

# Florida Credentials Review Committee

<b>Title:</b>	CareerSource Florida State Workforce Development Board Credentials Review Committee Charter
<b>Adopted:</b>	09/08/2021
<b>Effective:</b>	09/08/2021

## A. INTRODUCTION

### **Background**

Florida House Bill 1507 created Chapter 14.36, Florida Statutes, the Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act. The REACH Act addresses the evolving needs of Florida's economy by increasing the level of collaboration and cooperation among state businesses and education communities while improving training within and equity and access to a more integrated workforce and education system for all Floridians. This legislation amended Chapter 445.004, Florida Statutes. The bill was signed into law by Governor Ron DeSantis on June 24, 2021, and went into effect July 1, 2021 as Florida Law 2021-164.

The REACH Act is a bold step to modernize career pathways while promoting an aligned and seamless service delivery framework of workforce services to customers as well as improving employment and training outcomes through stronger connections between training offered and the training needed by employers. The law establishes a blueprint for Florida's talent ecosystem to ensure the state has the talent it needs to remain competitive in the new global economy.

Workforce boards, colleges and industry leaders will converge to create a uniform set of credentials and skills that align education and training to workforce needs. The REACH Act is a major step toward these goals. It creates the REACH Office under the purview of the Governor so that all entities involved in workforce preparation – education, workforce development, and those helping Floridians achieve economic self-sufficiency – are collaborating and informed by a common understanding of what occupations and skills are most in demand throughout Florida and the creation of a state-approved list of credentials that align with industry demand.

### **Statutory Requirements**

Chapter 14.36(2)(a), Florida Statutes, defines "Credential" as an apprenticeship certificate, industry certification, license, advanced technical certificate, college credit certificate, career certificate, applied technology diploma, associate in applied science degree, associate in science degree, Bachelor of Applied Science degree, and Bachelor of Science degree.

Pursuant to Chapter 445.004(4), Florida Statutes, the Florida state workforce development board shall appoint a Credentials Review Committee to identify nondegree credentials and degree credentials of value for approval by the state board and inclusion in the Master Credentials List. Such credentials must include registered apprenticeship programs, industry certifications, licenses, advanced technical certificates, college credit certificates, career

certificates, applied technology diplomas, associate degrees, baccalaureate degrees and graduate degrees.

Except as described in the authorities and powers section below, the Credentials Review Committee will act as an advisory committee or similar group created by CareerSource Florida, Inc. The Credentials Review Committee, its leadership, and CareerSource Florida do not have any direct or implied authority to withhold or direct funds appropriated by the federal government or the Florida Legislature for distribution by the partner entities who make up the membership of the committee.

## **B. AUTHORITIES AND POWERS**

Under the REACH Act, the Credentials Review Committee has the authority to:

- Define a framework of quality that will be used to identify credentials of value to include nondegree and degree credentials, registered apprenticeship programs, industry certifications, licenses, advanced technical certificates, college credit certificates, career certificates, applied technology diplomas, associate degrees, baccalaureate degrees and graduate degrees
- Designate the process for appealing decisions of the Credentials Review Committee
- Designate the process for submitting the Master Credentials List to the Florida State Workforce Board for approval
- Designate the process for forwarding the Master Credentials List to the State Board of Education by January 31, 2022, and annually thereafter
- Designate the date by which the Master Credentials List must be published
- Designate how reports of the Credentials Review Committee will be completed and made available to the public
- Designate any processes for the Credentials Review Committee to use to operate within the authorities established in statute

## **C. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

### **Membership**

The Credentials Review Committee must include:

#### **Statutorily Designated Members**

- The Chancellor of the Florida Department of Education Division of Public Schools
- The Chancellor of the Florida Department of Education Division of Career and Adult Education

- The Chancellor of the Florida College System
- The Chancellor of the State University System
- The Director of the Office of Reimagining Education and Career Help

### **Appointed Members**

- Four (4) members from local workforce development boards with equal representation from urban and rural regions
- Two (2) members from non-public postsecondary institutions
- Two (2) members from industry associations
- Two (2) members from Florida-based businesses
- Two (2) members from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
- One (1) member from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

### **Appointment of Members and Term**

The majority of membership of the Credentials Review Committee is designated by statute. Those members who are not designated by statute shall be appointed by the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors or its Executive Committee from a list of qualified, representative and appropriate nominees and volunteers.

The Executive Committee will solicit nominees and volunteers from the Executive Office of the Governor; the Reimagining Education and Career Help Office; the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors; the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity; local workforce development boards; The Florida Department of Education and its Divisions of Public Schools and Career and Adult Education; the Florida College System; the State University System; independent education organizations; the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; industry associations; and Florida businesses.

Membership from local workforce development boards, non-public postsecondary institutions, industry associations, and Florida-based businesses should represent diverse geographic areas of the state including urban, rural and suburban areas.

The members of the Credentials Review Committee shall serve for a period of time determined by the CareerSource Florida Board or its Executive Committee. Qualified members of the Credentials Review Committee may be reappointed by the CareerSource Florida Board or its Executive Committee.

### **Ethics and Transparency**

The Credentials Review Committee will promote an ethical and transparent structure. All committee meetings will be conducted in an open manner, comply with federal and state laws and ensure the public has access to information. The Credentials Review Committee is subject to the provisions of Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, relating to public records, and provisions of Chapter 286, Florida Statutes, relating to public meetings.

Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, commonly known as Florida's Public Records Law, provides information on public records in Florida, including policies, definitions, exemptions, general information on records access, inspection, examination and duplication. It is the policy of the state of Florida that "all state, county, and municipal records are open for personal inspection

and copying by any person. Providing access to public records is the duty of each agency” including CareerSource Florida and the Credentials Review Committee. (Chapter 119.01, Florida Statutes).

Chapter 286, Florida Statutes, also known as Florida’s Sunshine Law, establishes a basic right of access to meetings of boards, commissions and other governing bodies of state and local governmental agencies or authorities. The law describes how boards conduct public meetings, how these meetings are noticed, who may attend, and how they may be accessed. This law also describes what records must be kept and made available to the public upon request. CareerSource Florida and the Credentials Review Committee will support best practices in organizational ethics training and implementation of federal and state transparency requirements.

### **Ethics and Public Disclosure**

Credentials Review Committee members are expected to safeguard their ability to make objective, fair and impartial decisions. Credentials Review Committee members may not accept benefits when it could be inferred by a reasonable observer that the benefit was intended to influence a pending or future decision or to reward a past decision. Credentials Review Committee members will not use the powers and resources of the committee for personal benefit or for the benefit of immediate family members.

Each member of the Credentials Review Committee including statutorily delegated members and appointees who do not otherwise have to file a financial disclosure pursuant to Section 8, Article II of the State of Florida Constitution, or Chapter 112.3144, Florida Statutes shall file disclosure of financial interests pursuant to Chapter 112.3145, Florida Statutes.

Credentials Review Committee members may be employed by organizations with existing state contracts or may contract with any of the public, private or other entities represented on the Committee. Credentials Review Committee members who have a conflict of interest relating to the authorities and powers defined in this charter made by the committee are compelled to openly disclose a potential, real, or perceived conflict as soon as the issue arises.

Credentials Review Committee members are in a conflict of interest whenever they themselves, or members of their immediate family, place of employment, business partners or close personal associates may personally benefit either directly or indirectly, financially or otherwise, from their position on the Credentials Review Committee. For the purpose of this charter and business of the committee, “immediate family” is defined as parents, stepparents, spouses or domestic partners, children, stepchildren, full or half siblings, in-laws, sibling in-laws, grandparents, great-grandparents, step-grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews and grandchildren.

Committee members are required to disclose conflicts of interest prior to any vote or other action by the committee in which business involving these interests will be discussed. Credentials Review Committee members are not required to be dismissed or otherwise not attend a meeting where such business is discussed; however, after disclosing potential conflicts, those who could benefit from a transaction must abstain from discussion and voting on the recommended action.

A conflict of interest may be real, potential, or perceived; the same duty to disclose applies to each. Full disclosure does not remove a conflict of interest. If a committee member is not certain

they are in a conflict-of-interest position, he/she may consult the ethics officer for CareerSource Florida who serves as the ethics and public records officer for the Credentials Review Committee.

All committee members shall sign an acknowledgement of the ethics and public disclosure requirements for membership on the committee. This acknowledgement is filed with the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors.

### **Chair of Credentials Review Committee**

The director of the Reimagining Education and Career Help Office shall serve as the chair of the Credentials Review Committee for the first year of the committee. After one year, the Credentials Review Committee will designate a chair by a majority vote of the committee. If this position becomes vacant during the serving chair's term, an interim chair may be appointed by the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors or the board's Executive Committee until a new chair is designated by a vote of the Credentials Review Committee.

The chair of the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors shall not serve at any time as the chair or interim chair of the Credentials Review Committee; however, members of the state workforce development board may be appointed to serve in other roles on the committee for which they are qualified.

The chair of the Credentials Review Committee shall preside over meetings and delegate tasks to the membership of the committee to fulfill the statutory obligations of the committee. Other than the specific authorities, delegations and requirements described in Chapter 14.26, Florida Statutes, Chapter 445.004, Florida Statutes, and in this charter the Credentials Review Committee and its chair shall have no obligations, policymaking authority or rulemaking ability.

### **Removal of Committee Members**

Designated or appointed members of the Credentials Review Committee may be removed for cause by the Governor. For cause includes, but is not limited to, engaging in fraud or other criminal acts, incapacity, unfitness, neglect of duty, official incompetence and irresponsibility, misfeasance, malfeasance, nonfeasance, gross mismanagement, waste, or lack of performance.

Designated members of the Credentials Review Committee who no longer serve in their statutorily designated role shall be removed from the Credentials Review Committee and the position shall remain vacant until an interim or permanent designee is selected. Appointed members of the Credentials Review Committee who no longer qualify to serve in their appointed role shall be removed and a replacement will be appointed by the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors or its Executive Committee.

### **Absences and Permanent Designees**

Appointed members of the Committee may be removed by the CareerSource Florida Board or Executive Committee if that appointed member is absent from three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the Credentials Review Committee.

Those Credentials Review Committee members who are statutorily designated members of the committee may, at the committee member's discretion, appoint a proxy or permanent designee

to serve on the committee in the committee member's absence, subject to approval by the chair of the committee. The committee members shall retain the right to attend and vote at any and all regular meetings, but the permanent designee, once accepted by the chair, may, in the committee member's absence, attend and vote at any and all meetings and such attendance and vote shall be as if the board member attended and voted for attendance and voting requirements, including, but not limited to, establishing a board quorum.

## D. MEETING SCHEDULES

### Meetings

The Credentials Review Committee shall meet at a place provided for by the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors and its administrative entity, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. The Credentials Review Committee shall hold the following types of meetings:

- **Regular Meetings.** Regular meetings of the committee shall be held on a quarterly basis each year for the purpose of producing the key deliverables and updating the Master Credentials List as described below.
- **Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the Credentials Review Committee may be called by the chair of the Committee or the chair of the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors.

### Meeting Locations and Formats

Both regular and special meetings may be held in person or use any method of telecommunications to conduct meetings, including establishing a quorum through telecommunications or webinar, provided that the public is given proper notice of the telecommunications meeting and is given reasonable access to observe and, when appropriate, participate.

### Quorum and Voting

A majority of the total current membership of the Credentials Review Committee shall constitute a quorum for a meeting of the Credentials Review Committee. A majority of the committee membership is required to organize and conduct the business of the committee.

### Notice of Meetings

Written notice shall be provided stating the place, the day and hour of said meetings of the Credentials Review Committee, and the purpose or purposes of the meeting shall be stated in the notice. Said notice shall comply with notice and procedural requirements of Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine Law and reasonable efforts shall be made to deliver by electronic mail to each member entitled to vote at such meeting not less than seven (7) nor more than 45 days prior to the date of such meeting. In case of special meetings, or when meetings are called by the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors, the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called shall be stated in the notice.

Meetings of the Credentials Review Committee may coincide with the date of regular or special meetings of the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors or the State Board of Education but may not be scheduled at the same time as meetings of the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors or State Board of Education.

All notices and agendas for meetings of the Credentials Review Committee shall be posted on CareerSource Florida's website.

## **E. OPERATIONS AND RECORDS RETENTION**

### **Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year for the Credentials Review Committee shall be July 1 through June 30.

### **Execution of Documents**

The chair of the Credentials Review Committee shall have authority to record actions of the committee, including recommendations for the Master Credentials List as approved or not approved.

### **Books and Records**

The CareerSource Florida professional team, REACH Office, Department of Economic Opportunity and the Department of Education shall provide administrative support for the Credentials Review Committee. The CareerSource Florida professional team shall keep correct and complete records of accounts and shall keep recordings of and minutes on the proceedings of the Credentials Review Committee. The CareerSource Florida professional team shall archive records of the Credentials Review Committee with the Bureau of Archives and Records Management of the Division of Library and Information Services of the Department of State.

All information pertaining to the Credentials Review Committee, the process for the approval of credentials of value and the Master Credentials List shall be made available and be easily accessible to the public on all relevant state agency websites.

Pursuant to Chapter 119, Florida Statutes and Chapter 286, Florida Statutes, all books and records of the Credentials Review Committee, except records designated as confidential, may be inspected by any person or his agent or attorney, for any purpose at any reasonable time upon request. The request shall be submitted to the chair of the Credentials Review Committee and the President of CareerSource Florida who shall designate the time and place for such inspection.

All agendas, committee meeting packets and actions of the Credentials Review Committee shall be posted on the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors website.

### **Budget and Fiscal Accountability**

The CareerSource Florida Board of Directors shall adopt a budget for the purposes of holding meetings of the Credentials Review Committee.

No funds other than those appropriated by the Florida Legislature for the purposes of administering the Credentials Review Committee or approved by the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors shall be received or allocated to the operation of the Credentials Review Committee.

All documents relating to funds received, allocated, reimbursed or associated with the Credentials Review Committee shall be retained and accounted for by the CareerSource Florida professional team. Receipts, documents, and other information pertaining to the budget and

operations of the Credentials Review Committee may be inspected in compliance with Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.

## **F. DUTIES OF THE CREDENTIALS REVIEW COMMITTEE**

### **Framework of Quality and Credentials of Value Definition**

The Credentials Review Committee shall establish a definition for credentials of value and create a framework of quality. The framework must align with federally funded workforce accountability requirements and undergo biennial review.

The criteria to determine value for nondegree credentials should, at a minimum, require:

- Evidence the credential meets labor market demand as identified by the Labor Market Estimating Conference created in Section 216.136, Florida Statutes, or meets local demand as identified in the criteria adopted by the Credentials Review Committee. Evidence must include employer information on present credential use or emerging opportunities
- Evidence the competencies mastered upon completion of the credential are aligned with labor market demand
- Evidence of the employment and earnings outcomes for individuals after obtaining the credential. Earnings outcomes must provide middle- to high-level wages with preference given to credentials generating high-level wages. To be identified as a credential of value, credentials that do not meet the earnings outcomes criteria must be part of a sequence of credentials required for the next level occupation that will meet the earnings outcomes criteria. For new credentials, these criteria may be met with conditional eligibility until measurable labor market outcomes are obtained

The Credentials Review Committee shall establish the criteria to determine value for degree programs including associate, baccalaureate and graduate degrees. These criteria shall include:

- Evidence the program meets the labor market demand as identified by the Labor Market Estimating Conference created in Section 216.136 or meets local demand as determined by the committee. Such criteria must be used to designate programs of emphasis under Section 1001.706 and to guide the development of program standards and benchmarks under Section 1004.92

The Credentials Review Committee shall establish a process for prioritizing nondegree credentials and degree programs based on critical statewide or regional shortages.

### **Master Credentials List**

The Credentials Review Committee shall develop a Master Credentials List that must, at a minimum, identify:

- Nondegree credentials and degree programs determined to be of value for purposes of Sections 1008.44 and 1011.61(1), Florida Statutes
- If the credential or degree program meets statewide, regional, or local level demand (as determined by the committee)



- The type of certificate, credential, or degree
- The primary standard occupation classification code

The Credentials Review Committee shall establish a process for:

- At a minimum, quarterly review and approval of credential applications. Approved credentials of value shall be used by the committee to develop the Master Credentials List
- Annual review of the Master Credentials List
- Phasing out credentials on the Master Credentials List that no longer meet the framework of quality
- Designating performance funding eligibility under Sections 1011.80 and 1011.81, Florida Statutes, based upon the highest available certification for postsecondary students
- Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, submitting the Master Credentials List to the State Board of Education

For the 2021-2022 school year, the Master Credentials List shall be composed of the [Career and Professional Education Act \(CAPE\) Industry Certification Funding List](#) and the [CAPE Postsecondary Industry Certification Funding List](#) under Sections 1008.44 and 1011.62(1) and adopted by the State Board of Education before October 1, 2021.

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, in cooperation with the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida and the College of Agriculture and Food Sciences at the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, shall submit industry certifications for agriculture occupations to the Credentials Review Committee to be considered for placement on the Master Credentials List.

### **CIP to SOC Linkage**

The Credentials Review Committee shall establish a process for linking Classifications of Instructional Programs (CIP) to Standard Occupational Classifications (SOC) for all new credentials of value identified on the Master Credentials List. The CIP code aligns instructional programs to occupations. A CIP to SOC link indicates that programs classified in the CIP code category prepare individuals for jobs classified in the SOC code category.

The CareerSource Florida Board of Directors shall submit approved CIP to SOC linkages to the State Board of Education with each credential that is added to the Master Credentials List.

### **FETPIP Data Elements**

Any project conducted by the Department of Education or the workforce development system that requires placement information shall use information provided through the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) and shall not initiate automated matching of records in duplication of methods already in place in FETPIP.

The Department of Education shall implement an automated system which matches the social security numbers of former participants in workforce programs and state educational and

training programs with information in the files of state and federal agencies that maintain educational, employment, and United States armed service records and shall implement procedures to identify the occupations of those former participants whose social security numbers are found in employment records.

The Credentials Review Committee shall identify all data elements necessary to collect information on credentials by FETPIP automated system under Section 1008.39.

### **Returned Value Funding Formula**

The Credentials Review Committee shall develop a returned-value funding formula as provided under Sections 1011.80(7) and 1011.81(2)(b), Florida Statutes, to allocate school district performance funds that reward student job placements and wages for students earning industry certifications, with a focus on increasing the economic mobility of underserved populations. One-third of the performance funds shall be allocated based on student job placements. The remaining two-thirds shall be allocated using a tiered, weighted system based on aggregate student wages that exceed minimum wage, with the highest weight applied to the highest wage tier, with additional weight for underserved populations. Student wages above minimum wage are considered to be the value added by the institutions' training. At a minimum, the formula must consider variables such as differences in population and wages across school districts.

When developing the formula, the committee may not penalize Florida College System institutions or school districts if students postpone employment to continue their education.

## **G. PROCESS FOR APPROVAL OF CREDENTIALS OF VALUE**

The framework of quality and rules supporting the framework are shared quarterly with all Florida school districts, educators and instructors in secondary and postsecondary education, career and technical educators, registered apprenticeship programs, the Florida College System, the State University System, independent educators, local workforce development boards and other stakeholders.

- A joint review team established by the Credentials Review Committee to include the Department of Education, Department of Economic Opportunity, CareerSource Florida professional team, and other agencies as determined by the committee, collects and reviews information submitted about credentials of value. The review team is authorized by the Credentials Review Committee to communicate with submitters and stakeholders on their behalf. The review team will follow the process established by the Credentials Review Committee to review submissions.
- The review team presents recommendations to the Credentials Review Committee in the form of an action item describing specific credentials of value that meet the framework of quality established by the committee.
- The Credentials Review Committee may, by a majority, approve recommendations in whole or in part. The Credentials Review Committee may decline or delay approval on any recommendation and send the recommendation back to the review committee to collect more information for presentation at the next quarterly meeting of the Credentials Review Committee.

- All eligible recommendations approved by the Credentials Review Committee are forwarded to the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors for consideration at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
- An action item describing all eligible recommendations approved by the Credentials Review Committee *and* any certifications on which the committee declined or delayed approval pending further information is presented to the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors.
- Recommendations approved by the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors are added to the Master Credentials List.
- The Florida Department of Education releases a preliminary Master Credentials List that includes existing and new credentials of value.
- The Master Credentials List including all certifications is submitted to the State Board of Education.
- The Master Credentials List submitted to the State Board of Education is published and shared with all Florida school districts, educators and instructors in secondary and postsecondary education, career and technical educators, registered apprenticeship programs, the Florida College System, the State University System, independent educators, local workforce development boards and other stakeholders.

## H. APPEALS

All meetings of the Credentials Review Committee will be noticed and held in a public forum. Prior to taking a vote on any matter before the committee, board members, stakeholders and the public will be given an opportunity to speak on the matter. Committee members will consider stakeholder and public comment prior to voting to approve, not approve, recommend, not recommend or give consent.

Credentials Review Committee actions or consent are recorded by the committee chair.

Original submitters of credentials of value and local workforce development boards may appeal any specific action or consent items after they are approved or not approved by the Credentials Review Committee.

Appeals may be filed with the CareerSource Florida professional team by contacting the President and Chief Executive Officer of CareerSource Florida. Appeals must be filed in writing within 15 days of the action by the Credentials Review Committee.

Appeals should describe:

- Who is making the appeal and all impacted parties
- The action of the Credentials Review Committee appealed
- Any credentials under review for consideration or reconsideration

- All applicable elements of the framework of quality and administrative rules for consideration
- Requested resolution

The President and Chief Executive Officer of CareerSource Florida will respond, acknowledging receipt of the appeal within three business days.

The President and Chief Executive Officer of CareerSource Florida will consult with the chair of the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors to decide if the appeal shall be scheduled for consideration by the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors Executive Committee.

The chair of the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors may dismiss any appeal, giving an explanation to the appellant in writing.

The chair of the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors may work with the CareerSource Florida professional team to schedule appeals for consideration by the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors Executive Committee.

Appeals presented to the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors Executive Committee include all information on the action by the Credentials Review Committee under review. The CareerSource Florida Board of Directors shall consider the appeal and may:

- Approve the appeal, rescinding the decision of the Credentials Review Committee
- Deny the appeal, upholding the decision of the Credentials Review Committee
- Remand the decision of the Credentials Review Committee back to the Committee for reconsideration at its next quarterly meeting

All decisions of the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors and its Executive Committee on decisions of the Credentials Review Committee are binding and final.

## I. REFERENCES

[Chapter 14.36, Florida Statutes](#)

[Chapter 445.004, Florida Statutes](#)

[Chapter 216.136, Florida Statutes](#)

[Chapter 1001.706, Florida Statutes](#)

[Chapter 1004.92, Florida Statutes](#)

[Chapter 1008.39, Florida Statutes](#)

[Chapter 1008.44, Florida Statutes](#)

[Chapter 1011.62\(1\), Florida Statutes](#)