



Virginia Board of Workforce Development

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# Virginia Career Readiness Certificate

## 2016 Annual Report

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## **VIRGINIA CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE 2016 Annual Report**

The Career Readiness Certificate, issued by Virginia and based on ACT's WorkKeys® assessments – Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information – is a portable, evidence-based credential that provides individuals a workplace skills certification that employers can use to make reliable decisions on hiring and training. By putting the right people in the right jobs, businesses can be more productive and profitable.

Community colleges, partnering with their local Workforce Development Boards (WDB) and American Job Centers/One-Stops Centers, made connections to businesses and provided outreach efforts to continue access for individuals and employers to WorkKeys testing. In FY2016 (July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016), Virginia awarded approximately 7,140 CRCs, about a 24% decrease over the previous year's figures. This number was reported from the Virginia CRC database. The Virginia CRC database includes data for the VA CRC and the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), issued by ACT and aligns with the same three assessments and scoring as Virginia's CRC. Over the lifetime of this program, over 104,894 Virginians have received a CRC or NCRC.

Based on the criteria used to identify in-demand industry credentials adopted by the State Board of Community Colleges, the CRC/NCRC is not included as an industry credential under the new VCCS strategic plan. The community colleges continue to expand and promote the CRC/NCRC where here businesses and job seekers find value in the CRC/NCRC to measure essential workplace skills, help people build career pathways, and support employers to find and hire qualified workers.

The Virginia CRC website, hosted by the Virginia Community College System, continues to allow viewers to quickly learn about the CRC and access CRC data in Virginia and provides businesses access to examinees to help identify qualified workers in their region. Community colleges, local WIBS and American Job Centers/One Stop Centers continue to distribute marketing brochures that highlight the value of the CRC to individual job seekers and employers.

**CRC Attainment for WIOA Recipients:** In FY 2016, the 15 WDB regions in Virginia had 2,150 active participants who had earned a CRC, a very slight increase from the prior year attainment of 2,001 CRCs. The CRC attainment among the FY2016 participants was 35%.

Moving forward, the Virginia Board of Workforce Development will no longer require local workforce areas to expend Title 1 funds to meet an attainment goal for the Virginia CRC as a preparatory credential for job seekers; however, the Board acknowledges the need to respond to regional business needs and supports utilizing Title 1 funds for Virginia CRC attainment when there is demonstrated business demand for that workforce credential. Funds expended in this way on Virginia CRC attainment for participants of Title 1 programs will apply towards achieving the 40% training expenditure goal for local workforce areas.

**ACT's Certified Work Ready Community in Virginia's Southern Region:** July 2013, the Commonwealth of Virginia implemented ACT Certified Work Ready Communities (CWRC) through a local and regional economic development approach — utilizing Southern Virginia's Dan River Region as its pilot. Based on county-level education, employment rates, and population data, in mid-2013 ACT set common goals to be met by the region for the designation of "work ready." In April 2014, the Commonwealth established its criteria, in addition to ACT's common criteria, consisting of a threshold high school diploma or

equivalent attainment rate of 70% or more of working adult population. In FY2016, Greensville County joined the push by regions in Virginia toward establishing a certified work ready community.

In FY2016, Halifax and Pittsylvania became designated certified work ready counties in Virginia, meeting their goals for workers attaining the NCRC and of employers engaged with the NRCR. These two counties joined Henry County designated as a certified work ready community in FY 2015. The Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia certifies localities or regions that meet established benchmarks for these criteria.

The CWRC program works in concert with the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), issued by ACT and includes the same three assessments as Virginia's CRC, and serves as one form of evidence that a community has a skilled labor force for targeted industries. As participants in ACT's Certified Work Ready Communities initiative, Danville, Patrick Henry, and Southside Virginia Community Colleges are issuing NCRCs. The total number of NCRCs awarded in FY 2016 by DCC, PHCC, and SVCC was 1,117, 16% of all Career Readiness Certificates, including Virginia's CRCs and National CRCs, were NCRCs.

Resource:

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