectively assist customers in registering with CalJOBS and how to match customers to available jobs.
- g. All AJCC staff has received training on serving individuals with barriers to employment, including customers with disabilities.
- h. All AJCC staff has received training on providing excellent customer service and customer-centered design.
- i. All AJCC staff has received training on sector strategies, career pathways, job quality and high road training partnerships.

Assessment of the AJCC's Strengths and Continuous Improvement Opportunities:

Verdugo Workforce Development Board

Serving Burbank, Glendale and La Cañada Flintridge

Hallmark of Excellence #7

Hallmark of Excellence # 7 Ranking (1-5) : _____

Rationale for This Ranking:

Continuous Improvement Goals and Recommendations:

Verdugo Workforce Development Board

Serving Burbank, Glendale and La Cañada Flintridge

Hallmark of Excellence 8

The AJCC achieves business results through data-driven continuous improvement

US DOL Characteristics of a High Quality AJCC

- a. Use common performance indicators to ensure that federal investments in employment and training programs are evidence-based, labor market driven, and accountable to participants and taxpayers. Center performance is transparent and accountable to the communities and regions served; data entry staff are trained and understand the importance of data validation, data collection processes, and the importance of accurate reporting.
- b. Develop and implement operational policies that reflect an integrated system of performance, communication, and case management, and use technology to achieve integration and expanded service offerings.

California State Plan Vision and Strategies

- a. Certification criteria will include an assessment of the way the AJCC will use data for continuous improvement.

Quality Indicators

- a. The AJCC contributes to the achievement of WIOA performance indicators for all core program partners.
- b. The AJCC reports to the Local Board on an ongoing basis the number of customers served, the types of services provided, and the outcomes of those services.
- c. The AJCC operates in a cost-efficient manner and the resources invested are justified by the results.
- d. The AJCC has a system in place to collect satisfaction data from individuals and employers using the AJCC's services.
- e. The AJCC has a system in place to capture and respond to specific customer feedback, complaints, and compliments.
- f. The AJCC regularly reviews and analyzes performance, customer satisfaction, and service data and develops specific plans for AJCC service improvements.
- g. The AJCC regularly identifies areas of needed technical assistance to improve business results and taps available resources to obtain needed assistance.

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Hallmark of Excellence #8

Assessment of the AJCC’s Strengths and Continuous Improvement Opportunities:

Hallmark of Excellence # 8 Ranking (1-5) : _____

Rationale for This Ranking:

Hallmark of Excellence 8

Continuous Improvement Goals and Recommendations:

Verdugo Workforce Development Board

Serving Burbank, Glendale and La Cañada Flintridge

Summary of Rankings Hallmarks of Excellence AJCC Certification	
The Hallmarks of Excellence	Ranking
1. The AJCC Physical Location and Facility Enhances the Customer Experience	
2. The AJCC Ensures Universal Access, With An Emphasis of Individuals with Barriers to Employment	
3. The AJCC Actively Supports the One-Stop System Through Effective Partnerships	
4. The AJCC Provides Integrated, Customer-Centered Services	
5. The AJCC is an on-ramp for skill development and the attainment of industry-recognized credentials which meet the needs of targeted regional sectors and pathways.	
6. The AJCC actively engages industry and labor and supports regional sector strategies through an integrated business service strategy that focuses on quality jobs.	
7. The AJCC Has High-Quality, Well-Informed, Cross-Trained Staffing	
8. The AJCC Achieves Business Results Through Data-Driven Continuous Improvement	
Total Ranking for Hallmarks of Excellence:	

	Yes	No
Did the AJCC meet all Baseline Criteria requirements?		
Did the AJCC receive a "3" ranking or better on each Hallmark of Excellence?		

_____ Hallmark AJCC Certification

_____ Baseline AJCC Certification

_____ Not Yet Able to Certify

The Local Board Chair must attest the Local Board's certification decision by signing below.

Signature

Name

Title