Alabama Community College System
Adult Education Division

Policies and Operating Procedures Manual

Alabama Community College System | Adult Education Division
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Preface

The Alabama Adult Education Policies & Operating Procedures Manual establishes the policies, procedures, and operational requirements governing adult education services funded through the Alabama Community College System (ACCS). All ACCS-funded adult education personnel are responsible for understanding and complying with the requirements contained in this manual.

This manual is designed to ensure consistency, accountability, compliance, and quality service delivery statewide. Topics include student eligibility, assessment, instruction, performance accountability, and other operational requirements.

Because federal and state laws, regulations, and program requirements may change, this manual is reviewed and updated annually by the ACCS Adult Education Division (AED). Users should consult the electronic version of this manual and related resources for the most current guidance. For updates to Adult Education Program Memoranda, policy guidance, and other official communications, users should regularly visit the ACCS Adult Education Program Memoranda Webpage.

Questions, corrections, or recommendations may be directed to adultedinfo@accs.edu.

The Alabama Community College

The Alabama Community College System (ACCS) is Alabama's gateway to world-class, affordable education and technical training for the necessary skills to compete in a constantly evolving workforce. The system consists of 24 community and technical colleges, in addition to the Alabama Training Network (ATN) and the Innovation Center's Skills for Success training, serving as Alabama's largest educational and training entity.

The Alabama Community College System's commitment to access is characterized by statewide geographical locations, open enrollment, and low-cost tuition, as well as a variety of programs and services that remove barriers to college entrance, education pathways, and workforce training opportunities. Thousands of citizens statewide enjoy access to our facilities for community activities and enrichment programs.

The Alabama Community College System Board of Trustees serves as guardians of the ACCS mission, vision, and values. Governor Kay Ivey serves as chair of the Board by virtue of elected office. Longtime educator, Chancellor Jimmy H. Baker is in direct leadership of the Alabama Community College System.

Mission
To provide a unified system of institutions dedicated to excellence in delivering academic education, adult education, and workforce development.

Vision
To develop an educated, prosperous population by providing an affordable pathway to help citizens of any walk or stage of life succeed through quality education and training; a community college system where education works for all.

Values
- Integrity
- Excellence
- Accessibility
- Accountability
- Diversity

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The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act

The ACCS Adult Education Division (AED) is accountable to the State of Alabama and the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) and is mandated to improve the educational status of adult Alabamians. OCTAE administers and coordinates programs that are related to adult education and literacy, career and technical education, and community colleges.

OCTAE's Adult Education and Family Literacy Division is responsible for enabling adults to acquire the basic skills necessary to function in today's society so that they can benefit from the completion of secondary school, enjoy enhanced family life, attain citizenship, and/or participate in job training and the workforce. OCTAE's adult education and literacy initiatives are to:

- Administer the adult education formula grant program to the States
- Assist states with improving program quality, accountability, and capacity
- Establish national leadership activities to enhance the quality of adult education

Adult Education Programs Under AEFLA

The purpose of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) is to create a partnership among the federal government, states, and localities to provide adult education and literacy activities to:

(1) Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency;
(2) Assist adults who are parents or family members to obtain the education and skills that are necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children and lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their family;
(3) Assisting adults in attaining a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and in transitioning to postsecondary education and training.
(4) Supporting this transition through career pathways that connect; and
(5) Assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in improving their reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills in English and Mathematics; and acquiring an understanding of the American system of Government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship. (Authority: 29 U.S.C. 3271)

Instructional Approaches Under AEFLA

Adult education programs funded under AEFLA should provide data-informed, contextualized, standards-based, and career-focused instruction that supports students in making measurable progress toward educational advancement, employment, postsecondary education or training, and other identified goals. Instructional approaches may include, but are not limited to:

- **Standards-Based Instruction:** Instruction aligned to Alabama Courses of Study for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies and, when applicable, English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS). Standards alignment must be reflected in the student's Plan of Instruction (POI) and should inform lesson planning, instructional activities, and assessment.

- **Contextualized Instruction:** Instruction that connects foundational academic skills - including reading, writing, mathematics, language, and problem-solving – to authentic academic,

workplace, career, and everyday life contexts. Contextualized instruction should help students understand the relevance and application of the skills they are learning.

- **Integrated Education and Training (IET):** Concurrent and contextualized instruction that integrates adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training. IET courses should be aligned with established career pathways and should be responsive to local workforce needs and labor market information.
- **Career Pathway and Transition Support:** Instruction that prepares students for the successful transition to postsecondary education, occupational training, employment, or advancement along a career pathway. Instruction may include bridge and transition activities that address academic, workforce, and college readiness skills.
- **Credential and Postsecondary Preparation:** Instruction and support that prepares students to earn recognized credentials, transition to postsecondary education or training, and obtain or advance in employment. Credentials and training opportunities should be connected to identified career pathways and labor market demand.
- **Data-Informed and Individualized Instruction:** The use of formal and informal assessment data to identify student strengths and instructional needs, establish measurable learning goals, group students appropriately, select instructional strategies, and regularly update the student's POI.
- **Career Readiness & Employability Skills Integration:** Incorporating career readiness skills, including communication, critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, digital literacy, workplace behavior, civics literacy, AI literacy, financial literacy, career exploration, resume development, job applications, interviewing, and other skills identified through student goals and workforce needs, throughout instruction rather than treating them solely as a separate component. Alabama's POI guidance identifies career readiness skills as part of the instructional plan and references the U.S. Department of Education's Employability Skills Framework.
- **Technology-Enhanced Instruction:** The use of appropriate technology and digital learning resources to strengthen academic skills, financial literacy, AI literacy, digital literacy, career readiness, and access to instruction. Technology-based learning should support identified student learning objectives and be appropriately documented according to program requirements.

Actions Prohibited Under AEFLA

- **Charging Fees for AEFLA Funded Activities:** Programs are prohibited from charging students or employers for instructional or other services that are covered by state and federal adult education funds.
- **Providing Classroom Instruction in a Language Other Than English:** Although states may count the passing of a state-recognized, non-English high school equivalency examination as an outcome under the MSG and credential indicators while meeting certain conditions, local providers cannot use AEFLA funds to routinely provide classroom instruction in a language other than English.

Alabama Adult Education Program Design

Programs funded through the ACCS Adult Education Division (AED) must:

- Provide year-round, free and direct instructional services to eligible adult students
- Operate multiple sites in the service area based on student demand, demographic data, and community support
- Execute the program in the most efficient manner for maximizing resources, while demonstrating effectiveness
- Administer services to the entire service area stipulated in the multi-year subgrant
- Provide structured, scheduled, instructor-led learning opportunities resulting in successful student and program outcomes

All local programs must incorporate the following elements into their service delivery models:

- Orientation
  - Onboarding
  - Student eligibility determination
  - Goal setting
  - Career interest inventory
  - Student commitment and conduct guidelines
  - Partner eligibility determination
- Assessments
- Flexible schedules
- Alternative instructional options
- Intensity and duration of services

Orientation

All incoming adult education students must participate in new student orientation. A thorough orientation process helps to ensure that students understand the education, training, and supportive services that are available to them in relation to their career goals, while also ensuring that expectations regarding learner commitment are communicated.

Programs have the flexibility to design their orientation sessions in a manner that best meets the needs of their populations. This may include centralized and/or individualized orientations scheduled on a daily or weekly basis. Although there is flexibility for each local program to design its own orientation, the required elements are listed below.

1. Onboarding

Onboarding is the student's introductory process to the adult education program. All required forms are completed, and necessary documents are collected and reviewed to ensure the student meets eligibility requirements during onboarding.

2. Student Eligibility Determination

Determining if a student is eligible for adult education services takes place during orientation and is based on the following factors. Eligible students are those who:

- **Citizenship |** Are U.S. citizens or who are lawfully present in the United States

- **Residency |** Are Alabama residents, work in Alabama, or have been referred to an Alabama adult education program by a career center or other agency (i.e., for programs in

state border counties).

- **Minimum Age |** Alabama children between the ages of 7 and 17 are required to attend public school, private school, church school, or be taught at home by a private tutor. Therefore, individuals aged 16 and 17 who request to enroll must submit the documentation below to the adult education program prior to enrollment:

    - Documents Required for Students Aged 16
        - Proof of Alabama residency
        - Proof of withdrawal from educational coursework
        - Parent permission

    - Documents Required for Students Aged 17
        - Proof of Alabama residency
        - Proof of withdrawal from educational coursework **or** parent permission

    Documents must be kept on file for five years. Anyone currently enrolled in high school is ineligible for enrollment.

- **Unenrolled from Secondary School** | Individuals who are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law

- **No Secondary Diploma or Equivalent** | Do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent

- **Minimum Scores** | Have earned a high school diploma or equivalent but score at or below the NRS Level 6 maximum on an approved assessment - TABE Math, Reading, or Language below 800; ACT WorkKeys™ Applied Math or Workplace Documents below 90 - to be eligible for services.

- **Basic Skills Deficiency |** Are basic skills deficient or lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to enable the individual to function effectively in society

- **English Language Deficiency |** Are unable to speak, read, write, or comprehend the English language

- **Educational Functioning Level |** A student's educational functioning level is determined through an approved assessment administered during orientation. An educational functioning level should be determined within 12 hours of participation in the program.

- **Proof of Residency |** All individuals who request to enroll in an adult education program must provide proof of residency. Examples of proof of residency are as follows:
    - Alabama driver's license, driver's permit, or non-driver's ID
    - Alabama employer-issued ID Card
    - Verification of employment from an Alabama employer, such as a paycheck stub or written verification letter
    - Employee photo ID from any government-related entity within the state of Alabama
    - Student photo ID from a public or private college, university, or high school within

the state of Alabama
- Photo ID card issued by Alabama Department of Corrections
- Referral by a career center (for programs in state border counties only)
- Sworn affidavit of residency
- Utility bills, lease agreements, etc.

NOTE: Individuals with an F-1 Visa (student visa) status are ineligible for services and shall "not be accorded a course of study in a publicly funded adult education program." [U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act (Sec. 1101a (15)(F)(1).]

3. Goal Setting

Goal setting is the process whereby students meet with instructors or an orientation counselor to help identify and set objectives for instruction. It is strongly recommended that this takes place during orientation.

The goal-setting process should help students set both a realistic timeline for attaining each goal and a means for determining whether the goal is achieved. Since students often change their goals after they begin instruction, it is recommended that goals are revisited periodically to ensure that instruction is aligned with student goals. Goal setting should clearly help students and instructors understand educational and employment objectives.

4. Career Interest Inventory

All students will be given the opportunity to identify a career pathway during orientation. Programs will administer a career interest inventory to each enrolled student and maintain documentation of completion in the student file. The student's POI should align with the skills, education, and training needed to pursue the identified career pathway.

5. Student Commitment and Conduct Guidelines

Student commitment and conduct guidelines should be created at the local program level and communicated to students during orientation. This should include a student discipline policy in the event the student does not follow conduct guidelines.

6. Partner Eligibility Determination

Partner eligibility determination is the process used to verify that an individual qualifies for Adult Education services provided through partnerships with programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Refer to the AED DHR Programs Manual for additional information regarding partner eligibility requirements and procedures.

Assessments

See Assessment Policy Guidelines.

Flexible Schedules

Morning, afternoon, and evening classes should be offered as needed.

Alternative Instructional Options

Alternative instructional options – i.e., online, classroom, convenient locations – based on student demand.

Intensity and Duration of Services

Sufficient intensity and duration of services for learning to occur as determined by at least six hours of classroom instruction made available per week, which allows for sufficient instructional time to meet the post-assessment policy.

Instructional Requirements

OCTAE requires states to establish guidelines ensuring that programs are of sufficient intensity and duration to allow participants to achieve substantial learning gains and attain educational or employment credentials.

Category	Description
Qualified Instructors	Classes must be taught by instructors who are degreed or certified in the content area that they are teaching and/or who have gone through the Alabama Adult Education Teacher Academy.
Lesson Alignment	Lesson plans must be aligned with the Alabama Courses of Study for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.
Minimum Hours	At least six hours of classroom instruction must be made available per week, allowing for sufficient instructional time to meet the post-assessment policy.
Adequate Space	During instructional time, the facility must dedicate an adequate space that is conducive to learning. The space should have a low noise level, sufficient lighting, a comfortable temperature, and appropriate furnishings.
Instructional Materials for Additional Study	Students should have access to instructional materials for additional study outside of the classroom setting.
Technology	Technology must be incorporated into classroom activities.
Distance Learning	Technology must be used for distance learning opportunities.
Varied Instruction	Instructors must use varied instructional styles, strategies, adaptations, and resources to meet the needs of all students, including those with learning challenges. Differentiated learning and scaffolding are needed for successful student engagement and learning.
Employability, Financial, Digital, AI Literacy	Instructors must integrate employability, financial, digital, and AI literacy skills into academic subjects.
Record Keeping	Instructors must maintain sign-in sheets with signature or an electronic attendance tracking system with a unique identifier that accounts for student time in class.
Adequate Staffing	Classes must be adequately staffed according to student needs.
Attendance	Classes must adhere to the local program's established attendance policy for class attendance rates. Attendance must be recorded by designated program staff no later than the same day of instruction.

Adult Education Services

Adult Basic Education

Instruction in adult basic education is designed for adults who lack competence in reading, writing, speaking, problem solving, or computation at a level necessary to function in society, the workplace, or the family.

Adult Secondary Education
Adult secondary education (ASE) is the level of instruction designed for adults who have some literacy skills and can function in everyday life, but who are not proficient in reading, writing, speaking, problem solving, or computation, or do not have a high school credential.

Postsecondary Education Preparation
Postsecondary education preparation is the level of preparation a first-time college student needs to succeed in a credit-bearing course at a postsecondary institution.

Career Readiness
Career readiness is the level of preparation a high school (or high school equivalency) graduate needs to proceed to the next step in a chosen career pathway, such as postsecondary coursework, industry certification, or entry into the workforce. Career readiness includes:

- Providing standards-based instruction using Alabama Courses of Study
- Employability skills including critical thinking, computing, reading, writing, communication, problem-solving, team building, use of technology, collaboration, and creativity
- Providing standards-based instruction within the context of relevant employability skills and/or career pathway exploration, including skills needed to pass workforce readiness assessments
- Instruction leading to the National Career Readiness Certificate
- Integrating technology skills within Alabama digital literacy standards-based instruction
- Instruction leading to high school equivalency credential attainment
- Providing opportunities for career pathways

Adult Literacy
Adult literacy is a program of instruction designed for adults who have minimal or no skills in reading, writing, speaking, problem solving, or computation.

English Language Acquisition
English Language Acquisition is instruction that assists individuals of limited English proficiency to achieve competence in the English language. Instruction is geared to adults who want to become fluent in English, pass the U.S. citizenship and/or high school equivalency (HSE) assessments, and work on job-seeking skills.

Integrated English Language and Civics Education (IELCE)
IELCE services are provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees or credentials in their home countries, to enable such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens of the United States.

IELCE services must include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, civic participation, and a nexus with IET. Furthermore, programs that receive IELCE funding are required to prepare English language learners for, and place such adults, in unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency, as well as integrate with the local workforce development system to carry out the activities of the program.

Institutionalized Populations and Correctional Education State Reserve
States may reserve up to 20% of the 82.5% of the federal award that goes out to programs as an institutionalized population and correctional education state reserve. These services may take place at local jails, halfway houses, state correctional institutions, or other transitional housing. This instruction

may consist of adult literacy, adult basic education, adult secondary education, HSE credential preparation and/or English language acquisition for adult criminal offenders. Instruction in life skills, employability skills, and computer literacy may be integrated into academic instruction.

Family Literacy
Family literacy programs are designed to alleviate intergenerational poverty through a two-generational approach by delivering education for multiple members of a family in a concurrent and contextualized format.

Local adult education programs have flexibility in designing and offering family literacy classes. For example, programs may choose to operate a 12-month program, a summer program, or even a series of short, but intensive, family literacy classes.

In designing a family literacy program, local adult education programs should consider that family literacy does not have a separate enrollment goal. Each family literacy adult student counts toward the original program's performance and outcome guidelines.

Components of a family literacy program model include:

- Adult education
- Parent and Child Together Time
- Parenting education
- Pedagogically appropriate K-12 education activity in partnership with Local Education Agencies and other eligible partners

Eligible family literacy participants include at least one child between the ages of birth and 18 years and at least one adult who is responsible for the child's well-being and who is consistently an influence on the child's development. An adult student must meet the eligibility requirements for participation in adult education.

Facilities, programs and services shall comply with local, state and federal regulations for serving children. Programs are encouraged to braid funding with funds made available under Title IV, Part B of the Every Student Succeeds Act and after school programs to cover costs associated with the child education portion of the family literacy program since adult education programs cannot pay for that component.

Workplace Literacy
Workplace Literacy (WPL) services are offered in collaboration with an employer for the purpose of improving the productivity of the workforce through the improvement of essential skills and employability skills, such as problem solving, teamwork, communication, and digital skills. These services can be provided at a workplace or an off-site location that is designed to improve the productivity of the workforce. Once an employer has been identified for a WPL class, the adult education program should (in partnership with the employer):

- Identify the scope of targeted skills
- Determine milestones
- Establish class duration
- Design orientation
- Select assessment and curriculum
- Establish performance target

Any Alabama adult education program seeking to establish a Workplace Literacy (WPL) class should receive approval from the ACCS Adult Education Division. Programs must complete an IET Program of Study Form and submit it to the AED for review and approval along with a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the adult education program and the employer establishing the workplace literacy partnership.

Integrated Education and Training (IET)
An IET is, "A service approach that provides (1) adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with (2) workforce preparation activities and 3) workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement" (34 CFR 463.35). Before implementing a new Integrated Education and Training (IET) program, local programs must complete and submit an IET Program of Study Form to the AED for review and approval. For additional information, see the AED IET Manual.

Performance Areas | Measures and Outcomes

The AED identifies annually expected levels of performance for each of the National Reporting System (NRS) primary indicators of performance as well as state-assigned performance goals which are communicated by the AED to local programs on an annual basis.

NRS performance levels are negotiated between the State and OCTAE annually. NRS guidelines require documentation on performance outcomes for each learner enrolled in adult education classes. All programs must place students into an NRS educational functioning level and record student educational functional gains. NRS performance levels are based on the federal program year (July 1 through June 30). State-determined performance goals are measured on the state's fiscal year (October 1 through September 30).

Adult Education Primary Indicators of Performance (WIOA Title II/NRS)

Adult education programs are evaluated on six core federal performance indicators:

1. **Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs):** The percentage of participants who achieve documented academic, technical, or educational functioning level gains during a program year.
2. **Employment in the 2nd Quarter After Exit:** The percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after leaving the program.
3. **Employment in the 4th Quarter After Exit:** The percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after leaving the program.
4. **Median Quarterly Earnings:** The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment in the second quarter after program exit.
5. **Credential Attainment:** The percentage of participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma/equivalent during participation or within one year after exit.
6. **Effectiveness in Serving Employers:** An employer-focused measure tracked across core programs, defined as retention with the same employer.

Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs)

Measurable Skill Gain Type	Description
Educational Functioning Level Gain	• Documented achievement of at least one educational functioning level in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and functional areas, as measured by an NRS-approved assessment. • The awarding of credits or Carnegie units that lead to a secondary diploma or its recognized equivalent. • Enrollment in a postsecondary educational or occupational skills program by the end of the program year. • Passing a (single) subtest on a state-recognized high school equivalency examination.
Attainment of a Secondary School Diploma	Receipt of a secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent during enrollment or after exit and by the end of the program year.
Secondary or Postsecondary Transcript	For IET and Workplace Literacy Participants Only – Exhibiting progress on a postsecondary transcript (completion of 12 credit hours or more).
Progress Toward Milestone	For IET and Workplace Literacy Participants Only – Showing progress toward pre-determined milestones.
Pass Technical/Occupational Knowledge-Based Exam	For IET and Workplace Literacy Participants Only – Passing a technical or occupational knowledge-based exam.

Employment Measures

- Second-Quarter Employment - employment in the second quarter after the exit quarter.
- Fourth-Quarter Employment - employment in the fourth quarter after the exit quarter.
- Median Earnings - Median earnings of participants employed in the second quarter after the exit quarter.

Credential Attainment

- Obtained High School Equivalency or Secondary School Diploma - Learners who obtain a secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent while enrolled or one year after exit.
- Entered Postsecondary or Training – Learners who enroll in a postsecondary educational institution or occupational skills program, building prior services or training received.

Non-Discrimination, Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality, and FERPA Policies

Non-Discrimination

No student shall be discriminated against on the basis of any impermissible criterion or characteristic including, but not limited to, race, color, national origin, religion, marital status, disability, gender, age, as defined by federal and state law. Institutions must publish their policies regarding non-discrimination. Each program shall adopt a policy stating that the program does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, including in admission and employment.

Conflict of Interest

The AED strongly discourages adult education instructors from participating as students in adult

education services. If there is a situation where it is deemed necessary for an adult education employee to participate as a student in adult education services, there must be prior, written approval from the AED, requested by the local adult education program director.

No adult education employee may administer a standardized assessment to themselves or proctor an assessment for an individual related to them by blood or marriage. An employee also may not enter or modify data concerning their own enrollment, educational level, or program completion, or that of a relative by blood or marriage, in any database used directly or indirectly to award a diploma or certificate through the adult education program

Confidentiality and Security Agreements

Alabama adult education personnel who have access to the data management information system must complete a confidentiality/security agreement on an annual basis. A log sheet verifying each employee's signed agreement will be submitted annually to the AED. New hires will sign the Confidentiality and Security Agreement, and a signed log sheet will be sent to the State office within 14 days of employment. This is consistent with ACCS Policy – 223.01 – Information Security (Code of Alabama 16-60-111.4). Access to the management information system will be denied if users have not completed and submitted the annual agreement to the AED by the deadline.

Assessment Policy

Local Assessment Policy training will be conducted annually at an in-service professional development meeting. All staff members will be given access to the Assessment Policy Guidelines and must sign an acknowledgement form which must be submitted to the AED. All new hires must be trained within 14 days of employment. See the AED Assessment Policy for more information.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) applies to all educational agencies and institutions that receive funding under any program administered by the United States Department of Education. It pertains to education records which contain information directly related to a student and are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution.

FERPA rights are assigned to students at age 18 or at the start of postsecondary institution attendance. This includes adult education and English language learners. All rights formerly given to parents under FERPA transfer to the student. The eligible student has the right to:

- Access their education records
- Have the records amended
- Control the disclosure of personally identifiable information (PII) from the records (except in certain circumstances specified in the FERPA regulations)
- File a complaint with AED

Educational records include directory information and PII.

Directory Information

Directory information is defined by the institution and is not considered to be an invasion of privacy. To obtain this information, third parties may submit a reasonable written inquiry without the student's permission. Students who wish to prevent the release of Directory Information under any circumstances can protect all of their educational records by completing a non-disclosure form.

PII
PII is information that is related to, and can easily identify, a student. PII cannot be disclosed to third parties without the student's written permission. With WIOA, performance reporting and data matching is required. Student information is shared with a third party and, therefore, consent is required to comply with Section 212 of AEFLA.

It is important for an agency to recognize that non-PII can become PII whenever additional information is made publicly available, in any medium and from any source, that, when combined with other available information, could be used to identify an individual.

Important FERPA Reminders
Staff cannot:

- Discuss the progress of a student with anyone other than the student without written permission of the student (this includes discussion with parents, guardians, or spouses)
- Use any portion of a student's SSN or student ID in any public manner
- Use a student's SSN or ID in any email subject line or body of the email message
- Discuss the student's record over the phone with any third party without permission from the student
- Distribute a printed class list of student names with any identifiable data to a third party

Program Enrollment and Exit

Individuals shall be officially enrolled after completion of a proctored assessment approved by the AED, and that has been deemed to be reliable and valid by NRS. Once assessed, individuals are reported as:

- **Student** – An adult education student includes any student served by an adult education program (regardless of attendance hours).
  - **Reportable Individual** – An adult education student who has received less than 12 hours of instruction.
- **Participant** – An adult education participant is a student who has received 12 or more hours of instruction and an initial assessment. Participants are the only students who are included in the NRS reporting.

Student Attendance Hours
Student attendance hours, also referred to as contact hours, must be entered no later than the end of the instructional day on which the hours were earned, or by the start of the next business day at the latest. Attendance hours for newly enrolled students must be entered into the data management system within five days of the student's program enrollment.

Program Exit and Separation
Program exit is the last date the participant received services. Exit cannot be determined until at least 90 calendar days have elapsed since the participant last received services.

Separation will be based on periods of participation (POPs). A POP begins each time an individual enters adult education and gets at least 12 contact hours of service. A participant may have multiple POPs in a year, and performance is measured for each period. These periods must be separated by 90 calendar days without program attendance.

Plan of Instruction (POI)

All students are required to have a Plan of Instruction (POI) which guides the students' instructional progress. Local programs may customize the format of the POI to best meet the student and instructor's needs; however, the POI must contain certain elements outlined below.

Standards-Based Instruction

Adult education programs must be aligned with Alabama's rigorous academic content standards, aligned to the requirements of Every Student Succeeds Act, which are the Alabama Courses of Study in Mathematics, English Language Arts, Social Sciences, Science, and Career and Technical Education.

Contextualized Instruction

POIs should include documented instruction that is contextualized to the student's identified career pathway.

Formal and Informal Assessment

Data from each student's diagnostic assessment should be used to build the student's POI.

- Immediately identify non-mastered tested content.
- Hold meetings to engage students in their learning and be sure to update POIs every time content is mastered.
- Use data to effectively group students.
- Pace activities and post testing based on content mastery and readiness to post test.

Lesson Plan Development

POIs should also be used to differentiate, individualize, and personalize classroom lesson plan development.

Assessment

The AED Assessment Policy Guidelines provide procedures pertaining to standardized assessment practices for all adult education programs. It meets guidance from OCTAE, to describe approved assessments, initial and post-testing requirements, accommodations, and training requirements. Adult education providers shall use the assessment policy in conjunction with publishers' official examiner's manuals and training to determine local assessment procedures. Providers shall follow all guidelines in examiners' manuals and maintain the most current version of the manual for each test used by the program. See the AED Assessment Policy for more information.

Planning Time

Planning time is defined as time in the workplace preparing for instruction and/or record-keeping supporting the management information system. Planning time may be allowed on a weekly basis and cannot be carried over to subsequent weeks or accumulated in any manner.

At the local adult education director's discretion, and according to local policy and budgetary feasibility, part-time adult education instructors may be eligible for reimbursement of planning (non-instructional) time. The reimbursement should be based on the instructor's current rate of pay per hour, and it is the responsibility of the local adult education director to budget for the planning time of all eligible instructors. The reimbursement should be paid from the same budget as the instructor's salary. Local

policy for planning time should be reasonable and must be applied consistently to all eligible instructors.

Professional Development

Alabama's professional development initiative is designed to enhance the expertise, instructional effectiveness, and knowledge of adult educators through ongoing learning opportunities. Its goal is to ensure high-quality instruction for all learners while supporting a comprehensive, system-wide approach to adult education. Professional development will focus on:

- **Instructor, Program Director, and Staff Development:** What instructors, directors, and support staff need to know and be able to do to provide quality programs
- **Learning Content – POI:** The skills and knowledge that adult learners need to know and be able to do in their roles as workers, parents, and citizens
- **Program Standards – Indicators of Quality Programs:** The characteristics that exemplary local programs should demonstrate
- **Professional Development Standards:** The essential elements of meaningful professional growth activities.
- **Performance Standards – Core Indicators of Performance:** Expectations for program outcomes
- **Data Quality Standards:** Ensure that reliable and valid data is available to make informed decisions and guide program management

Expectations for Professional Development Activities

Program directors are expected to:

- Ensure all instructors have an active status in the management information system
- Explain to instructors their PD requirements and expectations
- Keep accurate records of all PD training (local, state, and national) including agendas, sign-in sheets, etc. clock hours of training
- Assist all new instructors with completing orientation, specific PD training, and any institution-related preservice, etc.
- Ensure that all instructors complete annual training on the Assessment Policy Guidelines and any applicable test certification or recertification
- Conduct classroom observations to identify areas of professional development needed for continuous improvement
- Periodically conduct local program surveys of staff and stakeholders to identify areas of professional development need
- Lead instructors in completing any PD opportunities and providing at least two local in-service meetings per year
- Ensure that student satisfaction surveys are completed twice per year, so PD can also be developed around students stated needs
- Ensure all program staff meet annual PD requirements
- Ensure that all instructors are in compliance with training for approved assessments as detailed in the annual Assessment Policy Guidelines

Program directors are expected to be instructional leaders by:

- Ensuring the highest quality instruction
- Realizing full implementation of Alabama standards-based instruction
- Integrating instructional technology to assist in digital, civics, financial, and AI literacy knowledge

- Fostering instructor effectiveness through building knowledge-based and professionalism
- Nurturing an environment of professional growth, collaborative learning, and participative decision making
- Engaging students through instruction relevant to their life experiences and real-life application
- Empowering students to achieve next steps
- Analyzing data and using it to guide instructional practice
- Providing constructive feedback and reinforcement to advance continuous improvement

Professional Development Requirements for New Personnel

Annual Alabama Adult Education Conference

The AED co-sponsors the annual conference in partnership with the Alabama Association for Public and Continuing Adult Education (ALAPCAE). This conference provides professional development on a variety of relevant topics for instructional and continual program improvement.

Adult Education Common Terms and Acronyms

A

ABAWDs
Able bodied adults without dependents (SNAP and TANF)

ABE
Adult Basic Education

Achievement of National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)
Achievement of National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) is based on the number of students who successfully complete the ACT WorkKeys™ tests.

ACCA
Alabama Community College Association

ACCS
Alabama Community College System

Active-Duty Military Spouse
Dependent spouse of active-duty military personnel.

Adult Basic Education
Instruction in adult basic education is designed for adults who lack competence in reading, writing, speaking, problem solving, or computation at a level necessary to function in society, in the workplace, or in the family.

Adult Education (WIOA definition)
Academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual's ability to:

- Read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.
- Transition to postsecondary education and training; and
- Obtain employment

Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)
The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) is Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), originally enacted in 1998 as Title II of the Workforce Investment Act and reauthorized as Title II of WIOA in 2014. AEFLA is the principal source of federal support for adult basic and literacy education programs for adults who lack basic skills, a high school diploma, or proficiency in English.

Adult Education and Literacy Activities (WIOA definition)
Programs, activities, and services that include:

- Adult education
- Literacy
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities
- Family literacy activities
- English language acquisition activities

- Integrated English literacy and civics education
- Workforce preparation activities
- Integrated education and training

(Workforce preparation and integrated education, including career pathways, is a requirement of WIOA implementation.)

Adult Literacy
Adult literacy is a program of instruction designed for adults who have minimal or no skills in reading, writing, speaking, problem solving, or computation.

Adult with Aging Dependents
An adult with the total support responsibility (food, utilities, medical bills, and housing) of an elderly parent or an adult dependent, usually related either biologically or through marriage.

AE
Adult Education

AED
Adult Education Division

AEFLA
The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act – Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

ALAPCAE
Alabama Association for Public Continuing and Adult Education

A-RESET
Alabama Resources for Enrichment, Self-Sufficiency, and Employability Training

ASE
Adult Secondary Education

ATB
Ability to Benefit

AVL
Alabama Virtual Library

B

Basic Skills Deficient
A basic skills deficient individual is:

- A youth or Adult who has English, reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
- A youth or adult who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the family, or in society.

C

CAP
Corrective Action Plan

Caregiver
A family member or paid helper who regularly looks after a child or a sick, elderly, or disabled person.

Career Pathway
A combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that:

- Align with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the state or regional economy involved.
- Prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or post-secondary education options, including apprenticeships.
- Include counseling to support individuals in achieving education and career goals.
- Includes, when appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupational cluster.
- Organize education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable.
- Enable individuals to attain secondary diplomas or recognized equivalents, and at least one recognized postsecondary credential.
- Helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

CASAS
Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (alternative to TABE®)

CLA
Certified Logistics Associate (MSSC)

CLT
Certified Logistics Technician Certification (MSSC)

Coal Mining or Supporting Industry
Mining machine operators and technicians employed in the coal mining or supporting industry.

COABE
Coalition on Adult Basic Education

Concurrent Enrollment
Enrollment in adult education and credit-bearing academic postsecondary education.

Correctional Institution
Prison, jail, reformatory, work farm, detention center, halfway house/community-based rehabilitative center, or other similar institution for the confinement and/or rehabilitation of criminal offenders.

CPT
Certified Production Technician Certification (MSSC)

Criminal Offender
An individual who is charged with or convicted of any criminal offense.

CTE
Career and Technical Education

Cultural Barriers
A person who perceives him/herself as possessing attitudes, beliefs, customs, or practices that influence a way of thinking, acting, or working, and that may serve as a hindrance to employment.

D

Digital Literacy
The skills associated with using technology to enable users to find, evaluate, organize, create, and communicate information; and develop digital citizenship and the responsible use of technology.

Dislocated Worker
An individual who has been terminated or laid off (or received notice of termination or layoff) or has been notified of a permanent closure of a plant or facility where they are (or were at one time) employed.

Displaced Homemaker
Someone who provides unpaid services in the home and is dependent on the income of another, but is no longer supported by that income, and is having trouble obtaining or upgrading employment.

DOL
Department of Labor

E

EDGAR
Education Department General Administrative Regulations (and other grant guidance)

EEFL
Entering Educational Functioning Level

EFL
Educational Functioning Level

ELA
English Language Acquisition
English Language Acquisition (formerly ESL – WIOA definition)
Program of instruction that is designed to help eligible students who are English language learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language; and that leads to attainment of a high school diploma or its equivalent, transition to postsecondary education, or employment.

ELL
English Language Learner

English Language Learner (WIOA definition)
An eligible student who:

- Has limited ability in reading, writing, speaking, or comprehending the English language, and
- Whose native language is a language other than English, or
- Who lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language.

Entered Postsecondary or Training
A learner who enrolls in a postsecondary educational institution or occupational skills program after exiting adult education.

ESL
English as a Second Language

Ex-Offender
An individual who has been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process for committing an offense or delinquent act, and who requires assistance in overcoming barriers to employment resulting from an arrest or conviction. (This category is not used for individuals who are currently incarcerated.)

Exhausting TANF (Within 2 Years)
A person within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

F

Family Literacy
Activities that are of sufficient intensity and quality to make sustainable improvements in the economic prospects for a family, that better enable parents or family members to support their children's learning needs, and that integrate all of the following activities:

- Parent or family adult education and literacy activities that lead to readiness for postsecondary education, training, career advancement, and economic self-sufficiency.
- Interactive literacy activities between parents or family members and their children.
- Training for parents or family members on how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children.
- An age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.

FERPA
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

First Generation College Student
A college student whose parent(s) did not complete a four-year college or university degree.

Formerly Incarcerated
An individual who has ever been in a correctional facility: any prison, jail, reformatory, work farm, detention center, or any other federal, state, or local institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders.

FY
Fiscal Year (October 1 - September 30)

G

Gained Employment
Learners obtain a job by the second and/or fourth quarter after exit.

GEDTS
GED Testing Service

H

HiSET
High School Equivalency Test; an alternative to a high school diploma and the GED® and TASC® tests.

Homeless/Runaway Youth
A youth who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; moved in the last 36 months due to a parent's employment in seasonal farm work; or is under 18 and leaves home without parent permission.

HSDO (HSO)
High School Diploma Option

High School Diploma Option Program (HSO or HSDO)
A partnership between the AED and the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE or K-12) to provide opportunities for adults who:

- Last attended an Alabama public high school, and who completed enough graduation credits to graduate, but did not pass all portions of the AHSGE; or
- Last attended an Alabama high school before dropping out and earned at least 10 graduation credits toward an Alabama high school diploma.

HSDO is now written into Alabama REACH Act legislation.

HSE
High School Equivalency

I

IET
Integrated Education and Training

IELCE
Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education

IFA
Infrastructure Funding Agreement

Individuals Preparing for Non-Traditional Fields
Someone who is preparing for a field in which women or men comprise less than 25% of the workforce.

Individuals with Disabilities
A person with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the person's major life activities.

In Need of Support Services
Someone who needs support services to obtain a driver's license, Social Security number, or has needs for transportation, childcare, food, or housing.

Integrated Education and Training (IET)

IET is a service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purposes of educational and career advancement. IET must include three components:

- Adult education and literacy activities.
- Workforce preparation activities.
- Workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE)
Education services provided to adult English language learners (including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries) that enable them to achieve competency in the English language and acquire skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the U.S. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English Language Acquisition (ELA) (formerly English as a Second Language) and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. It may also include workforce training. WIOA Section 243 adds the requirement that such services be offered in combination with integrated education and training activities.

L

Literacy
A student's ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in a family, and in society.

Lightcast
Electronic Career Coach (available for use throughout the ACCS system) (Formerly EMSI)

LMI
Labor Market Information

Long-Term Unemployed
A person who is out of work and has been actively seeking employment for at least a year.

Low Income
An individual who receives Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or local public assistance.

M

Management Information System (MIS)
An electronic management information system for data collection and reporting used by Alabama adult education programs.

Migrant/Seasonal Worker
An individual employed for the last 12 months in agricultural or fish farming labor, or who is a dependent of a seasonal or migrant farm worker without a permanent residence.

Monitoring
The annual, systematic tracking of adult education program implementation. It consists of examining the progress made in the program against the agreed upon goals set forth in the request for proposal (RFP).

MSG
Measurable Skill Gain

MSSC
Manufacturing Skill Standards Council

N

National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)
The ACT WorkKeys™ National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) is an assessment-based credential that includes Applied Math, Workplace Documents, and Graphic Literacy. The NCRC measures and certifies the essential work skills needed for success in jobs across industries and occupations. NCRC certificate levels are determined by the lowest score across all three tests.

- **Bronze**: Minimum score of 3 in each area (qualifies for about 16% of tracked jobs).
- **Silver**: Minimum score of 4 in each area (qualifies for about 67% of jobs).
- **Gold**: Minimum score of 5 in each area (qualifies for about 93% of jobs).
- **Platinum**: Minimum score of 6 in each area (qualifies for about 99% of jobs).

National Reporting System (NRS)
An outcome-based reporting system for state-administered, federally funded adult education programs.

NCRC
National Career Readiness Certificate

Non-Traditional Occupation
Occupation in which women or men comprise less than 25% of the workforce.

NRS
National Reporting System

O

OCTAE
Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE)
Administers and coordinates programs that are related to adult education, literacy, career and technical education, and community colleges.

OCTAE's National Reporting System (NRS) Performance Targets
Alabama adult education negotiates performance targets annually. Local programs are accountable for meeting these goals through the National Reporting System (NRS).

P

Participant (WIOA definition)
An individual participating in an adult education program who has achieved 12 contact hours after program entry, is reported on National Reporting System (NRS) and statewide performance report tables and is counted toward performance measures.

Parent of Children Aging Out of Social Security
A person who is a parent of a child who is near the age of no longer being eligible for Social Security

benefits.

PD
Professional Development

Period of Participation
A period of participation begins each time an individual enters an adult education program and gets at least 12 hours of service, even if there are multiple entries during the same program year. A participant may have multiple periods of participation in a year, and performance is measured for each period. These periods must be separated by 90 days without program attendance.

POI
Plan of Instruction

POP
Period of Participation

Proxy Contact Hours
Asynchronous time a learner spends independently engaged with distance learning activities, such as using an approved distance learning platform which contains a clock-time model that calculates the distance learning instructional hours. See the assessment policy guidelines for more information on proxy contact hours.

PY
Program Year (July 1 - June 30)

R

Reportable Individual (WIOA definition)
An individual who registers with an adult education program, or provides identifying information, takes action that demonstrates an intent to use program services, but has less than 12 contact hours.

Retained Employment
Learners obtain a job and remain employed in the second and/or fourth quarter after program exit.

RFP
Request for Proposal

RLA
Reasoning Through Language Arts

S

Single Parents, Including Single Pregnant Women
A single, separated, divorced, or widowed individual who has primary responsibility for one or more dependent children under the age of 18, or is a single, pregnant woman.

SNAP
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
The USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of needy families so they can purchase healthy food and move towards

self-sufficiency.

Specific Learning Disability
A learner who has deficits (related to neurological impairments) in defined limited learning areas such as dyslexia (reading disability), dysgraphia (writing disability), and dyscalculia (math disability). The learner also has a history of previous failed educational efforts.

T

TABE®
Test of Adult Basic Education

TABE® CLAS-E
TABE® Complete Language Assessment System - English

TANF
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
A federal assistance program that assists families with children when parents or other responsible relatives cannot provide for the family's basic needs. The federal government provides grants to the states to run the TANF program.

Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE®)
A diagnostic test used to determine a person's skill levels and aptitudes. Many companies use it for hiring, promotions, or selecting employees for training programs and skilled positions. It is also one of the National Reporting System (NRS)-approved assessments for adult education programs.

U

UG
Uniform Guidance

Under-Employed
People who do not have enough paid work or are not doing work that makes full use of their skills and abilities.

Unemployed or Underemployed
A person who is currently out of employment, not having enough paid work, or not doing work that makes full use of their skills and abilities.

V

Veteran
Someone who once served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.

W

WIOA
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is a United States public law that replaced the previous Workforce Investment Act of 1998 as the primary federal workforce development legislation

to bring about increased coordination among federal workforce development and related programs.

Workforce Preparation
Activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of academic, critical thinking, digital literacy, and self-management skills, including competencies in:

- Utilizing resources and information
- Working with others
- Understanding systems
- And obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into (and completion of) postsecondary education, training, or employment.

Workplace Education
Adult education and literacy activities, offered by eligible providers in collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or an off-site location, are designed to improve the productivity of the workforce.

Y

Youth/Young Adult in or Aged Out of Foster Care
Someone who is currently in the foster care system or who has aged out of the foster care system.

Youth with Parents in Active-Duty Military
A person currently under the care of an active-duty military parent/guardian.



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