JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
55 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0055

LAURA A. FORTMAN
COMMISSIONER

MAINE WORKFORCE SYSTEM POLICY & PROCEDURES

Policy: PY 26-01C1 Maine Workforce Pell Program Determination Policy

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To: Title IV Institutions, Local Workforce Development Boards, Registered Apprenticeship Sponsors, Maine Department of Labor, Maine Department of Education, and other interested parties

From: Christopher Quint, Director, State Workforce Development Board

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PURPOSE

Maine's Workforce Pell Program Determination Policy establishes the state's process to identify, review, and recommend short-term workforce training programs for state approval under the federal Workforce Pell Grant effective July 20, 2026. The policy balances three aims: (1) align programs with high-skill, high-wage, in-demand occupational needs; (2) ensure quality outcomes (completion, placement, and value-added earnings (VAE)); and (3) provide a transparent, consistent process for institutions and learners.

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY

Maine adopts the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) Accountability in Higher Education and Access Through Demand-Driven Workforce Pell: Pell Grant Exclusion Relating to Other Grant Aid; and Workforce Pell Grants, codified by 34 CFR Parts 600,668, 690 by reference. Maine's State Workforce Development Board (SWDB), in consultation with the SWDB Workforce Pell Advisory Committee, comprised of state agency and education leaders, sets program determination criteria, administers application review, data collection, and program approval recommendations; the Maine Department of Labor's Center for Workforce Research and Information (CWRI) provides labor-market data and analysis to maintain the Priority Occupations list; and the Governor certifies programs for ED review.

Participation by eligible institutions is voluntary. To be eligible for Workforce Pell, a program must meet all Workforce Pell eligibility criteria in federal law, including, but not limited to:

- Be offered by an accredited public, nonprofit, or for-profit entity eligible to participate in student aid programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act
- Program has been in operation for at least the 12-month period immediately preceding the request for program approval.
- Program has not been subject to any suspension or emergency or termination action by the Secretary of Education during the five years preceding the date of the determination.
- Program of 150-599 clock hours delivered over at least 8 weeks but less than 15 weeks.
- Align with the requirements of high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations (refer to Appendix A for definitions).
- Meets the hiring needs of employers.
- Lead to a recognized postsecondary credential that is stackable and portable (or prepares students for employment for which there is only one recognized

postsecondary credential) and ensures that a student receives academic credit for at least one certificate or degree program at one or more eligible institutions.
- Demonstrate ⩾70% completion (within 150% of normal time) and ⩾70% placement (second quarter after exiting the program).
- Satisfy ED's value-added earnings (VAE) standard.
- Cannot be a correspondence course (this does not prevent distance education), study abroad, or a direct assessment program.
- An eligible institution may contract out a portion of the eligible workforce program to an ineligible provider, but no more than 25% of the program can be offered by the ineligible provider. That flexibility is expanded to up to 49% for the related technical instruction (RTI) of a Registered Apprenticeship program.

Eligible institutions must submit program-level data demonstrating that proposed programs align with the approved priority occupations list (refer to Appendix B) and meet all federal and state Workforce Pell requirements to obtain program approval. Workforce Pell-eligible institutions must also submit student-level data to confirm evidence that a program can meet federally defined completion rate, job placement rate, and value-added earnings standard.

This policy is authorized under Section 83002 of the Working Families Tax Cuts Act of 2025 (H.R. 1), which establishes the federal Workforce Pell Grant. It applies to Title IV-eligible, accredited postsecondary institutions operating in Maine or serving learners located in Maine.

This policy governs the state Workforce Pell program determination process, establishing criteria and procedures the state uses to review and determine whether a program is eligible for SWDB approval prior to the Governor's certification under federal Workforce Pell requirements.

It applies to credit and noncredit programs that meet federal Workforce Pell program requirements and seek state-level review. The Governor makes the final state determination and certifies approved programs to the U.S. Department of Education, which issues a final federal approval for Workforce Pell eligibility.

GOVERNANCE

Advisory Council

- Composed of representatives from the Maine Department of Labor (MDOL), Maine Department of Education (MDOE), Finance Authority of Maine (FAME), Maine Community College System (MCCS), University of Maine System (UMS) and State

Workforce Development Board (SWDB) (2 members appointed by the Chair of the SWDB)
- Advise on policy and guidance decisions including priority occupations
- Annually review program eligibility policies, priority occupations, and propose recommendations to align with State's workforce, education & economic priorities
- Consult and advise SWDB staff and board members, as needed, on program eligibility determination matters
- Appeals Review Panel will consist of sub-set of Advisory Council (non-training provider members) to review appeals from programs whose eligibility for Workforce Pell is denied or terminated. The Appeals Review Panel will include one member from the following entities: MDOL, MDOE, FAME, and 2 members from the SWDB.

Maine State Workforce Development Board (SWDB)

- *Board*: Policy & guidance approval (including priority occupation list); approve eligible programs and maintain program list
- *Staff*: Host and process program applications; validate submitted training provider data (in partnership with CWRI); share public information; package and share information with Governor's Office

Governor's Office

- Approve and certify list of eligible Workforce Pell Programs for review by the US Secretary of Education for final program approval and issue final decision on appeals process

Note: Individuals involved in program application review, assessment, approval and appeals will follow the SWDB Conflict of Interest Policy.

POLICY/PROCESS

Program Eligibility

This section outlines the key standards and definitions that will guide the certification of program eligibility under Workforce Pell.

To be eligible for Workforce Pell, a program must meet all Workforce Pell eligibility criteria in federal law (outlined in 34 CFR 690.93(a) and 34 CFR 690.94(a)(2)(i)) for at least 12 months before applying for approval. Under federal law, an eligible program must:

- Be offered by an accredited public, nonprofit, or for-profit entity eligible to participate in student aid programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act

- Have been in operation for at least the 12-month period immediately preceding the request for program approval.
- Have a duration of 150 - 599 clock hours (or the equivalent credit hours) and at least 8 but less than 15 weeks of instruction.
- Have alignment with high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand occupations or sectors.
- Meet the hiring requirements of potential employers.
- Lead to a recognized postsecondary credential that is stackable and portable (or prepares students for employment for which there is only one recognized postsecondary credential).
- Ensure that a student is eligible to receive academic credit for at least one certificate or degree program at one or more eligible institutions.
- Demonstrates a 70% completion rate (within 150% of normal time) and 70% job placement rate (second quarter after exiting the program).
- Have tuition/fees less than Value-Added Earnings (VAE) of program completers three-years prior (beginning award year 2030-2031).
- Not be a correspondence course (this does not prevent distance education), study abroad, or a direct assessment program.

Additionally, under Federal law, an eligible institution:

- Must be offered by an institution that is eligible for Title IV aid and, during the five years preceding the date of the determination, has not been subject to any suspension, emergency action, or termination of programs.
- May contract out a portion of the eligible workforce program to an ineligible provider, but no more than 25% of the program can be offered by the ineligible provider. That flexibility is expanded to up to 49% for the related technical instruction (RTI) of a Registered Apprenticeship program, Title IV institutions must have a written agreement with any non-Title IV training provider for that provider to deliver the portion of the program permitted under federal regulations.

Federal Requirements for Program Performance

In addition to setting and assessing whether programs meet definitions, Governors, or their designee, are required to ensure that programs submitted to ED for approval for Workforce Pell meet the performance requirements in the law including:

Completion Rate: A completion rate of at least 70 percent, within 150 percent of the normal time to completion.

Job Placement Rate: For the 2026–27, 2027–28, and 2028–29 award years only, a job placement rate of at least 70 percent, calculated as the percentage of students that are employed during the second quarter after exiting the program. For each award year after the 2028–29 award year, job placement rate of at least 70 percent, calculated as the percentage of students who are employed in the occupation(s) for which the program prepares students or a comparable high-skill, high wage, or in-demand occupation during the second quarter after successfully completing the program.

Value-Added Earnings: Beginning award year 2030 – 2031, programs are required to meet a median value-added earnings measure. Per federal rule, this is determined by calculating the difference between the adjusted median earnings of student completers, measured three years after exit, and 150 percent of the U.S. Federal Poverty Guidelines applicable to a single individual.

Determination Process

Federal Workforce Pell statute requires Governors, in consultation with the State Workforce Development Board, to establish a publicly available process allowing providers to request determination that their program meets specific federal Workforce Pell criteria. This process must address how the state evaluates:

- Whether the program provides education aligned with high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand sectors or occupations.
- Whether the program meets employer hiring requirements in those sectors or occupations.
- Whether the program leads to a stackable and portable credential, or where only recognized credential exists, prepares students for employment in that occupation and provides that credential upon program completion.
- Whether the program ensures students receive academic credit that will be accepted toward at least one certificate or degree program at one or more eligible institutions.

The Governor's publicly available process must include:

- The state's methodology for determining and periodically updating which occupations or sectors are high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand, and where this information will be publicly posted.
- A written policy for assessing whether programs meet employer hiring requirements in the relevant sectors or occupations.
- A written policy for determining whether a credential is stackable and portable, including documented connections for additional credentials, available data on

credential progression, real-time labor market information, and a process for employer validation.
- A written policy establishing how institutions must demonstrate that an eligible program ensures the award of academic credit that will be accepted toward a certificate or degree program at one or more eligible institutions.

The following sections outline Maine's criteria and processes for making these determinations in accordance with federal requirements.

WORKFORCE PELL PRIORITY OCCUPATIONS METHODOLOGY AND LIST

Summary

The purpose of this section is to establish a data-driven process for identifying and maintaining the list of priority occupations that meet the requirement of high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations. This methodology ensures that Workforce Pell-funded programs prepare participants for employment in occupations with the highest demand and highest potential for economic self-sufficiency.

Requirements

Maine requires Workforce Pell-eligible programs to be aligned with one or more of the occupations on a state-maintained Workforce Pell Priority Occupations List. The list reflects current and projected labor-market demand and wage opportunities, using data from the MDOL's Center for Workforce Research and Information (CWRI), including:

- High-Wage, In-Demand Occupations, 2024 data, (with additional occupations added based on available 2025 data)
- Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates. 2024 data

Criteria for Identifying Priority Occupations

An occupation may be designated as a Workforce Pell Priority Occupation for Workforce Pell if it meets all the following baseline criteria:

- In-demand occupation with average annual openings exceeding 20
- Aligned with industry sector defined in state or local economic development priorities
- Minimum of 110% state minimum wage

In addition to meeting the baseline criteria, an occupation must meet the following conditions:

- Minimum education requirement of postsecondary non-degree award or high school diploma plus significant on the job training (OJT), i.e. apprenticeship, moderate-term, or long-term training
- High-wage meaning median wage exceeds median wage of the state, based on all Maine occupations in 2023
- Aligned with at least one of the top three sectors in local workforce development areas
- Workforce Pell training length and licensure /degree requirements are aligned

OR

Occupations that are essential to the operation of Maine's supporting public infrastructure systems, such as healthcare, childcare and early childhood education, housing, transportation, broadband and digital connectivity, and community-based services; and their role in enabling labor force participation and economic growth consistent with Strategy E (Providing Supporting Infrastructure) of Maine's Economic Development Strategy, even if the occupation does not meet "high-wage" or educational requirements stated above. The typical education required for entry into the occupation must be at least a high school diploma or equivalent.

Exclusions

Occupations typically requiring a bachelor's degree or higher, or occupations typically accessible with only a high school diploma, are excluded from Workforce Pell priority designation under this policy.

The related instruction component of a Registered Apprenticeship Program, when delivered by an eligible Workforce Pell provider and meeting Workforce Pell program length requirements, automatically satisfies the federal Workforce Pell requirements for being high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand. As a result, it is not evaluated under the state's Priority Occupations methodology, and occupations not included on the Priority Occupations List (e.g., Construction Craft Laborer) may still be eligible for Workforce Pell when offered through an eligible Registered Apprenticeship Program.

Maintenance

Aligned with current MDOL/SWDB Competitive Skills Scholarship (CSSP) processes, SWDB will update the Workforce Pell Priority Occupations list at least biennially; SWDB approves and posts the public list (appended to CSSP list) and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP)/Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) crosswalk.

Petition

To request that a new occupation be added to the Workforce Pell Priority Occupation List, an individual may submit a petition letter to the State Workforce Development Board Director. The petition must demonstrate that the proposed occupation sufficiently aligns with the criteria outlined in the Workforce Pell Determination Policy (e.g., in consultation with one of Maine's three local workforce development boards, evidence of alignment with demand via job openings, etc.). After submission, the State Workforce Development Board will review the petition.

The State Workforce Development Board will evaluate and determine whether the supporting evidence submitted for the occupation sufficiently aligns with the criteria in the Workforce Pell Priority Occupation Methodology and List Section of the Maine Workforce Pell Program Determination Policy.

Workforce Pell Priority Occupations List

Refer to Appendix B

WORKFORCE PELL EMPLOYER VALIDATION

The purpose of this section is to establish a consistent process for validating that Workforce Pell-eligible programs align with verified employer hiring needs in priority occupations. This requirement ensures that Workforce Pell-funded programs prepare participants for employment in occupations for which the program prepares students for a comparable high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand occupation.

Requirements

The state requires Workforce Pell-eligible programs demonstrate alignment with employer hiring needs for priority occupations through completion of a standardized Employer Validation Form. This form must document employer demand, confirm that the credential is recognized by employers in the occupation, and verify that the program's curriculum delivers the competencies required for employment and consistent with the intent of the recognized postsecondary credential.

Criteria for Employer Validation

To meet Workforce Pell employer validation requirements, providers must submit a completed Employer Validation Form for each Workforce Pell-eligible program.

The form documents employer confirmation that:

- The program prepares participants for employment in a priority occupation.

- Employers are currently hiring or anticipate hiring for the occupation.
- The skills, competencies, and credentials taught in the program align with employer expectations,
- Employers must complete the required form and provide signatures verifying the information. Workforce Pell-eligible providers are responsible for coordinating with employers and ensuring the completed form is submitted.

Employer Representation Standards

Employer validation should **primarily be provided through employer-led or industry-based entities**, such as:

- Industry associations;
- Sector partnerships (as defined by the SWDB);
- Program advisory boards with significant business representation (e.g., community college, or university); or
- Other employer-led industry groups.

These entities must represent employers that:

- Have current or projected hiring demand in the occupation(s) associated with the program; and
- Reflect the relevant regional or industry labor market served by the program.

If validation through an employer-led entity is not feasible, programs may instead provide validation from a **minimum of three Maine-based employers** that meet the same criteria above.

All validation—regardless of source—must include supporting documentation.
Documentation may include, but is not limited to:

- Industry-defined career pathways with credential requirements published on Work Source Maine, or other industry-defined career pathway framework (documentation required);
- Registered apprenticeship schedule of work: The related instruction component of a Registered Apprenticeship Program, when delivered by an eligible Workforce Pell provider and meeting Workforce Pell program length requirements, automatically satisfies the federal Workforce Pell requirements meeting employer hiring needs;
- Employer hiring standards or published occupational qualification requirements;
- Competency or curriculum alignment materials;

- Formal endorsement letters from employers (if submitting the validation form from an industry-led group); and
- Sector partnership, industry association or advisory board meeting minutes reflecting employer participation and curriculum review.

WORKFORCE PELL STACKABILITY, ARTICULATION TO CREDIT, AND PORTABILITY

The purpose of this section is to establish criteria and processes for determining whether a credential is stackable and portable for Workforce Pell eligibility. This requirement ensures that Workforce Pell-funded programs and credentials support career progression, continued skill development, and employment mobility aligned with labor market demand.

Requirements

To be eligible for Workforce Pell a program must lead to a recognized postsecondary credential, defined as a credential consisting of an industry recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of a Registered Apprenticeship under 29 CFR part 29, a license recognized by the State or Federal Government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

Workforce Pell-eligible programs must demonstrate that their programs lead to additional credentials, including credit-bearing pathways, and have broad employer recognition that supports advancement within a career pathway. The state will consider multiple forms of evidence, including but not limited to institution-provided evidence, labor market information, academic program stackability (including but not limited to articulation agreements), and employer validation.

Criteria for Stackability & Articulation to Credit

Programs may be determined to be stackable if there is evidence of alignment to additional credentials that can be accumulated over time to move individuals along an industry-defined career pathways or up a career ladder to different and potentially higher-paying jobs, unless the program prepares students for employment in an occupation for which there is only one recognized postsecondary credential and provides that credential upon completion[1].

Workforce Pell-eligible programs must demonstrate that, upon completion of the program and enrollment in a related certificate or degree program, a student will receive academic credit toward at least one certificate or degree program at one or more eligible institutions.

The evidence must demonstrate that the credential is stackable by showing alignment to additional credentials at the originating institution or another institution of higher education participating in Title IV federal student aid programs. This includes demonstrating that the program or credential is eligible for transcripted academic credit applicable to a higher-level certificate or degree program and/or is accepted in transfer toward specific credential or program requirements. Credits earned through an eligible program may be applied toward general education, elective, or core program requirements. Evidence may include, but is not limited to, articulation or transfer-of-credit agreements, catalog and curricular documentation as evidence of internal stackability, consortium or partnership agreements, registered apprenticeship schedules of work, official transcripts or academic program documentation showing the award and application of credit, or other similar formal arrangements.

Articulation agreements, or other similar agreements, must ensure that a student receives academic credit for the program for at least one certificate or degree program at one or more eligible institution. The articulation agreement, or other similar agreements, should delineate which institution(s) accept(s) credit for the program applying and how many credits each program completion will translate into and be fully executed for 12 months prior to the date of application. The SWDB will evaluate submitted documentation to determine whether the evidence satisfies the standard.

[1] Programs that prepare students for employment in an occupation for which there is only one recognized postsecondary credential must still provide evidence that a student, upon completion of the program and enrollment in a related certificate or degree program, will receive academic credit toward at least one certificate or degree program at one or more eligible institutions.

Criteria for Portability

A postsecondary recognized credential is considered portable when it is recognized and accepted as verifying the qualifications of an individual in other settings. A credential may be determined to be portable if one or more of the following are documented:

- **Multi-employer recognition**: Documentation that the credential is required or preferred by multiple Maine-based employers within the occupation, as evidenced through Workforce Pell employer validation requirements (see above).
- **Industry-recognized status**: Evidence that the credential is issued or endorsed by a nationally or regionally recognized industry body or appears in recognized credential frameworks or registries (e.g., inclusion in the American Council on Education National Guide, Credential Engine, national certification bodies, or other validated industry sources).
- **Labor market alignment**: Evidence that the credential is directly aligned to an occupation identified as in-demand within state or regional labor market information (LMI), and is recognized by employers as a standard or required credential for entry or advancement in that occupation (e.g., Certified Nursing Assistant credential for nursing assistants; Commercial Driver's License for heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers).
- **Transferability of competencies**: Evidence that the competencies associated with the credential are in-demand across multiple employers or occupations, as demonstrated through aggregated job posting data, occupational frameworks, or industry skill standards.
- **Licensure or regulatory recognition**: Evidence that the credential is recognized toward meeting state or national licensure requirements or is required/accepted for practice in the occupation.

Evidence and Data Sources

In making stackability and portability determinations, the state may consider:

- Real-time and longitudinal labor market information (LMI), including employment projections and job posting analytics, to assess alignment with in-demand occupations and the extent to which credentials are recognized as standard or required for employment in those occupations;
- Employer validation submitted under the Workforce Pell Employer Validation section, including evidence of multi-employer recognition and demand for the credential within the relevant occupation or industry sector;

- Provider-submitted documentation of career pathway alignment, including evidence that the credential is part of a sequenced pathway of education and training that enables progression to higher-level credentials or degrees, such as a career pathway published on Work Source Maine, or other industry-defined career pathway framework (documentation required);
- Evidence from a Community College or other higher ed Advisory Board, including validation of occupational alignment, industry relevance, and the credential's role within established education and workforce pathways.

WORKFORCE PELL PROGRAM DETERMINATION PROCESS

The Workforce Pell Program Determination Process establishes how programs are submitted, reviewed, approved, and published for Workforce Pell Grant eligibility. This process ensures transparency, consistency, and timely access for institutions, students, and employers. Participation in Maine's Workforce Pell Program is entirely voluntary.

Submission Window

Maine will accept applications on a rolling basis, with quarterly eligibility determination cycles. Institutions should refer to the Maine Workforce Pell Application Schedule on WorkSourceMaine.com to confirm the window for when the quarterly eligibility determination cycle will close for each quarter.

Submission Requirements and Review

Institutions should complete the Workforce Pell application and upload the following required documents for **each program** applying for Workforce Pell:

- Data Submission Template
- Evidence of portability and employer alignment, including signed Maine Workforce Pell Employer Validation form/s and supporting evidence provided by the institution
- Evidence of stackability and eligibility for articulation to credit
- Copy of the written agreement, if partnering with a non-Title IV provider

After submission, the staff of the SWDB will conduct an initial completeness and eligibility review of applications. SWDB staff will not advance applications that are incomplete.

SWDB staff will consult with the Advisory Council, as needed, during the initial eligibility review on matters requiring their expertise. Once initial eligibility requirements are reviewed and summarized by SWDB staff, the SWDB will evaluate and provide quarterly recommendations to the Governor's office for certification of approved programs.

GOVERNOR'S CERTIFICATION AND SUBMISSION

State Certification

The Governor, in consultation with the SWDB, must certify eligible programs. Upon approval of eligible programs, the Governor's office will provide the completed certification form to the institution. Institutions should refer to instructions provided in the Federal Student Aid Electronic Announcement GENERAL-26-44. Institutions must notify the SWDB when the ED issues its determination at workforcepell.dol@maine.gov.

Public Posting

The SWDB will publish the current list of Maine certified Workforce Pell programs quarterly on WorkSourceMaine.com, within 30 days after the ED's final approval of the Governor certified program list. Published information will include the program name, provider, credential type, CIP/SOC alignment, tuition and fees, and other disclosures required by state or federal law.

Program Modification

Per federal rule, institutions may make routine updates to a Workforce Pell-eligible program to maintain alignment with current industry standards, employer needs, and regional workforce demands. Routine curricular modifications that do not change the program's approved credential, program length, occupational alignment, or core competencies do not require submission of a revised Workforce Pell application.

Institutions must notify the SWDB of any substantive program modifications that may affect Workforce Pell eligibility. The SWDB may require the institution to submit updated documentation or a revised application to determine whether the program continues to meet Workforce Pell eligibility requirements.

Program Ineligibility & Removal

Consistent with federal law, the Governor may decline to certify a program or may withdraw certification at any time. A program's state certification also expires upon the expiration of the eligible institution's Program Participation Agreement (PPA), the agreement between an eligible institution and the U.S. Department of Education required under Title IV of the Higher Education Act that authorizes the institution to participate in federal student aid programs. Similarly, the U.S. Department of Education may remove a program from federal Workforce Pell eligibility if it does not meet verification requirements, outcome metrics, or other federal standards.

The SWDB will update the public posting within 30 days of any program being removed from eligibility due to state or federal action.

Appeals Process

An institution whose Workforce Pell Program's eligibility is found to be ineligible or removed will have 15 calendar days from the date of that determination to submit an appeal in writing to the voting members (non-training provider members) of Maine's Workforce Pell Advisory Committee which will serve as the Appeal Review Panel. The institution must specify the reasons they believe the denial is not justified, including evidence and documentation pertaining to the program that supports the appeal.

The Appeals Review Panel will provide its recommendation to the Governor's Office and a final decision will be made by *the Governor's Office* within 60 calendar days of receipt of the appeal.

The Appeals Review Panel and the Governor's Office will only review the information submitted by the institution in writing in making the final decision. The institution should ensure all necessary information is included with its appeal.

All appeals must be forwarded, via email, to the following address: Christopher.Quint@maine.gov.

The Appeals Review Panel and the Governor's Office does not have the ability to issue exceptions to the law, regulations, or policies governing Maine's Workforce Pell Grant Program, and such appeals will not be accepted. The Governor's Office will notify USDOL and ED within 15 calendar days of the final decision to withdraw approval of an eligible workforce program.

Annual Outcomes Reporting

Title IV Providers must submit program and participant- level inputs required to inform job placement rates, completion rates, and the Value-Added Earnings calculation to the SWDB by the state deadline on an annual basis. The SWDB will compile and transmit the program list and supporting data for Governor certification to align with ED's verification timelines.

Bilateral Agreements

The Governor, in consultation with the SWDB, may enter into a bilateral agreement with a Governor from another state that allows residents in Maine to enroll in a distance-education program offered in another state outside of Maine.

Before entering into a bilateral agreement, the Governor, in consultation with the SWDB, must confirm that the out-of-state program prepares students for a job that appears on the

Maine Workforce Pell Priority Occupations List. The program must also be officially recognized as an eligible Workforce Pell program in the state where it is offered.

The bilateral agreement between the two states must be published publicly. In Maine, it will be posted on WorkSourceMaine.com so residents can easily find it.

The agreement must also include a plan for sharing data between the states. This data sharing is necessary to calculate the program completion and job placement rates.

INQUIRIES

State Workforce Development Board

workforcepell.dol@maine.gov

The Maine Department of Labor provides equal opportunity in employment and programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available to individuals with disabilities upon request. Please contact us at 207-621-5165 or swb.dol@maine.gov should you require accommodations or alternative format for materials.

Appendix A: Definitions

Adjusted Median Earnings: The median earnings of Pell Grant recipients measured three years after program exit, adjusted using regional price parity based on where the institution is located.

Career Pathways: WIOA Sec. 3(7) defines Career Pathways to mean a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that: a. aligns with skill needs of industries in the state or regional economy b. prepares an individual to succeed in secondary or postsecondary education options c. includes counseling to support the individual's education and career goals d. includes education offered concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation and training in specific occupation or occupational cluster e. organizes education, training and other services to support the particular needs of an individual to accelerate their educational and career advancement f. enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent g. helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Eligible Students: A student is eligible to receive a Workforce Pell Grant if the student meets all applicable eligibility requirements for a Federal Pell Grant under Title IV of the Higher Education Act. To receive Title IV aid, a student must not be enrolled in elementary or secondary school. The student must be enrolled in an eligible workforce program and must not be enrolled in, accepted for enrollment in, or have completed a program of study at the graduate level or obtained a graduate credential.

Eligible Workforce Program: A program offered by a Title IV–eligible institution, consisting of 150–599 clock hours, delivered over at least 8 weeks but no more than 15 weeks, that meets Governor-approved, federally defined quality requirements. This definition includes Prison Education Programs (PEP) that meet all applicable federal requirements.

Eligible Institution: An institution is a Title IV-eligible, accredited postsecondary institution authorized to operate in Maine or serving learners located in Maine and offers one or more programs meeting federal requirements.

Essential Occupations: Occupations that are critical to the operation of Maine's supporting infrastructure systems—such as healthcare, childcare and early childhood education, housing, transportation, broadband and digital connectivity, and community-based services—and their role in enabling labor force participation and economic growth, consistent with Strategy E (Providing Supporting Infrastructure) of Maine's Economic Development Strategy.

Portable Credential: A credential is considered portable when it is recognized and accepted as verifying the qualifications of an individual in other settings— such as other

geographic areas across the country, other educational institutions, or other industries or employers.

Recognized Postsecondary Credential: A credential consisting of an industry recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of a Registered Apprenticeship under 29 CFR part 29, a license recognized by the State involved or Federal Government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

Sole Recognized Postsecondary Credential: A credential shall be considered the sole recognized postsecondary credential only where completion of the credential is required by statute, regulation, licensing authority, or governing occupational standard and no alternate postsecondary credential is required to qualify an individual for entry into employment in the occupation. SWDB will evaluate submitted documentation to determine whether the credential satisfies this standard.

Stackable Credential: A credential that prepares students to pursue one or more certificate or degree programs at one or more institutions of higher education (which may include the eligible institution providing the program).

Value-added earnings (VAE): Adjusted median earnings three years after completion minus 150% of the Federal Poverty Guideline; published tuition/fees must be <VAE (beginning 2030-31 award year)

Appendix B: Workforce Pell Priority Occupations List

Meets Criteria 1: High-wage, High-skill, In-demand Occupations	
SOC Code	**Job Title**
47-2021	Brickmasons and Blockmasons
47-2031	Carpenters
51-9124	Coating, Painting, and Spraying Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders
15-1231	Computer Network Support Specialists
51-9161	Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Operators
15-1232	Computer User Support Specialists
53-7021	Crane and Tower Operators
31-9091	Dental Assistants
47-2111	Electricians
51-9041	Extruding, Forming, Pressing, and Compacting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders
512051	Fiberglass Laminators and Fabricators
29-2099	Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics
47-2132	Insulation Workers, Mechanical
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses
51-4041	Machinists
49-9043	Maintenance Workers, Machinery
173013	Mechanical Drafters
49-9044	Millwrights
51-9023	Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders
47-2073	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators
51-4072	Molding, Coremaking, and Casting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic
519196	Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders
29-2043	Paramedics
47-2071	Paving, Surfacing, and Tamping Equipment Operators
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters
29-2034	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians
49-9096	Riggers
51-9012	Separating, Filtering, Clarifying, Precipitating, and Still Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders
47-2211	Sheet Metal Workers
47-2022	Stonemasons
47-2221	Structural Iron and Steel Workers
51-2041	Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters
29-2055	Surgical Technologists
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers

Meets Criteria 2: Essential, In-demand Occupations	
SOC Code	**Job Title**
49-3011	Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics
49-3031	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists
53-3051	Bus Drivers, School
53-3052	Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity
53-5021	Captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels
39-9011	Childcare Workers
29-2010	Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians
21-1094	Community Health Workers
47-4011	Construction and Building Inspectors
49-9051	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers
29-2042	Emergency Medical Technicians
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers
53-1047	Firstline Supervisors of Transportation & Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisor
47-4041	Hazardous Materials Removal Workers
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides
31-9092	Medical Assistants
31-1131	Nursing Assistants
49-9062	Medical Equipment Repairers
29-2072	Medical Records Specialists
29-2057	Ophthalmic Medical Technicians
29-2081	Opticians, Dispensing
49-3053	Outdoor Power Equipment and Other Small Engine Mechanics
39-9099	Personal Care and Service Workers, All Other
29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians
31-9097	Phlebotomists
25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education
29-2053	Psychiatric Technicians
49-2021	Radio, Cellular, and Tower Equipment Installers and Repairers
21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants
21-1018	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary
49-2022	Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers
49-9052	Telecommunications Line Installers and Repairers
51-8031	Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and System Operators