

Lebanon County Career and Technical Center (LCCTC)

1. Program Overview

The Cooperative Education (Co-op) Program at Lebanon County Career and Technical Center (LCCTC) is designed to provide students with meaningful, supervised work-based learning experiences that complement their career and technical education (CTE) coursework. This program bridges classroom instruction with real-world employment, allowing students to apply technical skills in a professional setting while gaining valuable workplace experience.

The Co-op Program aligns with the Pennsylvania Department of Education's guidelines and supports the development of career readiness competencies outlined in the PA Career Education and Work Standards. It serves as a capstone experience for students enrolled in approved CTE programs, offering them the opportunity to:

- Apply academic and technical knowledge in a real-world context
- Develop employability skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving
- Explore career pathways and make informed postsecondary decisions
- Build professional networks and gain references for future employment

Participation in the Cooperative Education Program is considered a privilege, not a right. Only students who demonstrate academic responsibility, professional behavior, and readiness for the workplace will be placed in the program. Continued participation is contingent upon maintaining these standards. Students who do not continue to earn this privilege may be removed from the program.

The program is structured to ensure that all placements are educational in nature, supervised by qualified personnel, and compliant with state and federal labor laws. It is a collaborative effort involving students, employers, parents/guardians, and LCCTC staff, particularly the Co-op Coordinator, who oversees the program's implementation and ensures its alignment with educational goals.

Through cooperative education, LCCTC aims to enhance student engagement, improve career outcomes, and strengthen partnerships with local businesses and industries.

2. Eligibility Requirements

To ensure students are prepared for the responsibilities of a workplace environment and to maintain compliance with Pennsylvania Department of Education guidelines, the Cooperative Education Program at LCCTC has established the following eligibility criteria:

A. Grade Level

- The Cooperative Education Program is designed for 12th grade students who are preparing to transition into the workforce or post-secondary education.
 - 3rd year students will be considered if they meet the requirements, on a case by case basis.

B. Enrollment in an Approved CTE Program

- Students must be enrolled in a Pennsylvania Department of Education-approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) program at LCCTC.
- The co-op placement must be directly related to the student's program of study.

3. Academic Standing

- Students must have a minimum grade of 80% in their CTE program.
- Students must be passing all academic classes at the time of placement and throughout the duration of the co-op experience.
- LCCTC will monitor academic grades twice per quarter to ensure continued eligibility.
- If a student's grades fall below these standards, they may be removed from the cooperative education experience.
- Reinstatement into the program is contingent upon:
 - o The students improving their academic performance to meet the eligibility criteria, and
 - o The employer agreeing to allow the student to return to the worksite.

First-Quarter Placement Requirements

Students seeking co-op placement beginning in the first quarter of their senior year must have met the following criteria by the end of their 11th-grade year:

- Achieved an overall grade of 80% or higher in their LCCTC program.
- Passed all courses at their sending/home high school.
- Had no more than one office referral per quarter during 11th grade.
- Maintained acceptable attendance, defined as:
 - o No more than one unexcused absence per quarter and/or tardies.
 - o No more than three excused absences per quarter and/or tardies.

Mid-Year or Later Placement Requirements

Students applying for co-op after the first quarter of 12th grade must meet the same academic, behavioral, and attendance standards based on their most recent completed quarter.

4. Attendance and Discipline

Workplace Attendance

- Students are expected to report to their co-op placement on time and as scheduled.
- Any absences must be reported in advance to both the employer and the LCCTC Co-op Coordinator.
- Excessive absences or tardiness may result in removal from the program.

Enhanced Attendance and Time Tracking

- LCCTC will implement enhanced time tracking using geolocation-based clock-in and clock-out tools for all cooperative education students.
- This system will serve as the official record of student attendance and daily work hours.
- Students are responsible for using the system accurately and consistently. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action or removal from the program.

Professional Conduct

- Students must always demonstrate professional behavior while at their worksite.
- This includes appropriate dress, respectful communication, and adherence to workplace policies and safety procedures.
- Students are expected to represent LCCTC positively and uphold the values of responsibility, integrity, and accountability.

Disciplinary Action

- Any disciplinary issues reported by the employer or observed by LCCTC staff may result in:
 - A formal warning
 - A probationary period
 - Removal from the co-op program, depending on the severity or recurrence of the behavior
- Students must maintain good standing at both LCCTC and their home school district.
- Suspension from either LCCTC or the home district will result in automatic removal from the worksite during the suspension period.

Ongoing Monitoring

- The Co-op Coordinator will maintain regular communication with employers to monitor student performance and behavior.
- Students are expected to respond promptly to any concerns raised and take corrective action when necessary.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Student Responsibilities

- Maintain eligibility by meeting academic, attendance, and behavioral expectations.
- Report to the worksite on time and follow all workplace rules and safety procedures.
- Use the geolocation-based time tracking system to clock in and out daily.
- Communicate promptly with the employer and Co-op Coordinator regarding absences or issues.
- Complete all required documentation as mandated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, including:
 - Training agreements
 - Evaluations
 - Weekly work logs
 - Proof of pay (paystubs) — submitted weekly or biweekly, depending on the employer's pay schedule
- Failure to submit any of the required documentation on time will result in removal from the co-op program.
- Represent LCCTC in a professional and respectful manner at all times.
- Possess a valid driver's license and have reliable transportation to and from the worksite. LCCTC does not provide transportation.
- Obtain and maintain a valid Pennsylvania work permit if under the age of 18.
- Report in person to LCCTC biweekly to fulfill the state-mandated 60 minutes per week or 120 minutes every two weeks of related instruction.
- Attend mandatory Co-op Student Report Days, held every other Friday at LCCTC.
 - If a student is absent from two report days within a single marking period, they will be removed from the co-op experience.

Employer Responsibilities

- Provide a safe, structured, and educational work environment aligned with the student's CTE program.
- Designate a qualified supervisor to mentor and evaluate the student.
- Complete and sign the training agreement and training plan in collaboration with LCCTC.
- Provide regular feedback on the student's performance and notify the Co-op Coordinator of any concerns.
- Comply with all applicable labor laws, including child labor and workers' compensation regulations.

Program Instructor Responsibilities

- Guide and support students in meeting the academic and technical requirements of their CTE program.
- Communicate regularly with the Co-op Coordinator to discuss student progress, worksite experiences, and any concerns that may arise.
- Assist in preparing students for workplace expectations, including professionalism, safety, and skill development relevant to their trade area.
- Participate in the development and review of training agreements and plans to ensure alignment with program objectives.
- Monitor student performance and provide feedback to both the student and the Co-op Coordinator as needed.
- Serve as a resource for employers regarding curriculum content, credentialing, and industry standards.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

- Support the students' participation by ensuring they have a valid driver's license and reliable transportation to and from the worksite. Transportation is not provided by LCCTC.
- Ensure that the student obtains a valid Pennsylvania work permit if under 18 years of age.
- Review and sign all required documents, including the training agreement and emergency contact forms.
- Maintain open communication with LCCTC staff regarding the student's progress and any concerns.

Co-op Coordinator Responsibilities

- Oversee the placement, monitoring, and evaluation of all co-op students.
- Ensure all eligibility requirements are met prior to placement.
- Facilitate the development of training agreements and plans with students and employers.
- Conduct regular site visits and maintain communication with employers to monitor student progress.
- Track student attendance, academic performance, and behavior throughout the program.
- Serve as the primary point of contact for students, families, and employers.

6. Legal and Safety Compliance

Child Labor Laws

- Students under the age of 18 must have a valid Pennsylvania work permit.
- Work hours, job duties, and conditions must comply with the Pennsylvania Child Labor Law and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).
- Prohibited occupations and hazardous work restrictions must be strictly followed.
 - Some LCCTC trade areas may qualify as hazardous occupations (HOs) under federal or state law.
 - If a student is placed in a trade area classified as hazardous, the employer must comply with all applicable HO exemptions and safety requirements.
 - Failure to meet these requirements will result in the placement being disqualified as a co-op opportunity.

Workers' Compensation

- Employers must provide workers' compensation coverage for all co-op students.
- Proof of coverage must be documented in the training agreement.

Training Agreement and Plan

- A state-mandated training agreement must be signed by the student, parent/guardian, employer, and Co-op Coordinator before placement begins.
- A training plan must outline the student's job duties, learning objectives, and supervision structure.

Workplace Safety

- Employers must provide a safe and compliant work environment.
- Students must receive job-specific safety training before beginning work.
- LCCTC recommends students complete OSHA 10-Hour General Industry or Construction Safety Training prior to placement.

Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity

- All co-op placements must comply with federal and state nondiscrimination laws.

Clearance and Background Checks

- Employers and supervisors working directly with students may be subject to background checks or clearances, depending on the nature of the placement and the student's age.
- Pennsylvania law requires background checks for individuals who have direct contact with students.
- Required clearances:
 - o PA State Police Criminal History Check
 - o PA Child Abuse History Clearance
 - o FBI Federal Criminal History Record (CHRI)
- FBI clearance may be waived for those who have lived in PA for the last 10 years and sign the Disclosure Statement for Volunteers.

Monitoring and Compliance

- The LCCTC Co-op Coordinator will conduct a site visit at least once every 30 days.
- During each site visit, both the student and their immediate supervisor must be present.
- The Co-op Coordinator will also maintain regular communication with employers.
- Violations or unsafe conditions must be reported immediately and may result in removal from the program.

7. Documentation and Evaluation

Accurate documentation and regular evaluation are essential components of the Cooperative Education Program. These processes ensure compliance with state regulations, track student progress, and maintain accountability for all participants.

Required Documentation

The following documents are mandated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and must be completed, submitted, and maintained throughout the duration of the co-op experience:

- Training Agreement – Signed by the student, parent/guardian, employer, and Co-op Coordinator outlining the responsibilities of each party.
- Training Plan – A detailed plan aligning job duties with the student's CTE program competencies and learning objectives.
- Evaluations – Regular performance evaluations completed by the employer (typically quarterly).
- Weekly Work Logs – Documenting tasks, hours worked, and learning reflections.
- Proof of Pay (Paystubs) – Submitted weekly or biweekly, depending on employer pay schedule, to verify employment status.

Submission and Deadlines

- All documentation must be submitted on time to the Co-op Coordinator.
- Failure to submit required documentation may result in a reduction to grades, disciplinary action, and possible removal from the program.

Evaluation Process

- The Co-op Coordinator will review all submitted materials and conduct monthly site visits to observe performance and gather feedback.
- Students will be evaluated on:
 - o Employer evaluations
 - o Attendance and punctuality
 - o Documentation quality and timeliness
 - o Professional conduct

Recordkeeping

- LCCTC maintains a secure file for each student, which may be audited by state representatives to verify program compliance.

8. Support for Special Populations

LCCTC is committed to ensuring equity, access, and success for all students participating in the Cooperative Education Program, including those with disabilities, IEPs, 504 Plans, English Language Learners (ELLs), and other special populations under the Perkins V Act.

Accommodation and Modifications

- Students with IEPs or 504 Plans are entitled to accommodation during both classroom and co-op experiences.
- The Co-op Coordinator collaborates with Special populations and the IEP team:
 - o Participation in IEP or 504 meeting to appropriately align the co-op experience with the students transitions goals

Collaboration and Support

- The Co-op Coordinator will attend IEP/504 meetings when co-op is considered a transition service.
- Ongoing communication among all parties supports student success.

Non-Discrimination

- All placements must comply with Title VI, Title IX, ADA, Section 504, and the PA Human Relations Act.

Additional Support

- Transportation, scheduling, assistive technology, and job coaching are reviewed individually, during IEP/504 team meetings, to ensure access and success.

9. Final Provisions and Program Integrity

The Cooperative Education Program at LCCTC is an extension of the student's educational experience and upholds high standards of integrity and accountability.

Program Accountability

- Participation is a privilege based on academic effort, responsible behavior, and workplace readiness.
- All parties must maintain communication and meet responsibilities to ensure continued eligibility.
- Students may be removed for failing to meet academic, behavioral, legal, or procedural expectations.

Program Adjustments and Termination

- The Co-op Coordinator may adjust placements or remove students due to:
 - o Ineligibility
 - o Disciplinary action
 - o Employer concerns
 - o Safety issues
 - o Missing required documentation

Annual Program Review

- LCCTC evaluates the program annually to ensure alignment with state guidelines and workforce needs.
- Feedback from stakeholders informs ongoing improvement.

Contact Information

Questions about the Co-op Program should be directed to:

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Reference Links and Resources

[PDE Cooperative Education Guidelines for Administration \(PDF\)](#)

[CareerTechPA Compliance Document \(PDF\)](#)

[Career Ready Lancaster - Cooperative Education Guidelines](#)

[PA Department of Education Clearances Portal](#)

[Disclosure Statement for Volunteers \(PDF\)](#)