



STATE OF GEORGIA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
ATLANTA 30334-0900

Debra M. Lyons, Director  
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Sonny Perdue  
GOVERNOR

February 19, 2008

Dear Community Leader,

The Governor announced on August 23, 2006, his Georgia **Work Ready** initiative. This voluntary program is in support of the Governor's vision to link workforce development and education and align it with economic development of the state, its regions and communities. The **Work Ready** effort will enable Georgia's communities to have a process to develop a documented workforce pipeline whose skill level can be matched to occupation or job profiles, and to demonstrate their commitment to improving their high school graduation rates. The Work Ready initiative is two-fold and consists of both an individual earning a **Work Ready Certificate** and a county becoming a **Certified Work Ready Community (CWRC)**. Only those recipients who assess at a minimum Work Ready level or above will receive a **Work Ready Certificate**. For counties that validate a high school graduation rate at or above 70 percent will attain **Certified Work Ready Community of Excellence** status. For a more detailed description of this initiative, visit [www.gaworkready.org](http://www.gaworkready.org) and review the information available under the **Certified Work Ready Communities** link. A listing of the county-based criteria for attaining the **Certified Work Ready Community** status may be found on the same Web page.

The state is seeking proposals from counties with **populations less than 100,000** to become **Accelerated Certified Work Ready Communities (ACWRC)**. ACWRC counties selected will receive additional supports to help them succeed in becoming a **Certified Work Ready Community**. **CWRC In-Progress counties who began the certification in January 2007 may re-apply to become an ACWRC.**

The **Certified Work Ready Community** criteria, found at [www.gaworkready.org](http://www.gaworkready.org), has been adjusted according to 2007 certificate data. Counties are scaled from small to large using county size HSGR criteria as a guideline. The percentages for targeted audiences that must attain a **Work Ready Certificate** are based on a county size scale, which is the following:

**\*\* New CWRC county criteria approved by State Workforce Investment Board\*\***

- Small county – **25%** of available workforce and **3%** of existing workforce must earn a Certificate.
- Medium county - **20%** of available workforce and **2%** of existing workforce must earn a Certificate.
- Large county - **15%** of available workforce and **1%** of existing workforce must earn a Certificate.
- Extra-large county - **5%** of available workforce and **.5%** of existing workforce must earn a Certificate.

**\*\* This county scale is retroactive and applies to all CWRC In-Progress from the January 2007 launch\*\***

These numbers will be placed into the *Notification of Intent to Participate* form to complete the application process, both the calculated county goal numbers and the *Notification of Intent to Participate* form can be found at [www.gaworkready.org](http://www.gaworkready.org).



The Technical College System of Georgia will be the state's **Work Ready** service delivery provider. All technical colleges have Work Ready Centers open. The estimated length of time for a county to become Work Ready Certified is 12 to 36 months. The anticipated length of time for an Accelerated Work Ready Community to attain the goals to become certified is estimated to be 6 to 18 months.

The Work Ready initiative has been active for more than a year. Over the past year the Governor's Office of Workforce Development has been collecting every county's **Work Ready Certificate** numbers whether they were actively participating or not. **A county that applies as a Certified Work Ready Community in this second launch have the option of counting their current Certificate number towards their overall certification goal. Counties that opt not to count their current Certificate numbers will have the full 36 months to attain their goals. Counties that choose to count their current certificates earned to date will have 24 months to attain their certification goals. Counties applying to become an ACWRC can also count their Certificates to date by putting themselves on a 12 month timeframe. If they choose not to count current Certificates they remain on the 18 month timeframe.** To see where your county stands for current certificates earned, call or e-mail Fred R. McConnel, Work Ready community leader, at 404-657-0361 or [fmconnel@gov.state.ga.us](mailto:fmconnel@gov.state.ga.us).

All counties are encouraged to begin the process of becoming a **Certified Work Ready Community** by completing the *Notification of Intent to Participate* form. The enrollment period is now through April 30, 2008. Upon receipt of the completed form, the current county criteria will be locked for a timeframe of 36 months from February 2008. **All counties** that begin the process of becoming **Certified Work Ready Communities** will be able to participate in conference calls and attend scheduled meetings that will provide guidance and a forum to share best practices.

Those counties seeking to be **Accelerated Certified Work Ready Community** should submit both a completed *Notification of Intent to Participate* form and a technical proposal that includes the following:

- Letters of commitment from each team member
- A summary (no more than five pages) of the county's commitment to becoming a Certified Work Ready Community including outlining:
  - Why their county will be successful in meeting the goals of becoming a **Certified Work Ready Community** in 6 to 18 months
  - How they will recruit individuals in the specified labor market groups and assist them in successfully obtaining a **Georgia Work Ready Certificate**
  - A cooperative strategy with the local school board to increase their high school graduation rate to level designated in their county criteria
- Additional letters of support may be included in the appendix

Those counties that want to be considered for selection as an **ACWRC** should submit both their *Notification of Intent to Participate* form and their proposal to the Governor's Office of Workforce Development by **COB March 31, 2008** by mail, fax or electronic transmittal.

The general *Notification of Intent to Participate* forms should be faxed, mailed or electronically sent to the Governor's Office of Workforce Development. Electronically sent applications should include a designated signature. Forms will be accepted through April 30, 2008 for this enrollment period.



Contact information for submitting county proposals:

Fred R. McConnel, Work Ready community leader  
Governor's Office of Workforce Development  
270 Washington Street, SW, Suite 5-191  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334  
Phone: 404-657-0361, Fax: 404-463-5043  
fmconnel@gov.state.ga.us

All counties **interested** in beginning the process to become a **Certified Work Ready Community** and that would like to participate in a conference call to learn more about the initiative are encouraged to e-mail their intent to Fred R. McConnel at [fmconnel@gov.state.ga.us](mailto:fmconnel@gov.state.ga.us) by March 5, 2008. All counties that submit an e-mail indicating their interest will be able to participate in a conference call to answer any questions and to provide additional information. The conference call date TBD.

It is strongly recommended that all counties review the information available on the Web site at [www.gaworkready.org](http://www.gaworkready.org) before completing the application.

I hope that all counties will consider beginning the process to become a **Certified Work Ready Community**. If you need additional information, please do not hesitate to call our office at 404-657-0361.

Very truly yours,

Debra M. Lyons, Director  
Governor's Office of Workforce Development