



# ACT<sup>®</sup> Work Ready Communities

**We all have a stake in making our country more competitive. Now we have a framework for closing the skills gap that threatens our economy.**

Change starts at the grassroots level by providing a community-based framework that:

- Links workforce development to education
- Aligns with the economic development needs of communities, regions, and states
- Matches individuals to jobs based on skill levels

The foundation for this framework begins at the county level and spans the current, transitioning, and future workforce. The key component: individuals earning and employers recognizing the ACT<sup>®</sup> WorkKeys<sup>®</sup> National Career Readiness Certificate<sup>®</sup>. The ACT<sup>®</sup> WorkKeys<sup>®</sup> NCRC<sup>®</sup> is a portable, industry-recognized credential that identifies an individual's ACT<sup>®</sup> WorkKeys<sup>®</sup> skill levels in workplace documents, applied math, and graphic literacy. These essential foundational skills are required for virtually any job.

Many groups benefit when their states, counties, or regions join the ACT Work Ready Communities initiative.

- **Businesses and industries** learn exactly what foundational skills are needed for a productive workforce and can easily communicate their needs to job seekers
- **Individuals** understand what skills employers require and how to prepare for career success
- **Policymakers** are able to measure skills gaps in a timely manner at the national, state, and local levels
- **Educators** help close skills gaps using stackable, industry-recognized credentials integrated into career pathways
- **Economic developers** have an on-demand reporting tool to document—and market—the quality of the local workforce

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[workreadycommunities.org](http://workreadycommunities.org)

## Partnerships at all levels are essential for success

| PARTNERS   | CAPABILITIES  |
|--|---|
| <b>ACT—the nonprofit organization with a track record of producing assessments and credentials</b> | Delivers the process for involving states and counties; the assessment and certification tools; and rich, county-specific workforce skill data updated each month   |
| <b>State ACT Work Ready Communities team</b>   | A public-private team of chambers of commerce, business leaders, and education leaders whose purpose is to build a service delivery infrastructure and engage business leaders statewide while implementing processes at the county level |
| <b>Local ACT Work Ready Communities team</b>   | A county-level or regional team that mirrors the state team in composition. This team uses the ACT approach to solve local workforce issues through attaining and maintaining a certified ACT Work Ready Communities status               |

**How do these partners come together to create change at the county level?** ACT partners with communities and states to build this framework through the ACT Work Ready Communities Boot Camp ([workreadycommunities.org/bootcamp](https://workreadycommunities.org/bootcamp)). ACT accepts applications from states, regions, and communities to participate in the initiative.

By working together and adopting the common criteria ([workreadycommunities.org/resources/Criteria\\_for\\_Certification.pdf](https://workreadycommunities.org/resources/Criteria_for_Certification.pdf)) for a community to be certified as “work ready,” states, regions, and counties are building a sustainable infrastructure to close skills gaps and attain a competitive advantage. The data-driven approach toward achieving certification as an ACT Work Ready Community allows an area to demonstrate they have a skilled workforce that is valued by local employers. The area also benefits by linking education and workforce development, achieving alignment to economic development, and matching people to jobs.

It’s a formula for economic success that benefits *all* stakeholders.

**For more information, please visit the ACT Work Ready Communities website at [workreadycommunities.org](https://workreadycommunities.org) or email [wrc@act.org](mailto:wrc@act.org).**