

Florida's Master Credentials List Small Business and Entrepreneurial Credentials Sector Alignment

Purpose and Why It Matters

Purpose: To provide technical assistance (TA) for implementing *Section III.D, Small Business and Entrepreneurial Workforce Support Pathways*, within the [Framework of Quality](#) (FOQ). The FOQ was adopted, consistent with Florida law, by the Credentials Review Committee that includes private and public sector leaders in business, workforce development, education, and government. It provides a clear reference for understanding demand, wage, and value requirements used to evaluate credentials for inclusion on the Master Credentials List (MCL).

The primary focus of this TA is to ensure small business credentials are evaluated by their connection to industry sectors of strategic focus, demonstrating alignment of small business and entrepreneurial credentials with [Florida's Targeted Industries](#) and workforce system priorities. Credentials in this category are intended to support employers meeting the statutory definition of a small business and operating within industries that drive economic growth and workforce demand.

Why This Matters: Florida's workforce system prioritizes alignment between training, occupations, and industry demand to ensure investments produce measurable economic and workforce outcomes.

Sector alignment determines:

- Which credentials are eligible for inclusion in the Master Credentials List
- How training programs are prioritized and funded
- How career pathways are structured within industries
- How small businesses are integrated into workforce development strategies

Key Insight

Small business status alone does not determine eligibility or priority within the credential system. A credential must demonstrate alignment of the small business within a Target Industry to ensure it supports high demand occupations, employer needs, and economic growth.

Florida Statutory Framework

[Section 288.703\(6\), Florida Statutes](#), defines a small business as "...an independently owned and operated business concern that employs 200 or fewer permanent full-time employees and that, together with its affiliates, has a net worth of not more than \$5 million, or any firm based in this state with a Small Business Administration 8(a) certification. As applicable to sole proprietorships, the \$5 million net worth requirement shall include both personal and business investments." [Florida's Targeted Industries](#) are organized as both Cross-Cutting and Sector Specific industries.

Workforce and Education Alignment

Credentials must align to at least one Target Industry to ensure relevance to sectors that drive employment growth, high-wage opportunities, and Florida's long-term economic competitiveness. Small business

credentials should address industry specific skills, support occupations aligned to a Target Industry and include employer validation to demonstrate relevance and applicability within the sector.

A credential demonstrates alignment when it:

- Links directly to an industry function or occupation
- Supports a defined supply chain or operational role
- Shows employer validation or real business activity
- Demonstrates progression to higher value outcomes

Wage and Income Progression

For entrepreneurial credentials, initial earnings may fall below threshold levels. Therefore, evaluations should consider:

- Documented progression toward threshold attainment
- Evidence of scaling business operations
- Transition from individual service activity to contracted or multi-client operations

See the [Wage Growth Progression Example.docx](#) for additional guidance.

Alignment Example

Credential:
Mobile Fleet Maintenance and Logistics Support Entrepreneur Certificate

Target Industry Alignment: Logistics (Cross Cutting Target Industry)

Occupation Alignment: Heavy duty truck service provider, Fleet maintenance operator, Logistics service contractor

Component	Example
Target Industry	Logistics
Supply Chain Function	Fleet maintenance and transportation support
Entry Activity	Individual mobile repair services
Growth Activity	Contracted fleet maintenance services
Advanced Activity	Multi-client logistics service provider
Sector Contribution	Supports goods movement and reduces downtime
Wage Outcome	Progresses from below threshold to above threshold

The above credential example shows alignment with Florida’s logistics target industry by supporting critical supply chain functions, including fleet reliability, transportation continuity, and goods movement. The credential prepares individuals to provide mobile maintenance services that directly support commercial transportation operations.

Although initial earnings may not meet wage thresholds, the credential enables:

- Entry into logistics service markets

- Expansion into contracted fleet maintenance
- Increased earnings through recurring service agreements
- Contribution to supply chain stability and reduced downtime

This demonstrates alignment with Section III.D within the Framework of Quality and supports business creation and sector growth.

Aligning small business credentials to Target Industries ensures that credentials reflect the industries driving Florida's economy, support real workforce demand, align with state policy and economic development strategies, and strengthen career pathways and employer engagement.