

Collecting Perkins Special Populations

As a requirement of receiving funding via the federal Perkins Act, colleges must collect and report Perkins Special Populations for **all students who are participating in Career and Technical Education (CTE)**, not just students who are served by Perkins grants. Students who are participating in CTE are enrolled in CTE programs, which includes all postsecondary programs outside of AA/AS, including WTCS Pathway Certificates, short-term, 1-year and 2-year technical diplomas, applied associates degrees and apprenticeships. Colleges that capture this data well tend to include these self-reported demographic questions within course registration and require that students provide responses to these questions before they can fully enroll in their courses (e.g., they can hold a spot in a course, but cannot fully enroll until they are finished with selecting responses to the demographic information).

For best practices regarding collecting demographic information, see [More Than Numbers: A Guide Toward Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Collection](#), which includes:

- Explain why you are asking for demographic information (e.g., to best connect students with relevant resources).
- Include a ‘prefer not to answer’ option.
- Solicit feedback from the communities that will be responding.

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Individuals with disabilities

Most colleges collect information on students with disabilities based on the students being served by disability/accommodation services. If the college provides a self-report option for students with disabilities, we recommend the following language:

Do you have any physical or mental conditions that disrupt your daily life activities? *This could include blindness, deafness, anxiety, learning disabilities, mobility challenges, etc.* Yes / No / Prefer not to answer

Note that [34 C.F.R. § 104.42](#) prohibits the preadmission inquiry (i.e., asking the prospective student to disclose information before an admission decision is made) into disability status, thus colleges should not include these self-report prompts in the application to the college. After admission, the college can inquire into the disability status of students for the purpose of providing academic adjustments ([34 C.F.R. § 104.42\(b\)\(4\)](#)).

Individuals from an economically disadvantaged family

Colleges collect this information from a combination of Pell-eligible and/or self-reported demographic prompts. For self-reported prompts, we recommend the following language:

Are you (or your household) unable to pay for one or more basic living needs? *For example: food, bills, rent, childcare.* Yes / No / Prefer not to answer

Individuals preparing for non-traditional fields

This special population is based on the student's reported gender (male or female) and their program enrollment, depending upon whether that program leads to a non-traditional occupation (NTO) in which men or women are considered a minority and make up less than 25% of the national workforce. Program NTO-status is based on the most recent [Nontraditional Crosswalk](#) from Department of Education.

Single parents, including single pregnant women

Colleges collect this information from self-reported demographic prompts. Note that [34 C.F.R. § 106.21](#) prohibits the preadmission inquiry (i.e., asking the prospective student to disclose information before an admission decision is made) into marital status, thus colleges should not include these self-report prompts in the application to the college. Instead, colleges could provide this within course registration or other forms for currently admitted CTE students. We recommend the following language:

Are you raising children under 18 years old?

If yes, are you single, separated or widowed and the main caregiver for your child/children?

Are you pregnant and will be a single parent?

Out-of-workforce individuals

Colleges collect out-of-workforce individuals at either the time of first enrollment in the college application and/or in course registration based on the student's response to the question regarding their current work status. Students who report their work status as underemployed or unemployed are then coded within our data systems as 'out-of-workforce individuals'.

Displaced homemaker is a historic Perkins IV special population that has been included within the new 'out-of-workforce individual' special population in Perkins V. Since displaced homemakers would also identify as unemployed, colleges do not need to ask students about whether they are a displaced homemaker for CTE program students. Yet, note that the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) still includes displaced homemaker as a barrier to employment for students who are served by AEFLA grants. Thus, colleges must still collect this population for students served by AEFLA. See the [Wisconsin AEFLA Reporting and Performance Accountability Manual](#) for more information.

English Learners

Most colleges collect this special population based on whether the student is currently or has previously enrolled in English language learning courses at the college. Some colleges also provide a self-report option for students in the college application and/or course registration. We recommend the following language:

English:

Is English the primary language you have used in your home and community? If not, has using English in your daily life been a challenge for you in terms of speaking, reading, writing, or understanding? Yes / No / Prefer to not answer

If your college has identified any national origin communities in your district, then this self-report question should be made available in the language of these national origin communities (e.g., Spanish, Hmong) in accordance with Office for Civil Rights guidance ([Guidelines § IV. L](#)).

Spanish:

¿Es el inglés el idioma principal que has usado en tu hogar y comunidad? Si no es así, ¿ha sido un desafío para ti usar el inglés en tu vida diaria en términos de hablar, leer, escribir o entender? Sí / No / Prefiero no responder

Hmong:

Puas yog lus Askiv yog hom lus tseem ceeb uas koj tau siv hauv koj lub tsev thiab hauv zej zog? Yog hais tias tsis yog, siv lus Askiv nyob rau hauv koj lub neej txhua hnuv lawm ib txoj kev sib tw rau koj ntawd hais lus, nyeem ntawv, sau ntawv, los yog to taub? Muaj / Tsis / Xav tau tsis teb

Homeless Individuals

Homeless Individuals is a **new special population in Perkins V that went into effect for Client Reporting in FY2020**. Colleges collect this as a self-reported option for students in course registration or the college application. We recommend the following language:

In the past year, have you experienced homelessness? *This could include living in a car, sleeping on a friend's couch, staying in a shelter, living in temporary housing (like a motel).*
Yes / No / Prefer not to answer

Youth who are in or have aged out of foster care

Youth who are in or have aged out of foster care is a **new special population in Perkins V that went into effect for Client Reporting in FY2020**. Colleges collect this as a self-reported option for students in course registration or the college application. We recommend the following language:

Are you currently in or have aged out of foster care? Yes / No / Prefer not to answer

These individuals should be 16-24, so your college would need to cross-reference this response with the student's reported age for submitting this special population to Client Reporting.

Youth with a parent who is on active duty in the armed forces

Youth with a parent who is on active duty in the armed forces is a **new special population in Perkins V that went into effect for Client Reporting in FY2020**. Colleges collect this as a self-reported option for students in course registration or the college application. We recommend the following language:

Do you have a parent currently serving on Active Duty with the US Armed Forces? Yes / No / Prefer not to answer

These individuals should be 16-24, so your college would need to cross-reference this response with the student's reported age for submitting this special population to Client Reporting.