

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

*We want to provide all the information you need to respond to our invitation to become a WorkSource site. If you have any additional questions, please send them to [questions@pacmtn.org](mailto:questions@pacmtn.org). We will update the FAQs with the answers to new questions each Friday through 8/18/17, so please check back each Monday for more information.*

### **How will PacMtn decide which sites to certify?**

In compliance with WIOA, PacMtn WDC is committed to assuring that there is a Comprehensive WorkSource Center in the region. However, based on the geography, demographics and resources and the input of the communities within the region, PacMtn WDC is looking for ways to provide flexible, community based approaches to service through its WorkSource/AJC site certification process. PacMtn WDC is committed to taking services to the community, rather than requiring community members to travel to a limited number of comprehensive WorkSource Centers. PacMtn WDC encourages applicants to think about how to partner in new ways to expand access to services and outreach to communities. The federal and state requirements for a WorkSource/ AJC Center are more extensive than those for other types of sites, and, at a minimum, include:

- Representation of the four WIOA Title programs (Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth), Title II Adult Literacy, Title III Wagner Peyser (aka Employment Services), Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation and TANF on site.
- The ability to make access to all of the 13 required partner programs available by:
  - Option 1. Having a program staff member physically present at the American Job Center;
  - Option 2. Having a staff member from a different partner program physically present at the American Job Center and appropriately trained to provide information to customers about the programs, services, and activities available through all partner programs; or
  - Option 3. Making available a direct linkage through technology to a program staff member who can provide meaningful information or services.” (TEGL 16-16)
- The development of an Infrastructure Funding Agreement that allocates the non-personnel costs of the center across all of the 13 required partners, regardless of their physical presence on the site.
- Operation during regularly scheduled hours of business (8am to 5pm, Monday through Friday) with the option to provide additional hours of service based on community needs.

Like all sites, comprehensive centers must also be physically, programmatically and technological accessibility, and fully integrated among the partners on-site. Designation as a comprehensive center does bring many additional benefit to the partners in the community, since PacMtn is committed to

providing a robust menu of services and access to all partner programs, regardless of the type of site that is certified. Designation as a center does show that a site has been able to meet all of the requirements listed above.

PacMtn WDC will consider each application for WorkSource/AJC site certification based on the content in the application in order to determine the appropriate level of certification. A review team will visit sites applying for certification as centers to assure all of the requirements are met.

Based on resources, the needs of the communities in the PacMtn region and PacMtn WDC's goals for a dynamic, community centered, highly flexible WorkSource/AJC system, it is highly unlikely that PacMtn WDC would certify more than one WorkSource Comprehensive Center. PacMtn encourages sites to explore the options for certification as affiliate and connection sites to meet these goals.

### **How will PacMtn “score” applications for certification?**

The application for comprehensive and affiliate sites have a scoring rubric to help those on site self-assess their ability to meet the certification criteria. The scoring rubric provides a 5-point scale, as follows:

- 5 = achieved the standard and excelling
- 4 = significantly meeting standard with some work yet to do
- 3 = have some of the elements in place, some of the time
- 2 = making progress but long way to go
- 1 = no progress yet

Recognizing that the certification process provides a mechanism to support continuous improvement, whenever an applicant self-scores less than a “5” the application should include a plan for improvement. PacMtn WDC provides two types of certification: full and provisional. In order to achieve full certification, a site should be in the 4 or 5 range on of the criteria, and have a clear, achievable plan with a relatively short-term timeline for addressing any item scored as less than a 4. Sites that are not at the 4 or 5 level on most of the criteria, may still be provisionally certified, if they are able to demonstrate a plan to address criteria below a 4.

Additionally, centers and affiliates will be assessed based on their ability to meet the other criteria in the application – partners on site, ability to provide career services etc. Again, PacMtn WDC may provide provisional certification for sites that do not fully meet these additional criteria, but are working to do so. Self-assessment scores will be verified for sites applying to become centers or affiliates, by a review team identified by PacMtn. The review team will have the authority to recommend the level of certification (center, affiliate or connection) as well as the type of certification (full, provisional, or not certified). PacMtn WDC encourages those completing applications to be honest and transparent in their responses. PacMtn is willing to work with sites to support continuous improvement, if the site is committed to doing so.

The scoring of criteria for connection sites is simpler, as the connections sites are scored on their commitment to put basic structures in place if these are not in place at the time of the application.

### **What is PacMtn?**

PacMtn is the five-county region that includes: Mason, Thurston, Lewis, Pacific, and Grays Harbor counties. PacMtn is a federally recognized Workforce Development Area, which means that the workforce development organizations in the region work together to support the economic

development of the region by providing an appropriately skilled workforce to meet the hiring needs of businesses.

### **What is PacMtn WDC?**

The Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council (PacMtn WDC) is a business led workforce development organization charged with overseeing the delivery of employment related services to businesses and jobs seekers in the five-county PacMtn region. As the Workforce Development Council for the region under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), PacMtn WDC is responsible for developing and implementing a regional workforce plan that brings together a broad range of employment related resources, services, and organizations into one seamless system in order to promote economic success for businesses, communities, and individuals.

### **What is WorkSource?**

WorkSource is the statewide network of organizations that provides employment related services to job seekers and businesses. WorkSource sites in the PacMtn region, certified by the PacMtn WDC, provide a variety of services to help people find, keep and progress in jobs, and to help businesses find, keep and grow employees with the right skills to be competitive in today's market. WorkSource is the federally recognized one-stop system under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

### **What is the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act?**

The Act (generally known as WIOA), which was passed in 2014, authorizes the use of federal resources for employment related activities. WIOA requires the formation of Workforce Development Councils, like PacMtn, to oversee the investment into employment related services, and the certification of sites to deliver these services throughout the U.S.

### **How is PacMtn WDC different from WorkSource?**

PacMtn WDC oversees and coordinates workforce services throughout the five-county region by:

- Investing in employment services on behalf of citizens and businesses, and
- Coordinating, aligning and continuously improving those services

WorkSource is the primary *deliverer* of workforce services in the region. WorkSource is the place where people looking for jobs or businesses looking for employees can get access to on-line and in-person employment related services

### **What is the American Job Center Network?**

The American Job Center Network (AJC) is the new name or brand for the national network of sites that offer employment related services. The name represents a single network of services offered across the United States. WorkSource is a member of the American Job Center Network.

### **Why is PacMtn WDC seeking applications for certified WorkSource sites?**

The communities and economies in the five-county region are changing. PacMtn WDC wants to make sure that WorkSource employment related services are provided how, when, and where people and businesses want them. PacMtn WDC wants to make sure that services are current and match the needs of today's economy. PacMtn WDC wants to expand the reach and relevance of WorkSource services. That is the main reason why PacMtn WDC is seeking applications for WorkSource sites – to see what creative solutions can be developed to meet community needs.

Additionally, PacMtn WDC is required by WIOA to periodically assess the quality of services and certify WorkSource sites that meet state-wide quality criteria. PacMtn WDC is combining these two efforts into  
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a single application process.

### **What is the benefit for a site to become a WorkSource Site?**

Joining the WorkSource system in the PacMtn region provides access to a broad array of services and resources to better serve existing and future customers (job seekers and/or businesses). Joining the system also allows a site to:

- ❑ Expand access to employment related services for local businesses and job seekers. This includes Title I funded staff and/or employment resources and services on behalf of customers.
- ❑ Access up-to-date technology, workforce expertise and labor market information.
- ❑ Help customers with employment related issues, increasing customer satisfaction.
- Share costs and increase efficiencies – you don't have to create it all yourself.
- ❑ Access professional development, cross-training, shared expertise and increased capacity.
- ❑ Increase competitive advantage for grants and other funding opportunities.
- ❑ Be recognized as a leader and innovator in the community.

### **Are there special qualities that PacMtn WDC is seeing in WorkSource applicants?**

PacMtn is seeking applications from organizations that have demonstrated:

- ❑ Qualities of innovation and entrepreneurship.
- ❑ A commitment to collaboration and partnership.
- ❑ Successful implementation of high quality services to their communities.
- ❑ Understanding of the workforce challenges and the needs of job seekers and businesses.
- ❑ A willingness to share resources as part of a larger network dedicated to the economic success of all citizens, businesses, and communities in the five counties.
- ❑ A willingness to expand services and help people access on-line and in-person resources.
- ❑ Commitment to our values of integrity, honesty, excellence, and mutual respect.

### **Who can apply to become a certified WorkSource site?**

PacMtn WDC will accept applications from existing WorkSource sites, as well as public and private educational institutions, non-profit organizations and for-profit organizations. Individuals cannot apply. Applicants must be able to meet the criteria identified in the applications. To review please select the application type from below:

- ❑ [Center and Affiliate Application](#)
- ❑ [Connection Site Application](#)

### **What happens to existing WorkSource sites during the application process?**

All sites – current WorkSource sites and potential new ones – will have to apply in order to use the WorkSource and the new American Job Center brands. The application process allows the partners at WorkSource and other sites to consider the services they offer and determine whether to make any changes to better meet community needs.

PacMtn WDC recently completed a Voice of the Customer survey that showed that job seekers are very satisfied with services provided by the current WorkSource sites. Through the application process, WorkSource and other sites can identify how they will continually improve services and make changes to meet the emerging needs of existing and future WorkSource customers – job seekers and businesses.

### **What does it mean to become a WorkSource site?**

Successful applicants become certified as part of the American Job Center Network. They display the WorkSource and American Job Seeker Network logos at their sites. These logos are a “seal of approval”

indicating that high-quality employment related services are available at the site. To become certified, sites must be ADA compliant and physically and programmatically accessible to the populations they serve, including making dedicated PCs/tablets or other internet connected devices and free and fast wi-fi available to customers. Staff at certified sites will be expected to participate in system-wide activities, like quarterly all system meetings and staff trainings, provide customers with access to standard in-person or on-line WorkSource workshops and services, and create strong linkages with other certified WorkSource Sites in order to access the full range of services available to job seekers and businesses.

WorkSource sites are similar to a franchise where sites have the same brand and deliver the same high-quality services. Like in other franchise situations, PacMtn WDC can provide a wealth of technical assistance, staff development, access to services and resources; including WIOA Title I funded staff and/or resources, to certified WorkSource Sites. Sites benefit from being part of a network dedicated to expanding resources to meet community needs, including opportunities to participate in grant development. With technical support from PacMtn WDC, sites will have access to up-to-date technology, workforce expertise from local and national experts, businesses engaged in PacMtn led sector development, as well as timely labor market information.

The table below shows the minimum requirements for each type of three types of sites. Sites may offer more than the minimum requirements.

Requirements	Connection Site	Affiliate Site	Center
• Physically and programmatically accessible to general public and targeted populations	✓	✓	✓
• Provide services at least during regular business hours (8-5 M-F)		✓	✓
• Provide services at least during regular, advertised hours	✓		
• Have representation of <b>two</b> or more mandated partners on site during business hours		✓	
• Have representation of <b>five</b> mandated partners (WIOA Titles I-IV, TANF) on site during business hours			✓
• Have working relationships as part of an integrated system of WorkSource sites	✓	✓	✓
• Provide Basic Career Services	✓	✓	✓
• Provide Individualized Career Services		✓	✓
• Provide Training Services		✓	✓
• Provide Business Services		✓	✓
• Provide electronic access to additional services	✓	✓	✓
• Create linkages with other WorkSource Sites and provide appropriate referrals to services	✓	✓	✓
• Collect and share data to help assure that customers at the site are progressing toward their goals	✓	✓	✓
• Engage customers in the design and review of services	✓	✓	✓
• Gather, share and use customer data for continuous improvement	✓	✓	✓
• Enter into the system wide PacMtn Memorandum of Understanding and cost sharing agreement	✓	✓	✓
• Display the WorkSource and American Job Center Network logos	✓	✓	✓

**Is technical assistance available to help me with my application?**

Yes. PacMtn WDC is interested in finding partners with a commitment to quality services and access to the community to become WorkSource sites. PacMtn recognizes that applicants may not have technical

knowledge of the federal requirements related to becoming a site, or an understanding of the full range of opportunities to partner with other service providers.

Materials, including updates to this FAQ, application forms, etc. will be posted to the PacMtn website. PacMtn will be hosting a technical assistance conference on August 20, 2017 from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. at Thurston County WorkSource, 1570 Irving Street SW, Tumwater, WA 98512, in person and via video conferencing to answer questions and provide more information about the process. Materials developed for the conference will be posted to the PacMtn website and the answers to additional questions arising from that conference will be added to this FAQ document for those who are unable to attend.

Additionally, PacMtn staff is available to organizations to discuss their ideas for becoming a site or to offer tips or referrals to community partners. To request technical assistance, please contact Corinne Daffern at [corinne@pacmtn.org](mailto:corinne@pacmtn.org).

PacMtn will also be updating these FAQs once a week through 8/18/17. If you have a question, please submit it at [questions@pacmtn.org](mailto:questions@pacmtn.org). We will provide answers to new questions each Friday.

### **What is a Memorandum of Understanding and Cost Sharing Agreement**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is an agreement among the PacMtn WDC, the Chief Local Elected Official for the region and the partners delivering services at WorkSource sites describing how they will work together to assure outcomes for job seekers and businesses. The current PacMtn MOU is available at our [website](#).

Once sites have been certified, a system budget will be developed to take into account all of the resources that partners invest to serve job seekers and businesses. A cost sharing agreement will be developed. The purpose of the cost sharing agreement is to assure that each partner contributes its fair share based on their customer use and benefit from services. Existing investments into services and sites are figured into the calculation – sites should not anticipate significant new costs to become part of the system as a result of cost sharing.

### **What is the process to become a WorkSource site?**

1. Review the FAQs and download the application and additional material at <http://www.pacmtn.org/creating-next-generation-worksource-american-job-centers/>
2. Attend the in-person and on-line technical assistance conference on August 20, 2017 prior to completing the application. The materials developed for and the answers to questions arising from the conference will be posted to the PacMtn website.
3. Forward your questions to [questions@pacmtn.org](mailto:questions@pacmtn.org) by 5:00 p.m. on 8/17/17. FAQs will be updated with the answers to new questions each Friday through 8/18/17.
4. Identify a single point of contact for the application process.
5. Identify the type of site for which you are applying (Center, Affiliate, or Connection) and complete either the appropriate application.
6. Determine whether any additional partners are needed in order to meet the criteria and work with those partners to clarify roles, responsibilities and expectations.
7. Contact Corinne Daffern at [corinne@pacmtn.org](mailto:corinne@pacmtn.org) if your site needs assistance from PacMtn WDC to complete the application process.
8. Complete and submit the application to [contracts@pacmtn.org](mailto:contracts@pacmtn.org) by 5:00 p.m. PST on 9/1/17
9. Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding and Cost Sharing Plan with PacMtn WDC and other WorkSource Partners by 12/31/17.

PacMtn WDC may ask for additional information regarding applications or may schedule a visit to an

applicant site prior to making a decision on site certification. Any site visits will be scheduled the week of 9/25. PacMtn WDC will complete the site certification process by Mid-October, and will let sites know if whether they have been fully certified, or if additional planning is needed to achieve certification. Once the site certification process is completed, PacMtn will work with sites to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding, WorkSource System Budget and Cost Sharing Agreement (described elsewhere in these FAQs).

PacMtn WDC may continue to accept requests for certification of Connection Sites on an on-going basis, throughout the year.

## **More Frequently Asked Questions**

*These questions and answers were added following the Technical Assistance Conference on 7/20/17.*

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### **What if a site wants to be certified as a center, but the review committee thinks it should be an affiliate. Who makes the final decision?**

PacMtn's review committee makes the recommendation to the PacMtn board, which makes the final decision. However, if a site is able to show that it could achieve all of the necessary criteria to be certified as a center within a reasonable timeline, PacMtn would consider provisional certification as a center, and would be willing to work with the site to achieve center status.

### **How long does certification last?**

Certification is for 3 calendar years from the date of initial certification, which is 1/1/18 for centers and affiliate sites. Center and affiliates will apply for re-certification in 2020. Connection sites may apply at any time and will apply for recertification during the center and affiliate recertification process.

Certification could be changed within the 3-year period if a site is no longer able to meet the criteria under which it was certified, or has expanded partners and/or services to meet the criteria for a different type of site.

### **Do organizations that provide services in multiple workforce regions (for example: PacMtn, SeaKing, Pierce) have to complete different application processes, or does being certified in one workforce region mean that the organization is certified in other regions?**

Certification is site specific, and is governed by the Workforce Development Council (WDC) in each workforce region. While the criteria for WorkSource Centers, Affiliates and Connection Sites are consistent across the state, each WDC may apply these slightly differently, and may have a different process and timeline for certifying sites. A WDC may only certify sites within the region for which it is responsible. It may not certify sites in a different workforce region.

### **Will training be available for staff at a site that may not be familiar with the workforce system?**

Yes. PacMtn will assure that staff at any WorkSource Site are provided with training on WorkSourcewa.com, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, WorkSource programs and services, and other topics identified through the certification process.

### **How should an organization that wants to partner with additional programs in order to apply for certification go about recruiting these partners?**

PacMtn encourages applicants to connect with additional partners needed to meet the employment needs of their customers and communities during the planning process. Organizations that need help identifying or connecting with programs that could partner with them should contact

[Corinne@pacmtn.org](mailto:Corinne@pacmtn.org).

**What are the requirements for a partner to be considered “represented” on site? How many hours do partners need to be present at centers and affiliate sites? Could centers or affiliate sites provide partner representation via skype or does it need to be in person?**

There is no set number of hours that a program provider must be on site to be “represented”, and while PacMtn encourages having partners on site, use of skype or other tools to connect customers quickly and effectively with partners is an acceptable way to achieve representation. Sites are encouraged to formalize arrangements to assure that services are available in sufficient number and for sufficiently long periods of time to meet customer needs.

**How will the system ensure quality control at affiliate and connection sites?**

Annual Equal Opportunity Monitoring is required at sites to assure that no discrimination is occurring. PacMtn, Employment Security Department and the Thurston Chamber of Commerce have formed a partnership to oversee the WorkSource System in the area, and hired a “one-stop operator” whose job it is to coordinate among the centers, assure that quality referrals are happening, identify technical assistance needs and opportunities and trouble shoot issues. PacMtn expects sites to collect, use and share customer satisfaction data on a regular basis as a way to maintain and continuously improve quality and to participate in periodic meetings, workshops and professional development opportunities. PacMtn also has 2 committees that meet on a regular basis: Tactical Implementers and Strategic Operator groups. PacMtn will explore how best to engage new sites with these groups.

**Is there "wiggle room" regarding the certification process timelines? Do all of the details have to be in place by 9/1/17 for an organization to submit an application?**

While connection sites may apply anytime, centers and affiliates must apply by 9/1/17. PacMtn has the option of providing provisional certification for sites that do not meet all of the certification criteria at the time they submit an application or recommending a different level of certification. While PacMtn encourages sites to have a solid plan in place by the time they submit an application, it is willing to work with sites that need additional time to meet all of the criteria.

**Is it possible for one organization to apply on behalf of other organizations?**

Yes. In such cases, the organizations must determine how the requirements to participate in the Memorandum of Understanding, System Budget, and Cost Sharing Agreements will be addressed. To discuss any specific situations, contact [Corinne@pacmtn.org](mailto:Corinne@pacmtn.org).

**How much space will connection sites need to provide for WorkSource activities?**

There is no minimum space requirement associated with connection sites. Connection sites are intended to provide access to services and assistance to job seekers and/or businesses who are having difficulty accessing services. Applicants are encouraged to think about how they might deploy resources that already exist at your site (staff, on-line access to information, workshop space, etc.) to best support customers who might be interested in WorkSource services. If a dedicated computer station(s), cubicle(s) or a meeting room(s) is what it takes to provide the service, then these spaces would count as part of the connection site's commitment.

**Are there any targeted populations?**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act identifies 14 targeted populations that should be served by the WorkSource system:

- Displaced homemakers.
- Low-income individuals.



- Native Americans, including Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians as those terms are defined in WIOA section 3.
- Older individuals, age 55 and older.
- Individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities, and Individuals with vision loss.
- Returning citizens (ex-offenders).
- Homeless individuals.
- Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system.
- English language learners, a group that is often referred to as Limited English Proficiency (LEP), individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers.
- Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers.
- Single parents, including single pregnant women.
- Long-term unemployed individuals.
- Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of title IV of the Social Security Act.

Sites may identify additional targeted populations, or may have more expertise in serving a particular population. However, all sites should be generally accessible to the public and not create any unnecessary barriers to serving any targeted population. PacMtn will provide training to sites to help them identify the services available in the WorkSource System to meet the needs of targeted populations.