Maryland Annual Collection Systems

Noncredit Workforce Completers System (NWCS)

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Maryland Higher Education Commission
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Noncredit Workforce Completers System (NWCS)

Selection Criteria

The Noncredit Workforce Completers System was developed to capture students who complete a noncredit workforce training program at any time during the collection year. Workforce training completers are those students who have successfully completed a course or series of courses that qualifies students for identifiable occupations or that provides a comprehensive body of knowledge leading to career advancement. Students will be referred to as Completers throughout this document.

This section provides guidance on the criteria to be used for selecting students to include in the NWCS file. Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) relies on institutions to provide accurate and timely data, and has checks in place to ensure data quality. See the Data Elements FAQs section for additional guidance on selection criteria and correct use of data element codes.

1. Which students should be included?
   a. Community College students.
   b. Completers of a noncredit workforce training course or sequence during the collection year (DD159).
   c. Completers of a noncredit workforce training course or sequence during the collection year, in any modality (face to face, online, hybrid, etc.).
   d. Completers regardless of program start date.
   e. Completers of a workforce training course or sequence, regardless whether completion has been conferred within the collection year.
   f. A noncredit workforce training course or sequence with a Course Intent of A, B, or C.
   g. Students ages 16 or older at the beginning of the workforce training course or sequence.
   h. Completers include both FTE eligible and ineligible students.
   i. Completers must have recorded grades for all courses.

2. Which students should be excluded?
   a. Students who have not completed a noncredit workforce training course or sequence during the Collection year.
   b. Students whose completion status cannot be confirmed due to missing grades.
   c. Students under 16 years of age. Do not include Youth Programs, Kids on Campus.
   d. Students who are enrolled in courses with an Intent of D or E.

3. What is the Collection year?
   a. July 1 to June 30.

b. The final course in the workforce training course or sequence ends during the Collection year ([DD159](#)).

c. Completers are included based upon the final date of the workforce course or sequence, not the conferred date.

Data Usage

MHEC uses and analyzes unit record data to answer questions posed by agency, institutional, state and research partners. These data may be included in publications such as the annual Data Book, and the State Plan for Postsecondary Education and be included in dashboards and other reports. See https://mhec.state.md.us/publications/Pages/research/index.aspx for more information.

MHEC provides NWCS data to the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center (MLDSC) through a memorandum of understanding. MHEC data are linked to data from the Maryland State Department of Education, the Maryland Department of Labor, and other state and national data. The mission of the MLDS Center is to develop and maintain a data system that contains student data from all levels of education and workforce data in order to provide analyses, produce relevant information, and inform choices to improve student and workforce outcomes, while ensuring the highest standards of system security and data privacy. MHEC data are critical to the MLDSC fulfilling its mission. Reports that include MHEC data can be found at https://mldscenter.maryland.gov/CenterOutput.html.

Data Element FAQs

1. When is NCWS data submission due?
   a. NCWS data is reported by December 1st.
2. Which students are included?
   a. See Selection Criteria Section, Item 1.
3. Which students should be excluded?
   a. See Selection Criteria Section, Item 2.
4. What completion period is included?
   a. See Selection Criteria Section, Item 3.
5. What constitutes a Workforce Training Course or Sequence?
   a. All Workforce Training courses or sequences must have Intent Codes of A, B, or C.
   b. A course or sequence is an approved noncredit certificate program leading to apprenticeships, employment, licensure, or job skill enhancement at a Maryland Community College.
   c. Include students who complete courses or sequences that directly contribute to employment opportunities, career advancement, and/or industry credentials.

      d.   Enrollments in programs that are considered add-on workforce credentials such as CPR, boating safety, motorcycle safety, and driver education (non-CDL) **should not** be included not be included in the NWCS.

6. What if my workforce training sequence does not require a specific sequence or order?
   a. A course sequence should contain all required courses but does not necessarily require courses to be taken in a specific order.

7. Should a student be included if they have completed coursework in a collection year but have missing grades?
   a. No, students with missing grades should be excluded from the report.

8. Why is the Social Security Number the preferred Identification Number?
   a. The SSN is used to match wage data.
   b. When a student moves from one institution to another, MHEC must be able to detect the movement and the only way to do so is through the use of the SSN identifier.

9. What is reported if no Identification Number (DD5) is available or more than one Identification Number is available?
   a. Follow definition provided for DD5 Identification Number. The Identification Number cannot be blank.

10. If the student's Identification Number (DD5) is the nine-digit institution-assigned ID, do I have to also provide the institution assigned ID in the Local Campus Student ID field (DD8)?
    a. Yes. Because the Identification Number provided for the student is 1) used to uniquely identify the student in the data and 2) scrambled to protect identity, the value in that field is necessary for all student records.

11. What if the institution assigned substitute number is less than nine digits?
    a. Leading zeros can be added to make the string nine digits.

12. Why is it important to use the same student identifier (DD5) with each file submission?
    a. MHEC produces trend analyses and reports that link identifiers from year to year and it is important to ensure that the identifier is consistent with the prior year for an accurate results. In addition, MHEC links identifiers from one data collection to another; again, it is important that identifiers are consistent across collections for accurate results.

13. How should I report students who report gender as "unknown" (DD21)?
    a. Students missing gender should be assigned evenly between codes 3 and 4 by the institution. See instructions in DD21.

14. What is reported if the Birthdate (DD27) is unknown?
    a. If the birthdate is unknown use 00000000 (8 zeros). If the birth year is known but the month and date are unknown, report the YYYY0000.

15. What is reported if the Current Zip Code (DD29) is unknown?
    a. If the zip code is unknown use 00000, if the current zip code is a non-US zip code, use 99999.

16. When is a student considered a resident of Maryland for NWCS reporting purposes (DD110)?
    a. A student who's residence (domicile) is in Maryland.

17. If U.S. Citizenship is unknown, can it be left blank?
    a. No, refer to DD165
18. What is reported if the student does not indicate whether they are of Hispanic or Latino origin (DD25)?
    a. If the student does not provide a response. Leave the field blank.
19. What is reported if the student did not indicate Race (DD26.1, DD26.2, DD26.3, DD26.4, DD26.5)?
    a. If students does not self-identify any of the options available under race, leave the field blank.
20. What is reported if the student selects more than one Race DD26.1, DD26.2, DD26.3, DD26.4, DD26.5)?
    a. Include the appropriate numeric value for each race selected in the appropriate race field(s).
21. What if I don't know the Subject Area?
    a. The Subject Area is the four-digit CIP Code of the predominate type of course as identified on the CC-10 for that course. Data submitted for the FY21 reporting period should utilize the 2010 CIP codes.
22. What if the sequence of courses contains courses that do not use the same CIP code?
    a. Institutions should report the CIP code of the predominant type of course in the sequence as identified on the CC-10 for that course.
23. What is the difference between the Course or Sequence Date Completed (DD159) and the Conferred Date (DD160)?
    a. The Course or Sequence Date Completed is the date that the student has successfully completed all of the requirements for the Completer. This is most frequently the last day of the completer course. The Conferred Date is the date that the institution confers an award, e.g. Certificate, if appropriate.
    b. The Conferred Date can be after the end of the Collection year as long as the final course in the workforce course or sequence is finished during the Collection year.
    c. Completers are included in the report based upon the end date of the final course in the workforce course or sequence, not the date conferred.
24. When is Date Conferred (DD160) reported?
    a. A conferral date is reported when an award is conferred for completion of course or course sequence competencies. Awards are not conferred based upon attendance alone. Note, this field might not be utilized by all programs or colleges. If not applicable enter 99999999.
25. What if Licensure or Certification (DD163) is unknown?
    a. Licensure or Certification is identified for each course or sequence of courses, not for each student so the outcome should be known at the course or sequence level and this is what informs DD163 Licensure or Certification.
26. How is licensure/certification defined?
    a. If the sequence prepares the student for licensure or industry certification.
        i. Use code 1 if an industry certification/licensure exam is external to the requirements for completion of the course or sequence.

        ii.   Use code 2 if passing of an industry certification/licensure exam is required for successful completion of the course or sequence of courses.

        iii.   Use code 3 if industry certification/licensure is awarded upon completion of course work.

        iv.   Use code 4 if there is not an industry certification or licensure for the course or sequence.

        v.   Use code 9 if none of the above.

27. What are Instructional Hours (DD161) and how are they reported?
    a. The number of instructional hours for the workforce training course or sequence of courses.
    b. Report either the State hours or the Contact hours. Round to no more than 2 significant decimal places.
    c. Instructional hours must be six digits, with one decimal point (####.##), even if the instructional hours are a whole number. Add leading zeros to instructional hours if less than six digits, e.g. 0037.25, represents a 37.25 hour class. Add zeros after the decimal point if the instructional hours are a whole number, e.g. 0038.00.

28. What are Hours Type (DD162)?
    a. This is the type of hours reported in the Instructional Hours (DD161) field.
    b. Contact hours are the number of instructional hours for the workforce training course or sequence of courses. Report hours as no more than 2 significant decimal places.
    c. State hours are the number of contact hours multiplied by 1.2 and rounded to two significant decimal places.

29. What if my course or sequence of courses is not included in the Course or Sequence Type?
    a. Each course or sequence should have a Course or Sequence Type. Locate the Course or Sequence type by first choosing the 2-digit CIP code for the course or sequence as identified in the Subject Area field, then refer to the crosswalk to identify the Course or Sequence Type. The crosswalk is available on the MHEC Secure Data Web (add page hyperlink). The list is reviewed and updated annually.
    b. All students with the same Course or Sequence Name (DD157) should have the same Course or Sequence Type (DD164). The Licensure or Certification (DD163) should be the same. If there are variations of the Course or Sequence Name (DD157), used for separate or unique sections, then the Course or Sequence Type (DD164) or the Licensure or Certification (DD163) may differ as well.

30. Does MHEC review my submission?
    a. **The formal review process will be developed during the pilot.**
    b. Institutional submissions are reviewed in two stages. The first stage performs Edit Checks. After year 1 of the pilot, visit MHEC's Data Web webpage for more information on Edit Checks. The second stage performs data validation and logic checks for data quality and data consistency. The Data Web webpage will have information on data validation after the first year of the pilot.

c. The relationship between Course or Sequence Name (DD157) and the values
    entered for Instructional Hours (DD161), Licensure or Certification (DD163),
    Course or Sequence Type (DD164), and Subject Area (DD166) will not be
    validated. Institutions are encouraged to review their data prior to submission
    to make sure that all students with the same value in DD157have correct values
    in these four fields. In most instances, all students with the same value in DD157
    will have the same values in DD161, DD163, DD164, and DD166.