

Bridges to Career Opportunities (BCO) Core Components

1. Bridge Component
1. Instruction is designed to:
a. Address an explicit career pathway in a growth sector or industry
b. Include an academic pathway that accompanies the career pathway
c. Teach basic skills that boost math, reading, English, and/or digital literacy to the level clients need to access community college, vocational training, or other credentialing programs and that are contextualized to a specific sector/industry or career path and prepares clients for occupational skills training and “middle-skills” jobs
d. Based on an industry-specific curriculum that is aligned with a career pathway
e. Enable clients to attain “industry-recognized” credentials that lead to postsecondary credential or degree
f. Have a measurable endpoint (e.g., skill gain, placement test score for next educational program, credential) or clearly defined completion criteria
2. Assessment:
a. Is used to determine client participation and involves the specification of criterion levels on skills assessments or “clearly defined entry criteria”
b. Involves the administration of pre-and post-test skills assessments to clients
3. Career Coaching:
a. Is provided on an ongoing basis during instruction
b. Connects the academic & career pathways for clients
2. Financial Coaching/Education Component
a. Complete Combined Financial Assessment (CFA), including financial profile, budget, balance, and credit information, and update when changes occur
b. Regular one-on-one interaction with clients about financial status is conducted through bridge program and beyond
c. Credit report is run at least every 6 months during client’s participation
d. Financial products are used in coaching clients
e. Financial workshops may be integrated into contextualized ABE or bridge course
3. Income Supports Component
a. Client’s screening of public benefits is conducted, (e.g., SNAP, medical benefits, childcare subsidies)
b. Clients are connected to supports to enable them to remain in training
c. Client’s supports are reassessed as client’s situation changes (e.g., new job)
4. Employment Services Component
a. Assistance is provided to clients in preparing job search materials (e.g., resume, cover letter)
b. Job search activities are conducted with clients (e.g., mock interview)
c. Counseling or coaching on job search, employment retention, and career advancement is provided to clients
d. Support is provided to clients as necessary as clients explore career pathway
e. Placement or job opportunities are discussed with clients
f. Job advancement opportunities are discussed with clients
5. Other Requirements for BCO Core Components
a. Target population(s) of participants for BCO intervention is specified in terms of clients’ skill level, other relevant characteristics
b. Employment coaching, financial coaching, and income supports are delivered in an integrated fashion
c. The Bridge component is designed as the “platform” for FOC services
d. Supports for clients begin in the Bridge services and continue post-placement
e. BCO staff develop connections with employers
f. The supports provided in the FOC services occur at one physical location