

Adult Workforce Diploma Program FAQ

Program Overview and Funding

What is the name of the new adult program that starts on July 1, 2026?

The name is the Adult Workforce Diploma Program.

How will funding work under the Adult Workforce Diploma Program?

The redesign introduces one funding stream for the Adult Workforce Diploma Program. The Department will determine the funding distribution formula. Providers will receive payment for delivering services to eligible participants up to \$7,500 per individual per school year, pursuant to [Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.902](#). Providers are to obligate funds by June 30 of each fiscal year for enrolled participants and liquidate by September 30.

When will allocations be released to approved providers?

It is anticipated that provider allocations will be available by July of 2026 based on the funding distribution that is being created by the Department.

Will funds be provided all at once for the 3-year period, or annually at the beginning of each fiscal year?

Approved providers will receive an allocation for each fiscal year.

What is the total state funding amount for the entire Adult Workforce Diploma Program?

The total state funding in FY27 for the Adult Workforce Diploma Program is \$9.4 million without earmarks. This funding amount does not include carryovers from FY2026, nor have salaries or other necessary operating costs been deducted.

What documents will be available to providers?

A student handbook template and a provider manual will be made available in 2026. The student handbook can be edited by the provider. In addition, the [LACES Data User Guide](#) is available on the Adult Options webpage.

Can we get an email confirming our award/funding amount for planning purposes?

The department intends to email each provider with their AWDP funding for FY27 once available.

Application

When will the Adult Workforce Diploma Program provider application be released?

The provider application will be released on April 20, 2026. It will be available on the Adult Diploma Options webpage of the Department of Education and Workforce website. The application can be found by scrolling to the [Adult Workforce Diploma Program](#) section on the Adult Diploma Option's webpage.

When will the Adult Workforce Diploma Program provider application close?

The provider application submission deadline is June 5, 2026, at 4:00pm. Late applications will not be accepted or considered. The next provider application period will open for program year FY28. Applications must be submitted to dewproviderapplication@education.ohio.gov

After the provider submits the application, can revisions be made?

Yes, Approved provider applications will be considered a living document, and providers may edit and update throughout the year as necessary.

Should providers submit one application per school location/IRN?

A separate application is required for each unique IRN. Sub-sites of fiscal agencies do not need to have a separate application; separate applications only apply when the IRN is a unique number.

Are providers listing the proposed training programs and matching industry recognized credentials in a specific question on the provider application?

On page 7 of the provider application, under the section titled 'Career Plan and Workforce Needs', providers may list all available pathway options in question 3. This may include proposed training programs along with their corresponding industry-recognized credentials. Approved providers may expand their program offerings throughout the year. Additionally, providers completing the application may include a separate attachment if they need additional space to describe their planned program offerings.

Can you explain what information you are collecting on page 4 of the provider application for the participating buildings question?

Please list which sites/buildings of your fiscal agent will be delivering and providing the Adult Workforce Diploma Program.

For question number 2 of the application that asks how many students the provider plans to serve, means the number of students expected to complete the program?

No, this is not about completers but the number of participants you plan to serve for each of the three years.

Systems, Data, and Reporting

What is the name of the data management system (DMS) that will be utilized for the Adult Workforce Diploma Program?

The name is LACES by LiteracyPro Systems.

If a program completer is employed at the 6-month mark, do we still need to contact these students at the 12-month and 18-month mark?

Yes. Providers must contact program completers at each of the required time periods which include the 6-months, 12-month, and 18-month mark. The purpose of contacting completers is to collect required outcome data and to advise and offer support to students.

How do we access LACES for the first time if we have never used it before?

LACES accounts are being created by the LACES Technical Support on an ongoing basis as providers submit information that was requested by ODEW. If you submitted information but have not received an account, please contact the LACES Help Desk at helpdesk@literacypro.com. Please also check your spam and/or quarantine.

Will our login info for LACES remain the same if we provide Aspire services?

The login information would not change, but the provider would need email the Adult Options team so that a team member can assign access to the DEW account.

Should current LACES users expect their login to have multiple dropdowns (Aspire, OH DEW)

Yes.

Program and Student Eligibility

If a student under 18 is enrolled in a postsecondary program such as College Credit Plus or Ohio Technical Center Plus, can these students attend with students enrolled in the Adult Workforce Diploma Program?

Yes.

How soon can we begin enrolling students into certification courses?

This is left to the discretion of the local provider.

Can we start enrolling students now, or do we need to wait for final documents?

Local providers can begin the enrollment process at their discretion. Please ensure a staff member has access to LACES.

Can students from the former 22+ program who did not finish in time enroll in the new program?

Yes, Students who exhausted their eligibility in 22+ or the Adult Diploma Program are still eligible for the Adult Workforce Diploma Program, if the student meets all other eligibility requirements of the program.

What is the process for verifying incoming high school credits?

Providers should plan to review credits and prior education history to determine what coursework is needed for the student. An official transcript from previous school(s) that shows all courses and assessments taken would be helpful. Providers will be able to enter historic/past-earned credits and other experiences in LACES.

Local Control and Program Options

Who decides which options and additional requirements providers will offer?

The allowable options to earn a state issued diploma are outlined in [ORC 3313.902](#). Eligible providers design and implement programs with local control to determine which allowable options are offered, consistent with pending standards in draft rules.

Do approved providers have the authority to create a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or other formal partnerships and contracts?

Yes. Local providers may create partnerships and agreements at their own discretion.

Program Requirements: Allowable Activities

What are the requirements for course credits, industry-recognized credentials (IRCs), and the number/ or type of activities to earn a diploma?

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section [3313.902](#), (1) The individual demonstrates competency by completing at least three of the following activities, at least one of which shall be the activity described in division (C)(1)(a) or (b) of this section.

Assessments

How does the program account for prior test scores or assessments (e.g., Ohio Graduation Test (OGT), End-of Course (EOC), WorkKeys)?

Prior OGT proficiency scores do not satisfy the (EOC) competency requirement. Under [ORC 3313.902](#), participants must attain competency scores on Algebra I and English Language Arts

II end-of-course exams. A participant may choose not to pursue (EOCs) and instead meet competency through the nationally recognized job skills assessment selected by the Department (WorkKeys) or by earning course credits. No explicit time thresholds for prior WorkKeys or (EOC) scores are set in statute, but scores must align to current vendor versions and valid administration practices.

Can an Individual Education Plan (IEP) exempt a participant from WorkKeys or (EOC) requirements?

No. [ORC 3313.902](#) provides no exemption from WorkKeys or (EOC) exams. Providers should offer reasonable accommodation consistent with participants (IEP).

Industry-Recognized Credentials

Where can I find the current approved industry-recognized credential list, and is it final? Who do I contact with questions or feedback?

As of July 21, 2026, the Industry-Recognized Credential Review Committee has approved a new industry-recognized credential list. The lists below outline pathway options that meet graduation requirements by allowing students to earn either a standalone credential or an approved bundle of credentials.

[Approved Standalone Industry Credentials](#)

[Approved Industry- Recognized Credentials Bundles](#)

Implementation Updates

To help you prepare, please take some time to review the approved standalone credentials and bundles. This information is essential as we move forward as it will guide your planning and support for your adult students.

Please keep the following updates and guidance in mind:

- The Innovative Workforce Incentive Program (IWIP) list will no longer be used for the AWDP. Although changes may occur to the IWIP list, providers should refer exclusively to the approved industry-recognized credential list.
- By Fiscal Year 2028, all approved AWDP providers must be fully compliant with the approved industry-recognized list.
- Beginning August 1, 2026, AWDP providers will not need to submit applications for new credentials or credential bundles. The Adult Options team will coordinate directly with the review committee on these matters.
- Providers may request a meeting with the Adult Options team to discuss standalone credentials or credential bundles they would like to have considered. However, review of a credential does not guarantee its inclusion on the approved lists.
- For Fiscal Year 2027, RISE Up Customer Service and Sales, RISE Up Retail Industry, Rise Up Supply Chain, Inventory, and Logistics, ServSafe, CPR First Aid, and OSHA 10-hour training, and OSHA 30-hour training are not allowable as standalone credentials.

Providers are encouraged to visit the Department's [Industry-Recognized Credentials webpage](#) to learn more about these updates and explore helpful resources. As always, the Adult Options team remains committed to providing professional development and technical assistance on this topic.

Industrial-Recognized Credentials

Is the TechCred list an acceptable source for credentials?

No. At this time, the TechCred list will not be utilized for the Adult Diploma Workforce Program.

Is the Adult Workforce Diploma Program following the same Industry-Recognized Credentials lists that secondary students will be following?

Yes. The Adult Workforce Diploma Program will follow the same guidelines and rules as aligned to K-12.

Will prior earned credentials be accepted?

Yes. Prior earned credentials may count toward the additional activity of completion of an Industry Recognized Credential. Providers will not receive payment for prior credentials earned.

What are the parameters for prior earned credentials?

Must contain the complete occupational license, certification, or certificate.

- Must be issued in the state of Ohio.
- The name of the occupational license, certification, or certificate must match the name of the individual enrolling into the Adult Workforce Diploma Program.
- The accreditation of the issuer, and the license, certification, or certificate was completed at a community college, technical college, state community college, an Ohio technical center, or a private or public entity that delivers training.
- The credential must be a part of a career pathway plan.
- The occupational license, certification, or certificate must be in English.
- The occupational license, certification, or certificate must be in active status and not expired.

The Department will be opening an application for new credentials and new credential bundles on Aug. 1, 2026. This application will be open through Oct. 31, 2026.

Any questions should be directed to the Industry-Recognized Credentials Team at industrycredentials@education.ohio.gov.

Ohio Means Jobs Seal

What is the required documentation needed to prove that a participant has already completed the Ohio Means Jobs (OMJ) Readiness Seal? Will the seal be on their high school transcript or is there a way the provider can cross check on the seal?

A participant could provide a transcript or a copy of a document demonstrating proof of the OMJ seal and this would be sufficient.

For the OMJ Seal, do providers only need to complete the first section, or do providers need to complete the optional parts as well?

As defined [Ohio Revised Code 3313.6112](#) participants will earn the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal by satisfying each of the following:

Demonstrate proficiency in each of 14 identified professional skills.

Use OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal form to record demonstration of each professional skill.

Work with a mentor to validate demonstration of each skill across a minimum of two of the three environments. The three potential environments are:

- School
- Work
- Community

Work-Based Learning (WBL)

Is work-based learning only for unpaid work?

No. WBL can be a paid opportunity. To learn more about [Work-Based Learning](#), visit the Department's website

For WBL, does the work-based learning opportunity have to be in the same industry as the training program?

If a participant begins with no prior credits or WBL, then WBL should align with the path of study. If a participant already has the required 250 hours of WBL with positive evaluations, and documentation is sufficient to meet Work Based Learning (WBL) requirements, providers do not need to resubmit WBL if local providers confirm sufficiency.

WebXams

Do we have more information regarding Webxams, especially for adults who do not take EMIS courses?

Please reach out to Stephanie Schab at stephanie.schab@education.ohio.gov if you are interested in learning more about administering WebXams through the Adult Workforce Diploma Program. ODEW will offer PD to interested approved providers in FY27.

Credentials, Diplomas & Transcripts

Can we get more information on DiplomaSender and who notifies them to issue diplomas and transcripts?

DiplomaSender will issue both the diploma and transcript. The initial documents are at no cost. Once a student record is loaded into DiplomaSender's system and shows "credentialed" they send an email to the student letting informing them that they can create an account and retrieve their documents.

Will providers have access to student transcripts and diplomas?

No, providers will not have access to student transcripts and diplomas. The documents belong to the students, and they must create an account, and order their initial complementary transcript and diploma. If they need additional documents in the future, they will log into their DiplomaSender account order and pay for the transcript or duplicate diploma.

Program Directory & Approved Credentials

Will the approved credentials list be released in August, and does that delay program offerings?

As of July 21, 2026, the Industry-Recognized Credential Review Committee has approved a new industry-recognized credential list. This list will be a pathway option to meet the graduation requirements by earning either a standalone credential or an approved bundle of credentials.

[List of approved standalone credentials](#)

[List of approved bundles of credentials](#)

Funding & Payment

Will there be a published preferred schedule for the state payment system?

Approved payments for the Adult Workforce Diploma Program will automatically run at 2:00am on the last Monday of each month, unless the last Monday of the month is a state holiday. In that case, the payments will be processed at 2:00am on the next business day. Only approved payments will be included in processing. 5:00pm on Wednesday prior to last Monday will be the cut-off for providers to submit payments, in-order for staff to review and approve. Payments will only be processed once a month.