

To: Chair Adam Grinold, Vermont State Workforce Development Board  
Cc: Vermont State Workforce Development Board  
From: Training & Credentialing Work Group of the Vermont State Workforce Development Board (Marilyn Cargill, Co-Chair; Jay Ramsey, Co-Chair)  
Re: Training & Credentialing Work Group Recommendations re the Training & Credentialing Committee of the Vermont State Workforce Development Board and the Process for the State Approval of Credentials of Value  
Date: May 6, 2019

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**Background:** On January 11, 2018, the Vermont State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) voted to create a Training & Credentialing Work Group (Work Group) and charged it with recommending the charge and initial membership of a standing Training & Credentialing Committee (TCC) of the SWDB.

On July 9, 2018, former SWDB Chair Frank Cioffi appointed 10 members to the Work Group, including Co-Chairs Marilyn Cargill (Vermont Student Assistance Corporation) and Jay Ramsey (Agency of Education), Hugh Bradshaw (Div. of Vocational Rehabilitation), Kim Bushey (Dept. of Corrections), Jane Fortin (Department of Labor), Maureen Hebert (Vermont Technical College), Lauren Hibbert (Office of Professional Regulation), Sharon Parker (Agency of Education), Mary Anne Sheahan (Vermont Talent Pipeline), and Joseph Teegarden (Center for Technology, Essex).

The Work Group held five meetings—including two meetings during which it solicited feedback from a large and diverse group of stakeholders—between August 2018 and April 2019 to complete its work and draft final recommendations. On April 4, 2019, the Work Group reached consensus to make the following recommendations to SWDB Chair Adam Grinold for approval.

**Recommendation 1: Definition of a “Credential of Value”**

The Work Group, recognizing that public and private entities in Vermont lack a standardized, common definition of a “credential of value,” and recognizing the necessity of such a definition for the State to approve credentials of value, proposes the following definition of a “credential of value”:

*A credential of value is an educational degree, certificate, occupational license, registered apprenticeship or industry-recognized certification verified by a third party with relevant authority or jurisdiction. It is a means of verifying skills and competencies and has value in the current and/or future labor market. Preferably, a credential is stackable, transferable, portable and accessible for participants.*

The Work Group recommends that, in addition to the Chair’s approval and the TCC’s operational use of this definition, the full SWDB vote to adopt this as the official definition of a “credential of value” for Vermont’s workforce development system.

**Recommendation 2: Charge of the Training & Credentialing Committee**

The Work Group proposes the following charge to guide the work of the TCC:

*The Training and Credentialing Committee informs credentialing policy as a state workforce development priority including the implementation of an approval process for state- and industry-recognized credentials, with the administrative support of the Agency of Education and the Department of Labor. The Committee will review applications and forward recommendations for approval or denial to the State Workforce Development Board based on “credential of value” as defined by the full Board.*

Additional responsibilities of the TCC are outlined in Attachment B.

### **Recommendation 3: Initial Membership & Governance of the Training & Credentialing Committee (Attachment A)**

The Work Groups recommends that the Chair appoint eleven (11) initial members to the TCC that reflect stakeholder interest and expertise from the business/employer community, the education community, and state government. See Attachment A for a list of recommended membership.

The Work Groups recommends the following provisions for governance of the TCC:

- TCC members shall serve at the discretion of the SWDB Chair for two-year terms with no term limits.
- The SWDB Chair shall appoint a TCC Chair and Vice Chair, with one post representing the business/employer community and one post representing the public sector.
- The TCC shall meet at least four (4) times annually.
- A quorum of the TCC shall be two-thirds (2/3) of its membership, or eight (8) members.
- Any action taken by the TCC shall be authorized by a majority of members present and voting.

### **Recommendation 4: Process for the State Approval of Credentials of Value (Attachments B and C)**

The Work Group recommends that the TCC approve credentials of value according to the process outlined in Attachment B, including the application provided in Attachment C.

Approved credentials of value will be added to the publicly-available Vermont Master Credential List (List). The List will serve several purposes:

- It will serve as a public, transparent inventory of state-approved and industry-recognized credentials of value.
- It will inform the use of state and federal funds for workforce education and training programs that lead to approved credentials of value.
- It will inform members of the public (students, workers, employers, training providers, etc.) as to which credentials have value in the current and/or future job market in order to best inform individuals’ workforce education and training pathways.

### **Recommendation 5: Public Availability of Information Pertaining to the Training & Credentialing Committee, the Process for the State Approval of Credentials of Value, and the Vermont Master Credential List (Attachment D)**

The Work Group recommends that all information pertaining to the TCC, the process for the state approval of credentials of value, and the List be made available and easily accessible to the public.

All information should be co-listed across state government websites including that of the SWDB, the Agency of Education, the Dept. of Labor, the Div. of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Office of Professional Regulation, and any other relevant state agency. See Attachment D for a proposed display of this information on the SWDB’s website.

### **Recommendation 6: Topics for Future Consideration by the Training & Credentialing Committee**

The Work Group recommends that the TCC consider the following topics related to its work and the process for state approval of credentials of value:

- The process by which the TCC will solicit external input on applications.
- The criteria (beyond the definition of a “credential of value”) by which the TCC will review and approve credentials.
- The process by which denied applicants may appeal the decision (this process will apply to applicants who are denied following full SWDB denial. See Attachment B for the preliminary denial and appeals process).
- Whether the TCC should maintain a list of denied credentials and their applications, and whether that list should be made public.
- The frequency at which denied credentials and applications may be resubmitted for state-approval
- The frequency and process by which approved credentials on the List will be reviewed.
  - Will historical use and/or attainment of the credential be used as a criterion for re-approval?
  - A transparent process with clear communication will also be necessary when a previously-approved credential is not re-approved and is removed from the List.
- The criteria by which a “home-grown” credentials will be evaluated. These criteria could also guide to the development of new credentials.
- The process by which the TCC will initially populate the List with existing state- and federally-approved “credentials of value” (ex. Should all credentials from the WIOA Eligible Training Provider List go through the entire approval process? Should they be added automatically?)
- The format of the List.
  - The Work Group offers New Jersey’s list of state-approved credentials of value as a possible template for the List:  
[https://careerconnections.nj.gov/careerconnections/document/prepare/NJ\\_Industry\\_Valued\\_Credential\\_List\\_January\\_2018.pdf](https://careerconnections.nj.gov/careerconnections/document/prepare/NJ_Industry_Valued_Credential_List_January_2018.pdf)
  - Other categories denoted on the List could include: funding eligibility (WIOA, Non-Degree Grants, etc.), source of training/training providers, relevant accountability systems (WIOA, ESSA, Perkins, etc.).

## **Attachment A: Recommended Initial Membership of the Training & Credentialing Committee**

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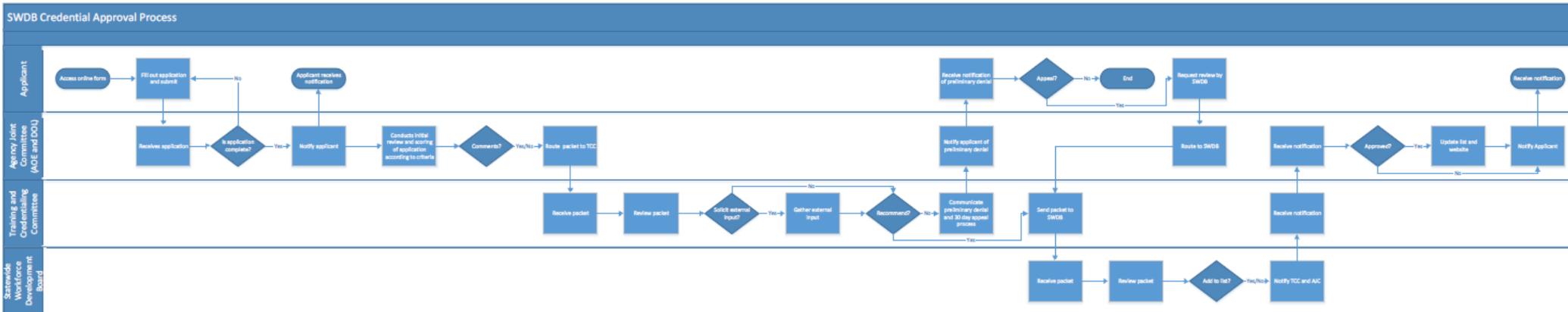
The Work Group recommends that the Chair appoint eleven (11) initial members to the TCC, one from each of the following designations:

1. Business/Employer: Manufacturing Sector
2. Business/Employer: Healthcare Sector
3. Business/Employer: Trades Sector
4. Business/Employer: Hospitality & Tourism Sector
5. Statewide Business Organization/Association
6. Ad Hoc Business/Employer (SWDB Chair's discretion)
7. Ad Hoc Business/Employer (SWDB Chair's discretion)
8. Higher Education
9. Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC)
10. Agency of Commerce & Community Development (ACCD)
11. Agency of Human Services (AHS)

Note that the Agency of Education (AOE), the Department of Labor (VDOL), and the Office of Professional Regulation (OPR) will serve as non-voting advisors to the TCC and will serve an official role in the credential approval process (see Attachment B).

Note that the TCC will have the option to solicit outside expertise from business/employers and other relevant stakeholders during its review of applications in the credential approval process (see Attachment B).

## Attachment B: Recommended Process for State Approval of Credentials of Value



1. The applicant<sup>1</sup> accesses a fillable online application (see Attachment C) on one of the state websites where the information is co-listed. The applicant completes and submits the application.
2. The Agency Joint Committee (AJC)<sup>2</sup> receives the application, verifies completion, and notifies applicant that the application has been received. If application is not complete, staff will contact applicant to correct.
3. The AJC conducts an initial review of the application, scores based on criteria set by the TCC, and provides comments. The application packet is then forwarded to the TCC.
4. The TCC receives the application packet and conducts a secondary review. The TCC can determine whether it will solicit external input of expertise from relevant stakeholders. The TCC makes a recommendation to approve or deny the application. If the application is approved, the recommendation is forwarded to the full SWDB.
  - a. If the application is denied, the TCC informs the AJC who notifies the applicant that the application has received a preliminary denial that may be appealed within 30 days.
  - b. If the applicant appeals the preliminary denial of the TCC, a request for review will be submitted to the AJC who will forward the request to the full SWDB for consideration.
5. The full SWDB receives the approved or appealed application and conducts a final review. The full SWDB will entertain a motion to approve the credential of value to be added to the Vermont Master Credential List. The full SWDB will notify the TCC and the AJC of its decision.
6. If the application and the credential are approved by the full SWDB, the AJC will add the credential to the List and update public posting accordingly. The AJC will notify the applicant that their application has been approved or denied.

<sup>1</sup> The applicant can be any business/employer, educational institution, CTE director, training provider, etc. Note that vendors of credentials are not eligible applicants.

<sup>2</sup> The Agency Joint Committee (AJC) is a body comprised of staff from the SWDB, AOE, and VDOL that is responsible for the administrative implementation of the process, as well as the initial review of applications and recommendation to the TCC.

## Attachment C: Recommended Application for State Approval of Credentials of Value

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The full application for state approval of credentials of value is available at:

<https://www.emailmeform.com/builder/form/o3yU5ljZsg2nd75BCN13Dcdfv>

Note that credentials relevant to adult education and literacy fall into the "K-12 Education" category.

### Credential of Value Approval Request Form

The Vermont State Workforce Development Board has defined a credential of value as: "an educational degree, certificate, occupational license, registered apprenticeship or industry-recognized certification verified by a third party with relevant authority or jurisdiction. It is a means of verifying skills and competencies and has value in the current and/or future labor market. Preferably, a credential is stackable, transferable, portable and accessible for participants."

This request is for \*

- K-12 Education
- Post-Secondary Education & Training
- Both

Select the option that best applies to this request so the form is directed to the proper entity for review. If you are requesting to approve a credential for high school, CTE, or adult education and literacy only, select "K-12 Education." If you are requesting to approve a credential for those who have graduated high school, select "Post-Secondary Education & Training." If you are requesting to approve a credential for both groups, select both.

Type of credential: \*

- Educational Degree
- Educational Certificate
- Occupational License
- Registered Apprenticeship
- Industry Recognized Certification

To which industry(ies) does the credential apply? \*

To which occupation(s) does the credential apply? \*

## DETAILS

Provide key information about the credential below. This information is used in the decision making process and, if approved, will be entered into the Vermont State Workforce Development Board's master credential list.

PLEASE CHECK THIS PAGE FOR THE MASTER LIST TO ENSURE THE CREDENTIAL HASNT ALREADY BEEN REVIEWED: LINK GOES HERE

**Credential Title: \***

**Issuing Organization(s): \***

**Issuing Organization Phone:**     
### ### ####

**Link to information about the credential: \***

The link should provide relevant, detailed information about the credential, NOT the homepage of the issuing organization.

**Registry Information \***

Yes  
 No  
 Unknown

For ease of verifying credential attainment, does the issuing organization maintain a registry system of individuals who have earned the credential?

**Description: \***

Provide a brief explanation of the credential.

**Cost per Individual \***

Enter the total cost for an individual to take the assessment that leads to the credential. This should NOT include training program costs.

**Assessment Information \***

Credentials of value must have a valid third-party assessment or verification. Please describe how the issuing organization assesses an individual's skills and knowledge to determine whether they have the skills required by the credential. Provide links to this information if available.

**Accessibility for Individuals with Disabilities \***

Credentials of value should be accessible to individuals with disabilities. Please provide information about accommodations available to individuals with disabilities.

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

The Vermont State Workforce Development Board's policy requires the submission of at least three signed letters of support. These letters may be from employers, industry organizations, or other relevant entities that acknowledge the value of the credential and that identify how the industry "recognizes" the credential (ex. guaranteed interview, hiring preference, advancement preference, higher starting or advancing wage guarantee, etc.).

Letter of Support #1 \*  No file selected.

Letter of Support #2 \*  No file selected.

Letter of Support #3 \*  No file selected.

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## APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Please provide your contact information so that we can communicate with you about this request.

First Name \*

Last Name \*

Role \*

Phone     
### ### ####

Email \*

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This form will be submitted for initial review by a joint committee of Vermont Agency of Education staff and Vermont Department of Labor staff. The application will then be reviewed by the Training & Credentialing Committee of the Vermont State Workforce Development Board (SWDB). The Committee's recommendation to approve or deny the credential will be subject to a vote of the full SWDB at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Approved credentials will be added to the [NAME OF LIST WITH LINK]

More information about the process for state approval of credentials of value is available at [LINK]

Please contact [sophia.yager@vermont.gov](mailto:sophia.yager@vermont.gov) with any questions regarding this form or the review process.

# Attachment D: Recommended Display of Information on the SWDB's Website Pertaining to the Training & Credentialing Committee, the Process for the State Approval of Credentials of Value, and the Vermont Master Credential List

VERMONT OFFICIAL STATE WEBSITE

STATE OF VERMONT

## Workforce Development Board

SEARCH  
CONTACT  
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Home  
The Board  
Committees  
Meetings  
Policy and Reports  
WIOA Eligible Training Providers  
Registered Apprenticeships  
Resources

Basic page *Training & Credentialing Committee* has been updated.

VIEW EDIT REVISIONS

### TRAINING & CREDENTIALING COMMITTEE

The Training & Credentialing Committee informs credentialing policy as a state workforce development priority and provides administrative support including the implementation of an approval process for state- and industry-recognized credentials. The Committee will review and recommend applications to the State Workforce Development Board based on "credential of value" as defined by the full Board.

A "credential of value" is an educational degree, certificate, occupational license, registered apprenticeship or industry-recognized certification verified by a third party with relevant authority or jurisdiction. It is a means of verifying skills and competencies and has value in the current and/or future labor market. Preferably, a credential is stackable, transferable, portable and accessible for participants.

The Training & Credentialing Committee is responsible for:

- Setting policy that governs the process for state approval of credentials of value
- Setting criteria for state approval of credentials of value
- Consulting with relevant experts and stakeholders to determine the value of a credential in the current and/or future job market
- Reviewing applications and making recommendations for the approval of credentials of value to the full Board
- Publicizing information relating to the process for state approval of credentials of value and the list of approved credentials

[LINK] Process for State Approval of Credentials of Value  
[LINK] XX List  
[LINK] Apply for State Approval of a Credential of Value

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[LINK] Apply for State Approval of a Credential of Value

**Upcoming Committee Meetings:**

XX  
XX

**Meeting Minutes and Agendas:**

XX  
XX

**Committee Documents and Materials:**

XX  
XX

**Committee Members:**

Chair: XX  
Vice Chair: XX

XX  
XX  
XX  
XX  
XX  
XX  
XX  
XX  
XX  
XX