



## Alaska Postsecondary Access and Completion Network **Definition of Postsecondary Credential**

**The Alaska Postsecondary Access and Completion Network encourages completion of a broader range of credentials**, to include any education degree or certificate, registered apprenticeship, industry recognized certificate, certification, or license valued and awarded by professional groups, industry, vendors, government agencies, colleges, universities or technical schools in recognition of an individual's attainment of measurable skills ***that lead to employment, higher wages, career advancement, and/or increased job security.***

### **Credentials may have one or more of the following characteristics:**

- Sought or accepted by employers within the industry or sector involved as a recognized, preferred, or required credential for recruitment, screening, hiring, retention or advancement purposes
- Time-limited – requiring renewal; or awarded for life
- Legally required to perform certain jobs
- Portable – skills learned are transferable and provide broad opportunities
- Stackable – skills learned lead to opportunities for continuous or advanced training and education

**The Network uses the U.S. Census Bureau's definition** of degrees and *certification, licenses, or educational certificates\** to track progress towards the attainment goal of 65% by 2025.

*Certification:* "A credential awarded by a certification body based on an individual demonstrating through an examination process that he or she has acquired the designated knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform a specific job. The examination can be either written, oral, or performance based. Certification is a time-limited credential that is renewed through a recertification process."

*License:* "A credential awarded by a licensing agency based on pre-determined criteria. The criteria may include some combination of degree attainment, certifications, certificates, assessment, apprenticeship programs, or work experience. Licenses are time-limited and must be renewed periodically."



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*Educational Certificate:* "A credential awarded by a training provider or educational institution based on completion of all requirements for a program of study, including coursework and test or other performance evaluations. Certificates are typically awarded for life (like a degree). Certificates of attendance or participation in a short-term training (e.g., one day) are not in the definitional scope for educational certificates."

EXAMPLES OF INCLUDED CREDENTIALS: doctorate, master's, bachelor's, and associates degrees, apprenticeship programs; occupational licenses such as: commercial driver's license (CDL), cosmetology license, massage therapy, dental hygienist or assistant, radiological technician, certified nursing assistant (CNA), welding, certificate, IT certifications (such as Certified Information Systems Securities Professional), paralegal/legal assistant, engineering technician, MSHA certifications, ASE certifications, NCCER credentials, etc.

EXAMPLES OF NOT INCLUDED CREDENTIALS: certificate of attendance at a conference, completion of professional development workshops, regular driver's license, etc.

\*<https://www.census.gov/prod/2014pubs/p70-138.pdf>