

# Credential Attainment Cohort

## What is a Cohort?

A cohort is an interactive technical assistance forum where cross-agency participants representing a combination of States and/or regions participate in the development of solutions to a specific challenge. Cohorts consist of teams of state participants who represent core WIOA programs and collaborate through an organized process to improve system integration. The cohort will work toward the following outcomes:

- The establishment of a strategy and/or plan to address the specified challenge within their own States/regions;
- The development of practical solutions to the challenge that can be disseminated to the field; and
- The creation of innovative ideas that have the potential to drive service integration and promote improved efficiencies.

Cohorts combine “team time” (within own State/region) with cross-state/regional collaboration using both virtual and in-person engagement.

### Cohort activities include:

**Kick-Off and Virtual Meetings:** These meetings provide teams with an opportunity to network and discuss efforts underway in each state and collectively across the country. The virtual sessions will occur every 2 to 4 weeks for approximately 60-90 minutes. The meeting days and times will generally remain the same throughout the Cohort. *Between virtual sessions, cohort participants will also engage with other states through a web-based platform built to facilitate and encourage discussion and information sharing.*

**Team Time:** Individual team meetings allow participants time to share thoughts and discuss next steps towards team assignment completion and/or strategy implementation. This time also allows the individual state team to learn about cross-agency programs and explore integrated approaches to addressing the specified cohort challenge.

**Wrap-Up Meeting:** The Wrap-up meeting is a virtual session that will showcase the finalized product or innovation. Cohort participants will also use this time to gain consensus on the next steps concerning its dissemination.

**Active Feedback:** Cohorts are designed to be participant-led, requiring engagement, idea sharing, and feedback throughout its process. At the cohort’s end, participants will reflect upon the process and provide insights and recommendations aimed at improving the experience for future cohorts.

## What’s This Cohort All About?

**The Goal:** *In the Credential Attainment Cohort, State teams will explore different methods for determining which degrees, certificates, certifications, and licenses qualify as credentials (according to the definition outlined within federal guidance), address common and state-specific challenges related to the indicator and develop a system-wide resource to assist states in similar efforts. The discussion, developments, and promising practices shared throughout this cohort will help to inform future federal technical assistance. States will also establish an action plan that outlines a new or enhanced process for assessing and determining which degrees, certificates, certifications, and licenses qualify as federally defined credentials.*

### **Federal Guidance on Credential Attainment**

- ◆ *“The Credential Attainment indicator measures attainment of two types of credentials: either a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.”*

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- ETA Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 10-16, Change 1, OCTAE Program Memorandum (PM) 17-2 & RSA Technical Assistance Circular (TAC) 17-01

**What's in it for my State?** Together, State Teams participating in the Cohort will develop actionable solutions to some of the common challenges around reporting on the credential attainment indicator, collecting the required data, and using the parameters established within federal guidance to determine which certifications qualify as credentials. State Teams will have the opportunity to strengthen their interagency partnerships, address outstanding questions around the indicator, share promising practices, and determine next steps for implementation of their action plans.

**How Can My State Participate?** All States are invited to apply to participate in the Cohort. See the "How Can my State Apply?" section for details on how to apply. *Applications are due by September 10, 2019.*

## Cohort Membership

- ◆ **Up to nine individual state teams will be selected to participate in this cohort.** Prior to applying, interested states must create a "State Team" that will include the following:
  - ✓ No more than six total representatives, with **one person** from each of the following programs:
    - WIOA titles I & III (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Employment Service),
    - WIOA title II (Adult Education), and
    - WIOA title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation). *In States with a separate VR agency to serve individuals who are blind or visually impaired, a representative from that agency may also be included on the State Team.*
  - ✓ State teams may also include **up to two optional** representatives of the State's choice (such as a board, WIOA partner program, agency staff member, or other appropriate state partner).
  - ✓ Chosen State teams are encouraged to include one local area representative to participate in all cohort activities
- ◆ **State Cohort Team Eligibility Criteria** – States that have established a clear delineated process for determining what qualifies as a credential, those that are still working to fulfill the statutory vision for the indicator, and states that would categorize themselves as falling somewhere in between the two categories are encouraged to apply.
  - **Mandatory Criterion** – State has submitted all PY 2017 Annual Performance Reports for Titles I, II, III, and IV in a timely manner
  - Selection criteria may also include geographic diversity, state size/population density, state organizational structure, and other criteria that may benefit the Cohort's learning environment.
  - State Teams may involve additional State and local colleagues to contribute to the relevant homework assignments, in-state working sessions and virtual discussions.

## How Can my State Apply?

Applications for Cohort participation are due by **September 10, 2019**. See the attached cohort application document for details on how to apply and then submit the required information using our [Online Application](#).

**Apply Today!**

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*If you have questions or need additional information or assistance regarding the Credential Attainment Cohort, please contact [cohorts@mahemet.com](mailto:cohorts@mahemet.com).*

## Cohort Schedule

*To view the Credential Attainment Cohort schedule, see the attached document titled “Timeline of Cohort Activities”.*