

Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

NEWS RELEASE



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Secretary Heiner Announces Newest ‘Kentucky Work Ready Communities’

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 17, 2017) – Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Secretary Hal Heiner announced today that Barren and Taylor counties have been certified as a Kentucky Work Ready Communities. In addition, Harlan, Laurel and Scott counties have been certified as Kentucky Work Ready Communities in Progress.

“Everything we aspire to economically is contingent on our communities having a skilled workforce that is ready and able to fulfill the needs of employers. Earning the Kentucky Work Ready Communities certification gives counties a competitive edge when businesses are looking for a new location or want to expand in Kentucky. I encourage all communities in the Commonwealth to pursue the Work Ready designation,” Heiner said.

The Kentucky Work Ready Communities certification program from the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB) and the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet assures employers that a local workforce has the talent and skills necessary to staff existing jobs and to master the innovative technologies new jobs will require.

To become certified, a county must gather local support and commitment and apply for the Work Ready Community designation. Counties have to meet criteria in six areas including high school graduation rates, National Career Readiness Certificate holders, demonstrated community commitment, educational attainment, soft-skills development and digital literacy.

Counties that are close to meeting all of the criteria may be designated as Kentucky Work Ready Communities in Progress. To achieve this level, a county must present a viable plan to meet all of the criteria within three years. The designation shows that a community is making strides and working with its business, education, workforce and economic development leaders to set and meet common goals that will give the county an economic edge.

Currently, 85 counties are certified as Work Ready Communities or Work Ready Communities in Progress.

“Momentum is growing for the Kentucky Work Ready Communities program as more communities

learn about the certification and how it can help them achieve a higher level of competitiveness among business and industry,” said Hugh Haydon, chair of KWIB.

Applications for the certification are reviewed by a panel appointed by the KWIB. The panel recommends certification by the board for the counties that satisfy the criteria. The panel meets four times a year to review applications, which can be submitted at any time.

For more information about the Kentucky Work Ready Communities program, go to workready.ky.gov.



Eddie Rogers, Ron McMahan, Executive Director of Team Taylor County, Midge Hunt, Director of Taylor County Adult Learning Center, Michael Hale, Kentucky Work Ready Communities Review Panel and Barren County Judge-Executive, and Tony Young, Mayor City of Campbellsville.