



## ACT WorkKeys® and the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate™: Questions & Answers for State Policymakers

### ***What is ACT WorkKeys?***

ACT WorkKeys is a set of research-based assessments that measure foundational workplace skills that are broadly relevant across industries and occupations. More than 13 million ACT WorkKeys assessments were administered between September 2008 and June 2014.

ACT WorkKeys assessments yield information that helps individuals document their skills and evaluate career opportunities; helps employers make better decisions about whom to hire, train, and promote; and helps educators across the country prepare their students for the workplace and evaluate curricular outcomes.

*More than  
**13 million**  
ACT WorkKeys  
assessments have  
been administered  
since 2008.*

*More than  
**2.4 million**  
WorkKeys-based  
career readiness  
credentials have  
been issued since  
2006.*

### ***What is the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate?***

The ACT National Career Readiness Certificate (ACT NCRC) is a nationally recognized, portable, assessment-based credential that certifies foundational workplace skills. More than 2.4 million ACT career readiness credentials based on ACT WorkKeys assessments have been issued since 2006.

The ACT NCRC is based on three ACT WorkKeys assessments: Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information, and Locating Information. The skills measured by these three assessments are the foundational cognitive skills most broadly relevant across industries and occupations. Taken in combination, the assessments provide a robust measure of the skills most commonly associated with workplace success.

### ***How do states use ACT WorkKeys and the ACT NCRC?***

States use ACT WorkKeys and the ACT NCRC in a number of settings, including **(1)** high schools, **(2)** workforce development programs, and **(3)** economic development efforts, as discussed below.

### ***How do states use ACT WorkKeys and the NCRC in high schools?***

ACT WorkKeys assessments and the ACT NCRC help educators prepare their students for postsecondary success, help administrators satisfy federal and state accountability requirements, and provide students with a valuable postsecondary credential whether or not they are headed for college.

Eight states administer ACT WorkKeys assessments to their high school juniors or seniors: Alaska, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, North Carolina, North Dakota, South Carolina, and Wyoming. Many also issue the ACT NCRC to eligible students based on the results of the assessments.

***Eight states  
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WorkKeys to their  
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***Workforce  
development  
programs in at  
least***

***30 states  
use ACT WorkKeys  
and/or the ACT  
NCRC.***

### ***How do states use WorkKeys and the NCRC for workforce development?***

ACT WorkKeys assessments and the ACT NCRC help workforce developers assess and remediate the skills of displaced workers, certify the readiness of these workers to re-enter the workforce, and satisfy federal and state accountability requirements. In addition, an aligned ACT Career Curriculum can be used to help individuals prepare for the assessments.

Workforce development programs in at least 30 states use ACT WorkKeys assessments and/or the ACT NCRC: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

### ***How do states use WorkKeys and the ACT NCRC in economic development?***

ACT WorkKeys assessments and the ACT NCRC help economic developers demonstrate the skill level of the local workforce, attract business and industry to local communities, and provide employers with information to make better employment decisions.

As participants in ACT's Certified Work Ready Communities initiative, 17 states use ACT WorkKeys and the ACT NCRC, either statewide or in economic regions, to promote economic development and support local businesses: California, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, and Wyoming.

***ACT's Certified  
Work Ready  
Communities  
initiative includes  
17 states.***

ACT WorkKeys: <http://www.act.org/products/workforce-act-workkeys/>

ACT NCRC: <http://www.act.org/products/workforce-act-national-career-readiness-certificate/>

ACT Work Ready Communities: <http://workreadycommunities.org/>