

Career Pathways System Overview

An Introduction to the Career Pathway System

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), enacted on July 22, 2014 requires cross-system alignment; education and training that is focused on the needs of high-demand industry sectors and occupations; regional collaborations focused on the skill needs of regional economies; and the establishment of career pathways systems that make it easier for all employment seekers to attain the education, skills and credentials needed for family-supporting jobs and careers. Career pathways programs offer a clear sequence, or pathway, of educational coursework (including English language acquisition) and/or training credentials aligned with employer-validated work readiness standards and competencies along with appropriate support services.

Benefits of Career Pathways

Career pathways can offer employment seekers, as well as current workers desiring to advance their employment status, an efficient and customer-centered approach to training and education by connecting, often through co-enrollment, the necessary adult basic education, occupational training, postsecondary education, career and academic advising, and support services for them to prepare for, obtain, and progress in a career (USD OE).

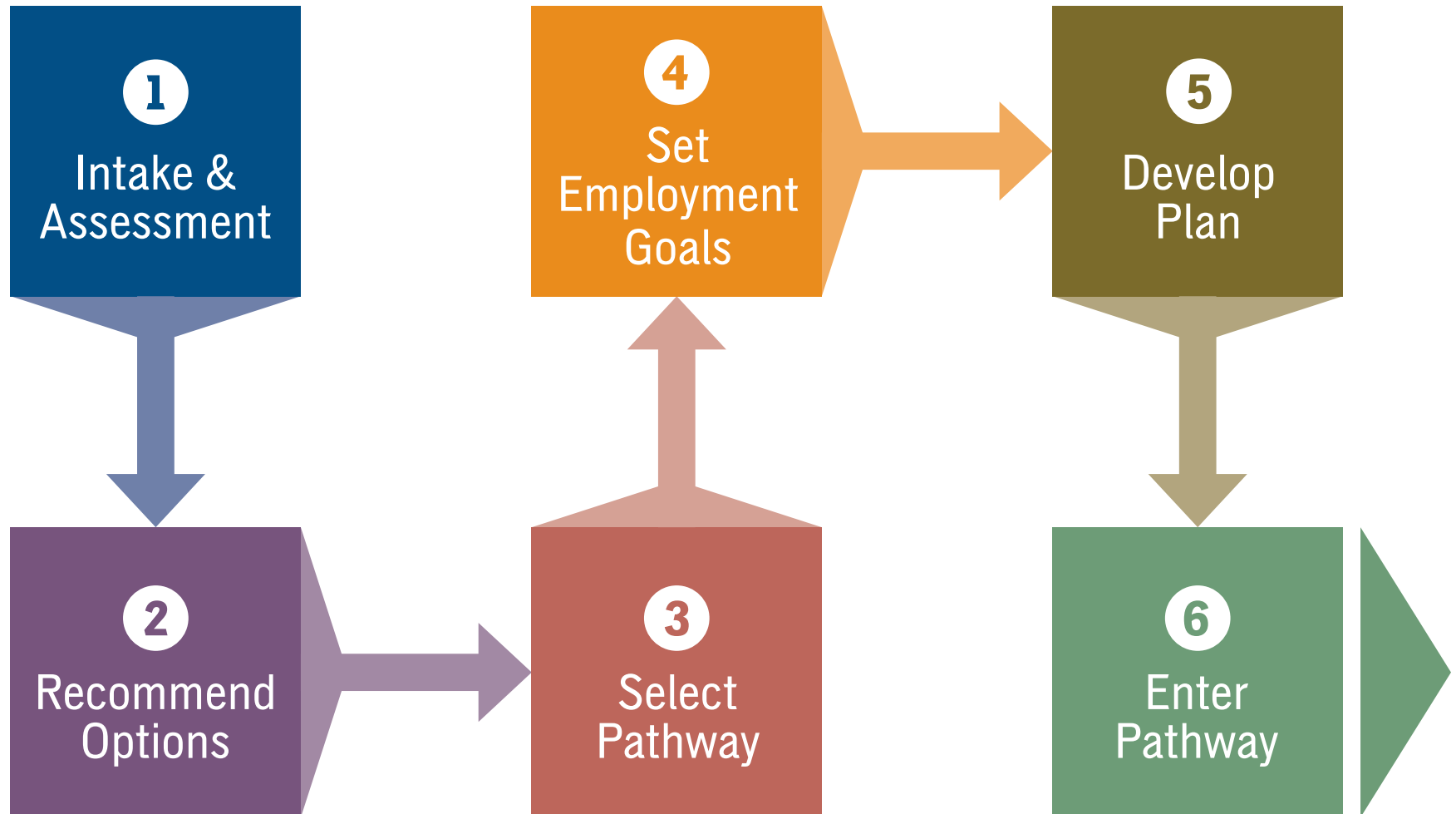
Career pathways help employment seekers and incumbent workers think about their employment in terms of careers and career advancement, and not just about obtaining a single job. Career pathways provide people in low-wage jobs or with few skills the opportunity to obtain better jobs. Pathways increase participant motivation as they: can gain a clearer understanding of how the pathway leads them from one employment opportunity to the next; understand the estimated timelines for completion; experience success as they progress and meet benchmarks; and receive guidance and tools to help make informed decisions about their next steps.

Flexibility of Career Pathways

Although the model shows sequential steps toward goal attainment, participant progress is not always linear. An important element of career pathways is the inclusion of multiple points of entry and exit. Depending on prior education, skills, and/or work experience, the pathway may be entered at various points. Likewise, personal situations, the need for immediate employment, or even a change in the career goal may lead someone to exit the pathway. As part of supporting participants, it should be made clear how they can reenter the pathway.

NOTE: The list of resources, requirements and employment opportunities for each pathway is not comprehensive. They are included as starting points and they can be built upon and adapted to the specific career goals of each participant.

Career Pathways Roadmap



Career Pathways Process

1 Intake & Assessment

Typically occurs at a Workforce Solutions or Adult Education location.

Assessment of skills and needs (high school completion, foundational academics, work readiness, support services and English language acquisition)

Initial identification of career interests and alignment check with existing skills/experience

Unskilled jobs may be necessary while participants progress on their career pathway. While immediate employment may not require any special training or degrees, workers should possess/demonstrate the following work readiness skills:

- Ability to learn on the job
- Ability to follow directions/instructions
- Patience
- Positive attitude.

If other skills and training are needed for workers to obtain an unskilled job, this should be included in their development plan. Job types include custodians, fast food workers, housekeepers, furniture movers, retail workers, *etc.*

2 Recommendations

Results of the assessments and career interest survey are used to develop a short list of recommended career pathway options that are likely to be successful. The list, along with detailed information about the pathway options are then reviewed and discussed with the participant.

3 Pathway Selection

Based on feedback shared in the recommendation phase, participant makes a pathway selection.

4 Employment Goals

The agency works with the participant to develop immediate, mid-term, and long-term employment goals which align with current levels of education/experience and the planned milestones.

5 Plan Development

After pathway selection, the agency works with the participant to develop an education and training plan which includes an overall timeline, as well as the timeframe for key milestones.

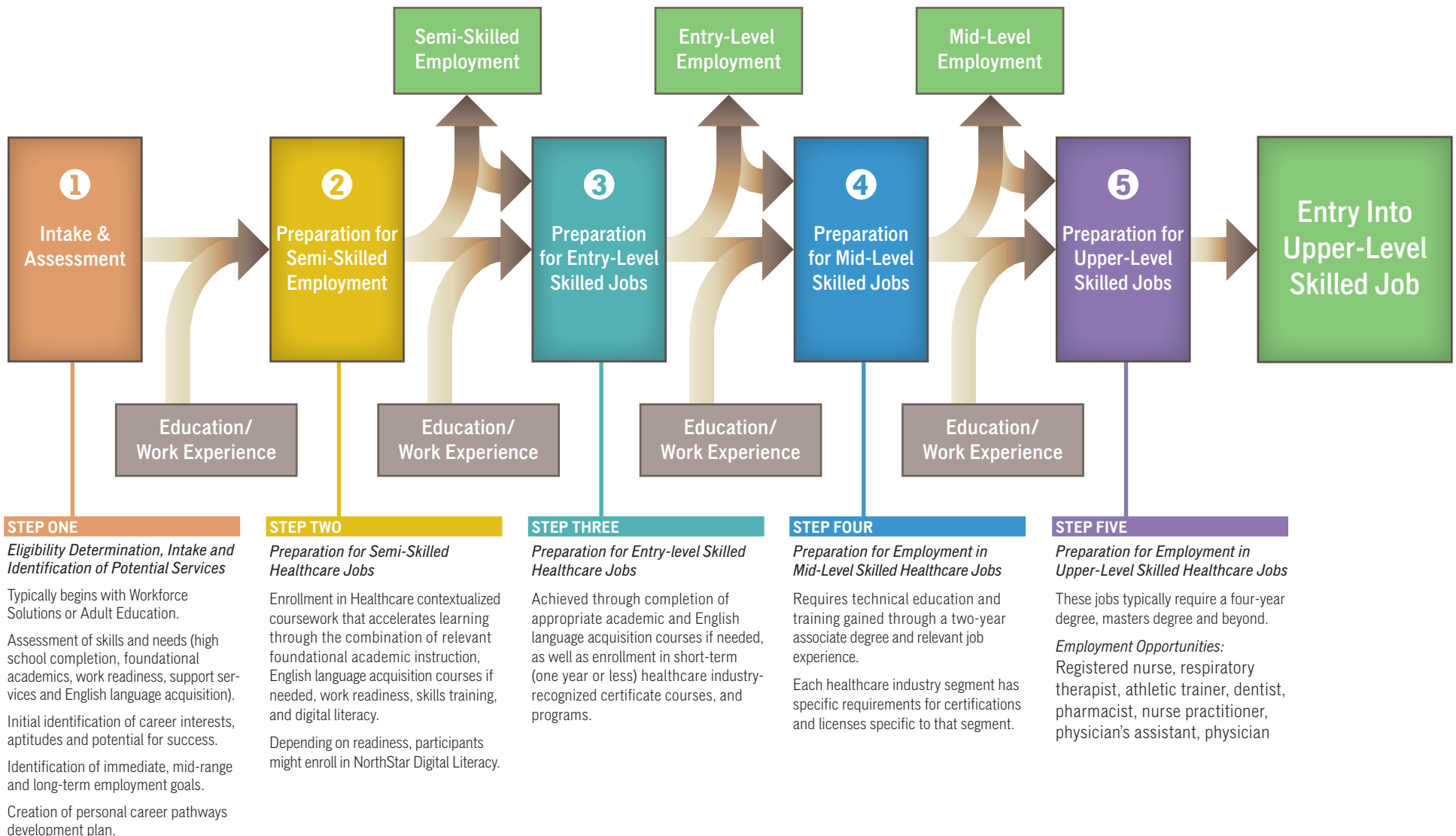
6 Pathway Engagement

The participant begins their career pathway journey with regular check-ins and guidance from the agency. As progress is made along the pathway, the agency guides the participant to improved employment opportunities as those milestones are achieved. The agency also works with the participant to make any needed adjustments to the plan along the way to help ensure the success of the participant.

Healthcare Career Pathway

The Healthcare Pathway provides a map for entry into multiple areas of employment for those interested in working in this rapidly-growing industry. This Pathway provides multiple entry and exit points and is suitable for those with little or no professional work experience to those interested in entering positions requiring years of education and advanced degrees.

Employment opportunities along this pathway include working directly with patients, serving in clerical and record-keeping positions, conducting medical research, staffing labs, or managing a medical facility. Depending on the employment goal, educational and training requirements vary widely—high school completion, industry-recognized certifications, two-year degree, four-year degree, and advanced degrees with increasing levels of specialty all offer employment entry points.



Healthcare Career Pathway Resources

STEP ONE

Initial Eligibility Determination, Intake and Identification of Potential Services

Typically begins with Workforce Solutions or Adult Education.

Assessment of skills and needs (high school completion, foundational academics, work readiness, support services, English language acquisition, and digital literacy).

Depending on readiness, participants might enroll in [NorthStar Digital Literacy](#).

Initial identification of career interests, as well as aptitudes and potential for success (World of Work Inventory or similar vocational assessment), including [O*NET Online](#)

Because of the multiple careers and varying educational requirements within the healthcare industry, it is important for participants to understand which area they want to pursue. This will guide decisions regarding appropriate education, skills development, and on-the-job training for their personal pathway.

Identification of immediate, mid-range and long-term employment goals.

Creation of personal career pathways development plan.

[Healthcare Training for ME](#) is a state developed site listing a variety of healthcare training programs. It is a helpful tool to review with participants to help them learn more about a potential career choice and training resources.

Create an account with [Maine JobLink](#)

STEP TWO

Preparation for Semi-Skilled Healthcare Jobs

Enrollment in Healthcare contextualized coursework that accelerates learning through the combination of relevant foundational academic instruction, the development of work readiness, skills training, English language acquisition courses if needed.

Requirements for Employment:

High school completion, appropriate level of English language, work readiness skills, prior experience in positions such as customer service, prior work in a healthcare facility as volunteer, kitchen worker, or in housekeeping.

Employment Opportunities:

Semi-skilled healthcare job may include occupational therapy aide, personal caregiver, psychiatric aide, dental assistant

Average Salary:
\$15–18/hour

STEP THREE

Preparation for Entry-level Skilled Healthcare Jobs

Achieved through completion of appropriate academic and English language acquisition courses if needed, as well as enrollment in short-term industry-recognized certificate courses and programs.

Enrollment in the [Maine Adult Education College and Career Access program](#) provides relevant classes and supports to help prepare for a successful transition into two- and four-year colleges.

Click the links below for details:

- [Healthcare Training for ME](#)
- [Maine Adult Education Class Portal](#) (Search for healthcare, CNA)
- [Portland Adult Education](#)

The following Community College links list healthcare certificates and two-year degrees

- [Central Maine Community College](#)
- [Eastern Maine Community College](#)
- [Kennebec Valley Community College](#)
- [Northern Maine Community College](#)
- [Southern Maine Community College](#)
- [Washington County Community College](#)
- [York County Community College](#)

Requirements for Employment:

Appropriate industry-recognized credentials, prior work experience

Employment Opportunities:

CNA, patient services representative, direct support specialist, residential service worker, rehabilitation technician, life skills coach, phlebotomist

Average Salary: \$16–22/hour

STEP FOUR

Preparation for Employment in Mid-Level Skilled Healthcare Jobs

Requires technical education and training gained through a two-year associate degree, industry internship, prior experience, or industry-recognized credentials. *Each healthcare industry segment has specific requirements for certifications and licenses specific to that segment.*

Enrollment in the [Maine Adult Education College and Career Access program](#) provides relevant classes and supports to help prepare for a successful transition into two- and four-year colleges

Click below for details:

- [Maine Department of Labor Apprenticeship](#)
- *The Community College links for two-year degree options are listed under Step Three at left.*

Requirements for Employment:

Associate Degree, industry recognized credentials and/or prior work experience.

Employment Opportunities:

Nursing, EMT, paramedic, health information technician, cardiovascular technician

Average Salary:

\$57,000–80,000/year

STEP FIVE

Preparation for Employment in Upper-Level Skilled Healthcare Jobs

Typically requires a four-year degree, masters degree, or beyond.

Click the links below for details:

- [The University of Maine Institute of Medicine](#)
- [University of New England School of Pharmacy](#)

Requirements for Employment:

Many medical jobs require a bachelor's degree, additional degrees, advanced certifications, or on-the-job experience.

Employment Opportunities:

Registered nurse, respiratory therapist, athletic trainer, dentist, pharmacist, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, physician

Average Salary:

\$51,000–239,000/year

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