



Certified Workforce Specialist (CWS)

Initial Application Package



Congratulations on your decision to become certified! Becoming a Certified Workforce Specialist shows your employer and your co-workers your initiative in continuing your professional development. We wish you luck in your workforce career!

The Certified Workforce Specialist (CWS) credential is administered and awarded by the International Association of Workforce Professionals (IAWP). IAWP is a worldwide professional association available to all individuals with a common interest in workforce systems. IAWP equips members for success by providing the highest quality of education, leadership, information exchange, and recognition of excellence through a network of local, regional, and International chapters preparing members for the workforce challenges of tomorrow.

IAWP 1801 Louisville Road Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
888-898-9960 Fax: 502-223-4127
iapes@iapes.org www.iawponline.org

August 2014

REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME A CERTIFIED WORKFORCE SPECIALIST (CWS)

There are four (4) requirements:

1. Education plus Workforce Development Experience:

- Master's Degree with 2 years current workforce development experience OR
- Bachelor's Degree with 3 years current workforce development experience OR
- Associate's Degree with 4 years current workforce development experience OR
- High School Diploma or GED with 5 years current workforce development experience

Documentation must be provided in the form of a copy of diploma/degree from an accredited institution and detailed workforce development experience.

2. Professional Membership: The applicant must have maintained membership in IAWP for the previous two (2) consecutive years or have similar membership in another workforce development professional association for the same time frame.

Verification for IAWP membership will be done by IAWP Administrative Office. Other association memberships will require documentation.

3. IAWP Workforce Professional Development Program (WPDP): Applicants must pass all four (4) WPDP competencies (History of Workforce Development, Business & Jobseeker Specialist, Unemployment Insurance Specialist, and Labor Market Information Specialist). The WPDP is currently available in a hardcopy version, but an electronic/online version is being planned.

4. Professional References: The applicant must submit two (2) letters of reference: one from an immediate supervisor, and one from another person within the workforce profession that can attest to the individual's experience, knowledge, and skills. Please see the last page of this application package for help in getting these letters.

CERTIFICATION PERIOD

Certification is valid for three years from time of approval. Every three years thereafter, a re-certification can be applied for as long as the individual can show proof that they are still employed in a workforce development profession, are still a member of a professional association, and provide proof that they have completed at least 100 hours of professional development training since their last certification. (See the separate Recertification Application Package for details.)

APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Application Form The official application form must be completed legibly and sent to the IAWP Administrative Office with the required documentation and fees as noted.

B. Time Frame for Review Applications will be reviewed by the IAWP Review Committee within two (2) months of receipt.

C. Notification/Recognition Approved applicants will be notified within two (2) weeks of completion of review by way of a certificate and letter of congratulations.

Notification by letter will be sent to the applicant's employer, whether an agency administrator or private sector supervisor, and the applicant's immediate supervisor. Please supply the information for whom you wish to be notified on the application form.

Certified Workforce Specialists will be recognized in the IAWP publication *Workforce Professional* and in the printed program of the IAWP Annual International Educational Conference. Certified Workforce Professionals are encouraged to use the "CWS" designation after their name in professional correspondence.

If your application is not accepted, IAWP will provide a written explanation for the non-acceptance and options for correction or resubmittal. You may resubmit the application once within six months from the date on the non-acceptance letter without an additional application fee.

REVIEW

Your application will be reviewed by members of the IAWP Educational Development Committee within two months of receipt. You will be notified by mail only whether you were accepted or rejected. The IAWP Administrative Office will not be able to respond to telephone inquiries about your application status.

FEES

A. Certification The application fee is \$50 and is not refundable. If the application is rejected you can reapply within six (6) months for no additional fee.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Do all items have to be sent with the application?

Yes, applications with missing information will be returned to the applicant.

2. If I received a certificate from a program, will that count toward my education requirement?

No, only completed high school/GED, Associate's Degree, Bachelor's Degree, and Graduate Degrees from accredited institutions will be accepted to fulfill the education requirement. Certificate programs may be considered for continuing professional development for recertification.

3. Does the work experience have to be related to workforce development?

Yes, the applicant should be involved in processes or systems that assist or support the workforce (individuals, groups and/or businesses) in preparing for, obtaining, or maintaining employment, including but not limited to one-stops, unemployment, labor market information, business services, veterans, rehabilitation, and WIA.

4. Can I request the return of my application materials?

No, all application materials become the property of IAWP.

5. How long is the certification process?

Applications are reviewed within two months of receipt and applicants are notified of the decision within two weeks of the end of the review.

6. Who reviews the applications?

Members of the IAWP Educational Development Committee.

7. What if my application is not accepted?

You will receive a written reason for the non-acceptance and options to make corrections. You can resubmit once within six (6) months from the date on the non-acceptance letter with no additional application fee.

8. How long is the certification valid?

Three (3) years.

9. What are payment options for the application fee?

Check (made payable to IAWP) or credit card (Visa or MasterCard only).



CHECKLIST FOR YOUR CWS INITIAL APPLICATION

- _____ FORM: Completed and signed application form
- _____ EDUCATION: enclose a copy of:
 - _____ HS diploma/GED OR
 - _____ College degree/transcript
- _____ EXPERIENCE: enclose a copy of:
 - _____ Hire date verification (on application form) OR
 - _____ Recent performance evaluation
- _____ PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP:
 - _____ IAWP member for previous two consecutive years (IAWP Administrative Office will verify membership)
 - _____ Other association: Must enclose copy of membership card or other documentation, including join date and current status
- _____ WPDP: Enclose a copy of certificate(s) for successful completion of WPDP program
- _____ PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES: List two professional references detailing required years of work experience. One of the references must be from an immediate supervisor
- _____ FEE: Enclose payment for certification (\$50)
- _____ MAIL TO: IAWP 1801 Louisville Road Frankfort, Kentucky 40601



CWS INITIAL APPLICATION FORM

Title (*circle one*): **Dr. Mr. Ms. Mrs.**

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Business Title: _____

Company/Agency Name: _____

Company/Agency Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Office email: _____

(Notices and reminders will be sent to this address unless otherwise requested.)

Preferred Mailing Address: _____ Home _____ Business

Optional information:

Home phone: _____ Home email: _____ Office

Phone: _____ Office Fax: _____

Education plus Experience (*please check one*):

_____ Master's Degree with 2 years current workforce development experience OR

_____ Bachelor's Degree with 3 years current workforce development experience OR

_____ Associate's Degree with 4 years current workforce development experience OR

_____ High School Diploma or GED with 5 years current workforce development experience

Documentation for education must be provided in the form of a copy of diploma/degree from an accredited institution. Documentation for experience can include a recent performance evaluation or verification of your hire date (below).

Name & Address of school/institution indicated above:

Current Employer: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Years with current employer: _____

Date of hire: _____

Supervisor's signature (verifying hire date): _____

Professional Membership:

The applicant must have maintained membership in IAWP for the previous two (2) consecutive years or have similar membership in another workforce development professional association for the same time frame.

Verification for IAWP membership will be done by IAWP Administrative Office. Other association memberships will require documentation and verification.

Association Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____ Telephone: _____

Member Number: _____

IAWP Workforce Professional Development Program (WPDP):

Applicants must pass all four (4) WPDP competencies (History of Workforce Development, Business & Jobseeker Specialist, Unemployment Insurance Specialist, and Labor Market Information Specialist).

Please list dates when all four competencies were received:

History of Workforce Development _____

(formerly Employment & Training Generalist)

Business & Jobseeker Specialist _____

(formerly Employment Services Specialist)

Unemployment Insurance Specialist _____

(formerly Tax & Benefits Specialist)

Labor Market Information Specialist _____

Professional References:

The applicant must submit two (2) signed letters of reference: one from an immediate supervisor, and one from another person within the workforce profession that can attest to the individual's experience, knowledge and skills.

The letter should include the following items:

- Statement the applicant is working in a workforce development area
- Statement the applicant possesses extended knowledge of workforce issues
- Reason why the applicant should receive the Certified Workforce Specialist designation
- Contact information of the person writing the letter

Certification Announcement:

The employer and immediate supervisor you list will be informed when you earn the CWS designation.

Name: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Title: _____

Company/Agency: _____

Company/Agency: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Email: _____

Certify

By signing below, I certify the information in this application is accurate, true, and complete to the best of my knowledge. I agree IAWP has the right to contact any person or agency/business to verify this information. I authorize the release of information needed in the verification of information contained in this application to IAWP.

Applicants Signature: _____ Date: _____

Payment

Amount: _____ Certification (\$50)

Payment Method: _____ Check enclosed _____ Charge to Visa or MasterCard

Cardholders Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Signature: _____

Account #: _____ Exp. Date ____/____

Need help explaining what you need from your references? Check out this sample letter to share with them that explains it all!

(Detailed information about the CWS Certification Program (including the application package) can be found on the IAWP website: www.iawponline.org. Information may also be obtained from the Administrative Office at (888) 898-9960.)

To Whom It May Concern:

*This letter is being sent to your attention because a member of the International Association of Workforce Professionals (IAWP) is applying for the **Certified Workforce Specialist (CWS) Certification Program** and would like to request that you provide a Professional Reference letter.*

In order to apply for the CWS certificate, the applicant must meet a minimum requirement based on professional membership, education, and years of current experience in the workforce system. In addition, they must have passed a rigorous competency-based testing program known as the Workforce Professional Development Program (WPDP). The WPDP consists of four modules that cover the following topics: (1) History of Workforce Development, (2) Unemployment Insurance, (3) Labor Market Information, and (4) Business and Job Seeker. Upon completion, the member receives the designation of WPDP Master.

The “CWS” credential after one’s name, though, shows that they are part of an outstanding group of workforce professionals who have extensive knowledge and experience in workforce issues. The designation also shows current and potential employers their initiative in developing, maintaining, and improving their career skills. In addition, it shows that they are respected by their peers, and that they see professional membership as an important part of their career.

Professional Reference Information Needed

*The applicant must submit two (2) **signed** letters of reference: one from an immediate supervisor, and one from another person within the workforce profession that can attest to the individual’s experience, knowledge, and skills.*

The letter should include the following items:

- *Statement the applicant is working in a workforce development area*
- *Statement the applicant possesses extended knowledge of workforce issues*
- *Reason why the applicant should receive the Certified Workforce Specialist designation*
- *Contact information of the person writing the letter*

Please provide the original printed and hand-signed letter to the IAWP member so that they can include it in their application package.

We appreciate you taking the time to compose this letter and providing the opportunity for this individual to show that they possess the knowledge of the employment security and workforce development field.

Thank you.