

As our economy evolves, the role of workforce service providers must evolve to effectively meet job seekers' and employers' needs. Through service integration, Iowa's workforce partners are streamlining services to help workers develop their skills and help employers find qualified workers.

IowaWORKS

Legislation passed in 2008 called for coordination of workforce programs to better serve customers, with the goal of a "One-Stop" service center in each of the 15 workforce regions by 2012. Integration is progressing as Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) regional staff and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) service providers come together under the new "IowaWORKS" brand. Staff in local IowaWORKS offices are integrated into functional service units instead of separated by funding stream, which has transformed the "unemployment offices" into more efficient, customer-focused "employment centers."

ADDRESSING THE SKILLS GAP

Employers with open positions often cite a lack of necessary skills in job seekers, so effective workforce service must go beyond résumé writing and job search assistance. The mission of IowaWORKS is that every person who becomes a member of an integrated workforce center will have the chance to know their skills, improve their skills and get a job with their skills. The goal is to develop job seekers into skilled workers who can sustain and expand Iowa businesses.

FOCUSED AND EFFICIENT

IWD staff and WIA providers are co-locating their offices, coordinating the workforce delivery system, and integrating all workforce and job training programs with an emphasis on skills development. These One-Stop employment centers are more efficient, cost-effective, and customer-focused. Best practices include free workshops that are designed to bridge the skills gap and are open to all job seekers regardless of age, disability, education level or eligibility for a



particular program. Workshops are kept fresh and relevant to the needs of both job seekers and businesses. They range from résumés and interview prep to recommendations for education and training, all designed to position workers for employment or advancement.

Iowa now has nine integrated One-Stops, two integrated field offices, and an integrated transition center, with two more One-Stops to be integrated in summer 2011. From July 2009 through November 2010, more than **47,000** Iowans have become members of their local integrated workforce centers.

FUTURE OF INTEGRATION

Our changing economy demands that workers adapt to emerging fields, so integrated workforce centers will play a crucial role in closing the skills gap. While providing job training is more expensive than foundational services like résumé creation, it has a high return on investment as workers become qualified for open jobs. Workforce centers will need dedicated funding for one-stop infrastructure and operations to preserve training funds that will advance the skills and opportunities for Iowa workers.

INTEGRATION STATUS:

One-Stops:

- Des Moines
- Creston
- Dubuque
- Council Bluffs
- Fort Dodge
- Cedar Rapids
- Burlington
- Mason City
- Waterloo
- Jon Morrell Transition Center (Sioux City)

Integrated Field Offices:

- Newton
- Red Oak

One-Stops opening summer 2011:

- Sioux City
- Ottumwa

