



Florida's Ready to Work Credential Program – An Overview

Florida employers need and seek dependable, skilled workers. Florida's Ready to Work Credential program will help prepare prospective and current employees to fill that need. The information below will give you some details about Florida's Ready Work Credential and how this program will assist job seekers and employers in your community.

What is a Ready to Work Credential?

This is a credential awarded to a student who has successfully passed designated assessments. A student who has earned a Ready to Work Credential will be considered equipped with skills needed to enter the workforce.

What led to the launching of Florida's Ready to Work Program?

In 2006, former Governor Bush initiated, with the support and the leadership of Representative Pickens and other key legislators, FS 1004.99. This initiative recognizes the needs of the business community for better prepared employees.

This statute defines the Ready to Work Credential and outlines its operational parameters. The Florida legislature allocated a total of \$13,250,000 for program implementation and another \$4,000,000 for business outreach activities. It is expected that a continuing allocation to support this program will be funded in the 2007-2008 budget.

Who are the program partners?

Florida Ready to Work is funded by the Florida Legislature. There is no direct cost to participate in the program for students, job seekers, employers, schools or other partners. Florida's Ready to Work Credential program is administered by the Florida Department of Education, Division of Workforce Education, in cooperation with Worldwide Interactive Network (WIN) and the nationally recognized ACT® WorkKeys program. WIN provides the online WIN for WorkKeys® pre-assessment and skills training courseware, career database and other program support. ACT WorkKeys® provides the proctored assessment and career readiness certification.

In addition, the Florida Association of District School Superintendents (FADSS) has partnered with the Florida Department of Education, Division of Workforce Education, to bring the Florida Ready to Work program into Florida K-12 schools statewide.

Who is eligible to earn a Ready to Work Credential?

Any student or resident in the state of Florida is eligible to earn this credential.

What assessments are required to earn a Ready to Work Credential?

Mastery of three (3) WorkKeys assessments must be demonstrated

- Reading for Information
- Applied Mathematics
- Locating Information

Each assessment is scored on a scale from 3 to 7. The higher the score, the greater the participant's ability to perform more complex skills. Each assessment can be completed in less than one hour. The assessments are offered online but must be proctored and taken at a certified Florida Ready to Work testing center.

What are the three levels of Florida's Ready to Work Credential?

- BRONZE minimum score of 3 or more on all three assessment
- SILVER minimum score of 4 or more on all three assessment
- GOLD minimum score of 5 or more on all three assessment

What is the process for earning a Ready to Work Credential?

- Sign up at a participating assessment center
- Completion of the on-line pre-instructional assessment to determine mastery level
- Enrollment in self-paced tutorial course work if needed
- Completion of the proctored WorkKeys assessments
- Receipt of a Ready to Work Credential, signed by the Governor, once mastery level expectations have been achieved

Where will the Ready to Work Credential Program be offered?

The participating sites include:

- Public Schools
- Community Colleges
- Area Technical Centers
- One-Stop Career Centers
- Vocational Rehabilitation Centers
- Department of Juvenile Justice Programs
- Regional Education Consortium

How will a Ready to Work Credential benefit business partners?

This credential will demonstrate to current and future employers that students have the skills to meet employment expectations. Business partners are currently being made aware of this new Ready to Work Credential Program and are being encouraged to utilize this credential as part of their recruitment and hiring practices. Knowing a job applicant possesses a Florida Ready to Work Credential, an employer can be more confident that he/she can begin the job with the skills necessary for successful job performance.

In addition, Florida's Ready to Work Credential ensures that students have the skills necessary to enter college or the workforce based on objective, standardized skill assessments which are aligned to FCAT objectives

How may WIN/ACT-WorkKeys tools and resources be accessed?

All program tools and resources are easy to access from the Florida Ready to Work website:

www.myfloridareadytowork.com

These tools and resources include:

- Online courseware
- Online assessments
- Online Career Center database
- Florida Skills Bank, on-line access to statewide data
- Alignment of the program to FCAT and several national assessments

What are your next steps?

Make plans to have all high school juniors and seniors in your district take the Florida Ready to Work assessment this spring to help them get ready for summer employment and for college. The following are suggested plan implementation activities:

- Assign a Florida Ready to Work District Coordinator
- Inform key high school staff members about the program
- Assign a Florida Ready to Work School Coordinator at participating high schools
- Enroll District and School Coordinators participate in online Florida Ready to Work training sessions
- Notify students and parents
- Target for all high school juniors and seniors to take the Florida Ready to Work assessments by May
- Award the Florida Ready to Work Career Readiness Certificates at year-end assembly and/or graduation ceremonies

Who to contact for:

Assessment Site Information and Assistance

Ellen Zuniga
Coordinator, Ready to Work
Florida Department of Education
Division of Workforce Education
850-245-9063 or
ellen.zuniga@fldoe.org

Student or Job Applicant Questions

1-866-429-2334
ReadytoWork@fldoe.org