

# ACT Work Ready Communities: Maintaining criteria



**After a county meets the ACT Work Ready Communities common criteria and becomes a certified ACT Work Ready Community, it can build on that status and strengthen its position as a desirable location for new and expanding businesses.**

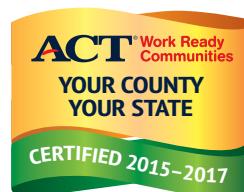
Every two years, a county has the opportunity to document its continued workforce development efforts through ACT Work Ready Communities maintaining criteria. When a county has met its maintaining criteria goals, it earns a “maintaining” status ribbon to add to its initial certification badge.

“Maintaining” status goals are similar to the initial certification goals. To achieve “maintaining” status, counties must continue issuing the ACT NCRC® to the current, emerging, and transitioning workforce. The total number of ACT NCRCs earned within the county will be calculated based on the criteria in the tables that follow. In addition to their residents earning ACT NCRCs, counties are also required to select one of three new criteria: improving certificate levels, completing job profiles, or providing college credit for the ACT NCRC.

In addition to listing newly engaged employers, counties will also ask employers who supported the ACT NCRC during the certification phase to reaffirm their support during the maintaining phase. By reconfirming their support, employers can gain greater understanding and usability of ACT WorkKeys® and the ACT NCRC.

## WORKFORCE STATUS CATEGORIES

Current workforce	Currently employed: private or nonprofit Currently employed: local, state, or federal government
Transitioning workforce	Currently unemployed Adult education participant Current or recent active duty military
Emerging workforce	High school junior, senior, or recent graduate College student or recent graduate



**ACT® Work Ready  
Communities**

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

HOW WE "SIZE UP" COMMUNITIES*		HOW WE CATEGORIZE EMPLOYERS	
<b>Small counties</b>	Up to 29,999	<b>Small employers (1–4 employees)</b>	<i>May aggregate to support their county</i>
<b>Medium counties</b>	30,000–99,999	<b>Medium employers (5–99 employees)</b>	<i>Support their local county</i>
<b>Large counties A</b>	100,000–399,999	<b>Large employers (100-plus employees)</b>	<i>May support all counties within 25 miles</i>
<b>Large counties B</b>	400,000–649,999		
<b>Very large counties</b>	650,000–999,999		
<b>Mega counties</b>	More than 1,000,000		

\* Based on US Census Bureau population data

HOW WE CALCULATE ACT NCRC COUNTY WORKFORCE AND BUSINESS GOALS**					
County size	Current workforce	Transitioning workforce	Emerging workforce	ACT NCRC goal cap	New or repledged employers supporting ACT NCRC
<b>Small counties</b>	0.25%	7.5%	25%	1,400	same as certified goal
<b>Medium counties</b>	0.15%	6%	25%	3,000	same as certified goal
<b>Large counties A</b>	0.05%	5%	15%	4,600	same as certified goal
<b>Large counties B</b>	0.0375%	3.75%	10%	6,400	same as certified goal
<b>Very large counties</b>	0.025%	2.5%	5%	7,400	same as certified goal
<b>Mega counties</b>	0.01%	1.25%	2.5%	8,400	same as certified goal

\*\* Maintaining goals are a combination of certified goals and actual maintaining goals

Counties will submit updated population and labor force data every two years in order for maintaining goals to be recalculated. For statewide programs, the state ACT Work Ready Communities team will provide updated demographic data every two years for all counties to recalculate goals during the maintaining status phase.

ADDITIONAL MAINTAINING CRITERIA (counties select one)	
<b>Improving certificate levels</b>	Certificate level improvement based on 30% of Bronze-level ACT NCRCs earned over past 12 months
<b>Job profiles completed</b>	<b>Small county:</b> one job profile <b>Medium county:</b> three job profiles <b>Large county (A and B):</b> five job profiles <b>Very large county:</b> eight job profiles <b>Mega county:</b> 12 job profiles
<b>ACT NCRC for college credit</b>	Community or technical college will provide college credit for the ACT NCRC, according to American Council on Education guidelines

Go to [workreadycommunities.org](http://workreadycommunities.org) for more information.