



Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity
OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING
JB Pritzker, Governor

CEJA POLICY: BRIDGE PROGRAM TEST-OUT CRITERIA

POLICY NUMBER: **CEJA 02-PL-25** VERSION NUMBER: **1**
EFFECTIVE DATE: **FEBRUARY 3, 2026** LAST UPDATE: **N/A**

I. ISSUANCES AFFECTED

References:

Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), Public Act 102-0662 as amended.

Illinois Administrative Code Title

Climate Works Preapprenticeship Program Manual (Chapter 7)

Clean Jobs Workforce Network Hubs Program Manual (Chapter 7)

Returning Resident Clean Jobs Training Program (Chapter 7)

Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA) Solar Pipeline Training Program (Chapter 7)

Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA) Multi-Cultural Job Grant Program (Chapter 7)

Rescissions:

None

II. POLICY

The **Bridge Program** is a part of the overall Clean Energy Jobs Curriculum Framework that provides training in workplace safety, job-readiness skills, and clean energy basics to help participants succeed across a range of clean energy industries and workplaces. It prepares participants for the job-specific technical training options offered after the Bridge Program.

While it should be taught before starting job-specific technical training, aspects may be taught concurrently with the technical training component.

Note: For more information about the technical training component, see Chapter 7 in the relevant Program Manual.

This document outlines the conditions, processes, and documentation required to implement and manage test-out options.

1. Bridge Program Structure

The Bridge Program consists of the following components.

a. Pre-Assessment

- 1) Needs Assessment
- 2) Career Assessment
- 3) Reading Assessment
- 4) Math Assessment

- b. Bridge Curriculum
 - 1) Essential Employability Skills 101
 - 2) Clean Energy Basics
 - 3) Intro to Clean Energy Careers
 - 4) Energy and Sustainability Fundamentals
 - 5) Safety Basics (OSHA 10 required)
 - 6) Building Science Principles
 - 7) Construction Basics
 - 8) Electrical Basics
- 2. Bridge Program Test-Out
 - Participants with relevant prior knowledge, training, certifications, or experience may qualify to test out of parts or all the Bridge Program.
 - a. Test-Out Eligibility Criteria
 - Testing-Out Criteria
 - 1) Prior training or coursework in clean energy, safety, or construction.
 - 2) Valid and relevant certifications (e.g., OSHA 10, BPI, NCCER Core).
 - 3) Documented work experience in relevant fields.
 - 4) Demonstrated proficiency in pre-assessments or bridge assessments administered by the grantee.
 - b. Components Eligible for Test-Out
 - The following may be eligible for test-out.
 - 1) Employability Skills 101: Participants are eligible to test out if they pass the provided Essential employability skills assessment.
 - 2) Safety Basics - OSHA 10 required; optional First Aid/CPR: Participants are eligible to test out if the previous OSHA card is less than 3 years old.
 - 3) Building Science Principles: Participants are eligible to test out if they receive a pass on the BPI certification exam and receive a Building Science Principles certificate upon successful completion, completed within the last 3 years.
 - 4) Construction Basics: Participants are eligible to test out if they have previously taken and passed a NCCER-aligned course in the last 3 years.
 - 5) Entire Bridge Program: Participants are eligible to test out Entire Bridge and move directly into job-specific training if all components --Needs, Career, Reading, Math pre-assessments, and the Bridge assessment-- are satisfactory in scoring.
 - c. Documentation Requirements
 - The following documentation must be submitted to qualify for test-out.
 - 1) Official transcripts, certificates, or training records.
 - 2) Proof of valid certifications (e.g., OSHA 10 card, BPI certificate), which must be uploaded into the participant's file.
 - 3) Employer verification or a resume detailing relevant work experience.
 - 4) Completed pre-assessments and bridge assessment scores.
 - d. Participant Consideration
 - 1) Participants who test out of components will only receive a stipend for hours of training that they partake in, within the CEJA program.
 - 2) Participants who test out must wait for job-specific technical training to begin or for the class to catch up.
 - 3) Testing out is optional but requires verification and approval by the grantee.

- 4) Grantees must require OSHA to be retaken if the current credential is over 3 years old, to stay current with safety regulations.

III. IMPLEMENTATION

1. Review the respective CEJA Program Manual to become familiar with the Bridge Program component of the curriculum.
2. Determine if testing-out is an allowable program criterion.
3. Use the Illinois Essential Employability Skills Framework for assessment to help determine the testing-out areas relevant for program participants.
4. Decide on cohort sizes and scheduling flexibility (e.g., offering open entry/exit training formats for cohorts based on need).
5. Ensure all relevant information is entered into the CEJA Reporting System.
6. Regularly communicate with regional CEJA managers for any inquiries or assistance with the implementation.

IV. INQUIRIES

Inquiries should be directed to [the appropriate CEJA Regional Administrator, Larry Dawson at Larry.Dawson@illinois.gov for the Northern Region, Nate Keener at Nate.Keener@illinois.gov for the Central Region, or Michelle Cerutti at Michelle.Cerutti@illinois.gov for the Southern Region].

V. ATTACHMENTS

None

Sincerely,



Julio Rodriguez, Deputy Director
Office of Employment and Training

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