

Approximate Training Timeline for IPS Certification Pilot

- July 14: Applications open
- August 15: Applications close
- September 1: Notify trainees and their managers
- October 9-13: 40-hour training in Salem
- October 16 – October 25: Field assignment and preparation for open book test
- October 26: First test
- November 7-9: State Specific Trainings
- November 16: State Specific Benefits Exam
- November 17: Provisional Certification after passing second exam
- November 20– Dec 1: Job Shadow when opportunities are available; can be ongoing and as needed
- December 2017 thru November 2018: Submission for review three BSA reports for grading
- Final Certification is given once they have passed all three reports.

WORK INCENTIVE NETWORK TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

The Department of Human Services, Work Incentive Network (WIN) is working with the Oregon Health Authority, Addictions and Mental Health (AMH) and Oregon Supported Employment Center for Excellence (OSECE) train and certify benefits counselors for Oregon's Mental Health Supported Employment Programs. The pilot project will accept 15 trainees for the first training group. It is our hope that additional pods will be trained following the full certification of the first training group.

WIN Central's training and certification program requires annual recertification for benefits counselors who have gone through WIN Central's training and certification program. The goal is to have benefits counselors who provide accurate information and who stay current with benefit and program changes.

INITIAL TRAINING

Initial training consists of 40 hours of classroom instruction provided in Woodburn at the DHS Woodburn Training Facility. The first 40 hours will be for federal and other non-Social Security Administration benefits such as HUD (housing), SNAP, TANF, Workers Comp and Veterans benefits.

Work assignments will be provided to supplement the training, as well as to evaluate how well the information is being comprehended.

FIELD-STUDY ASSIGNMENT

The trainees will be assigned a fake beneficiary/participant for services. They will be asked to help the fake beneficiary/participant through various scenarios as they navigate an employment path. The field study will test the trainee's ability to analyze and synthesize the information, policies and rules needed to provide services and a report that is accurate and understandable. The reports will be graded and 80% score is required to pass.

The trainees may ask for technical assistance and direction, but they must find the answers on their own. They will be allowed two attempts to pass. A second attempt must be taken within five business days of the first attempt.

If they don't pass after two attempts, they must begin again with the initial 40-hour training if they wish to continue the certification and training process. Once the trainees pass the field study test, they become Provisionally Certified Work Incentive Coordinators and they can begin to provide services.

FIRST TEST

A timed, open-book test will follow the 40-hour initial training. The test is an open-book format to test the ability of the trainees to research needed information, rules and policy as well as their knowledge of the various federal and local benefits programs. An 80% score is needed to pass.

The trainees will be allowed two attempts to pass the test. A second attempt is allowed within 5 business days of the first attempt. If they don't pass after two attempts, the training and certification process is terminated. WIN Central's training and certification program requires a trainee who has failed the first test to retake the initial 40-hour training before any additional testing and training will be provided by WIN Central.

STATE SPECIFIC BENEFITS TRAINING

Once the first test is passed by the trainee an additional 24-hours of training will be provided on Oregon specific benefits via an online platform.

Homework will be assigned to assist learning, as well as to evaluate comprehension of the material.

SECOND TEST

A timed, open-book test will follow the three-day training. The test is an open-book format to test the ability of the trainees to research needed information and policy as well as their knowledge of the various federal and local benefits programs. An 80% score is needed to pass.

The trainees will be allowed two attempts to pass the test. A second attempt is allowed within 5 business days of the first attempt. If they don't pass after two attempts, they must begin again with the initial 40-hour training if they wish to continue the certification and training process.

PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATION

Provisionally Certified Work Incentive Coordinators will be provided an opportunity to job shadow a seasoned, experienced WIC to observe how WIN provides direct services. This will be done locally if possible, but travel costs will be reimbursed by WIN Central if needed.

All reports for the next six months must be submitted to WIN Central for review before being disseminated to participants. There must be two contacts for technical assistance from WIN Central each week.

FINAL CERTIFICATION

Three reports for participants the WIC is serving must be submitted for grading, at least one per quarter following Provisional Certification. One report must represent a participant who is receiving SSI only; another SSDI only; and the third report is for a concurrent beneficiary. A passing grade is 80% without using Hot Docs and 90% using Hot Docs.

Provisionally Certified WICs are encouraged to ask for technical assistance and direction, but they must find the answers on their own for the graded reports. They will be allowed two attempts to pass. A second attempt must be submitted within five business days of the first attempt.

If they don't pass each report after two attempts, their Provisional Certification will be suspended. WIN Central and the WIC's manager will determine next steps. Next steps may include additional specific training to address observed issues, beginning again with the Initial Training, or termination.

Once the Provisionally Certified WIC has passed all three BSA report reviews, they will become a Fully Certified Work Incentive Coordinator. They will be certified for one year. They won't need to renew their certification for 12 months.

RECERTIFICATION

All WICs who contract with WIN must be annually certified by WIN Central. WICs who are CWIC certified by the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) must maintain that certification and any additional requirements established by WIN Central.

2017 CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

VCU requires 18 hours of approved training. WIN Central currently is only requiring current WICs to maintain their CWIC certification. WICs who are not CWIC certified were certified by WIN Central within the last 12 months.

2018-2019 CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

WICs who have a CWIC certification from VCU must maintain their CWIC certification and complete 6 hours of additional training either approved or provided by WIN Central. WICs who are not CWIC certified are required to complete the same number of hours of training required for the CWIC certification plus 6 hours of training either approved or provided by WIN Central.

Disclaimer: This is a general outline and is subject to change when necessary.