

## Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

The United States needs a strong technical workforce. However, employers need workers with industry-recognized skills credentials.

The right workers with the right skills at the right time drive innovation, increases productivity, and enable employers to remain globally competitive. Workforce development provides workers with the right skills to access employment and advancement opportunities. An important step in addressing the skills gap to accomplish workforce development opportunities was the enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in July 2014.

WIOA is part of the solution. WIOA replaces the Workforce Investment Act, a long-expired program that provided structure and funding for Workforce Investment Boards around the country with a goal of improving worker training. WIOA improved on WIA by eliminating duplicative programs, streamlining processes and placing an emphasis on the need for industry-recognized credentials. Specifically, SMRP has endorsed the following provisions for impactful workforce development:

- **Targeted Workforce Services That Better Serve Job Seekers:** WIOA promotes the use of career pathways and sector partnerships with state and local workforce regulators to increase employment of in-demand industries and occupations. WIOA requires states to identify economic regions within their state, and local areas are to coordinate planning and service delivery on a regional basis.
- **Nationally Recognized Credentials and Accountability:** The law streamlines skills certification programs by prioritizes credentials that verify the core effectiveness skills, foundational academic skills, general workplace skills and industry-specific skills necessary for individuals to succeed in virtually all entry-level jobs.
- **Higher Accountability and Outcome Data Reporting:** With a new performance measure on state's, the law puts a strong focus on skills training that leads to an industry-recognized, postsecondary credential valued by employers. New goals and performance measures are built into the law to track progress on this front.
- **Upskilling Employees:** WIOA allows funds to provide a variety of worker training, and it adds new support for employers to offer customized, on-the-job training by reimbursing companies for up to 75 percent of each eligible employee's wages.

SMRP knows the importance of industry-recognized credentials for upward mobility. The [Certified Maintenance & Reliability Professional \(CMRP\) program](#) is the #1 leading credentialing program for certifying the knowledge, skills and abilities of maintenance and



reliability professionals. The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited certification was developed to assess professionals' aptitude within the five (5) pillars of the Maintenance and Reliability Body of Knowledge: Business Management, Equipment Reliability, Manufacturing Process Reliability, Organization and Leadership, and Work Management. WIOA provides more access and opportunities for CMRP certifications.

The [Certified Maintenance & Reliability Technician \(CMRT\) program](#) is the #1 credentialing program for the knowledge, skills and abilities of maintenance and reliability technicians. The certification assesses the knowledge and skills of those responsible for preventative, predictive and corrective maintenance, multi-skilled individuals who play a critical role in the success of organizations worldwide. The CMRT exam tests competency and knowledge of specific tasks within four (4) domains: Maintenance Practices, Preventative and Predictive Maintenance, Troubleshooting and Analysis, and Corrective Maintenance.

Colleges have utilized both the societies CMRP and CMRT credentials to identify student completion of key competency benchmarks. WIOA acknowledges that industry-recognized credentials, such as CMRP and CMRT are critical for upward development as it can assist schools with their training program.

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SMRP is a 5,000-member professional society formed to develop and promote excellence in the maintenance, reliability, and physical asset management industry. Maintenance and reliability jobs are skilled positions that provide competitive advantages to the companies that employ them. SMRP members consist of engineers, operations managers, repair and reliability technicians, worksite and project planners, and other service providers.