EMERALD COAST TECHNICAL COLLEGE

# PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND WORKFORCE READINESS

Emerald Coast Technical College (ECTC) is a public postsecondary technical college operated by the Walton County School District, with campuses in DeFuniak Springs and at the Magnet Innovation Center in Watersound. ECTC's mission is to prepare and empower today's students to meet the demands of an evolving and competitive workforce.

A non-degree-granting institution under the authority of the Florida Department of Education, Division of Career and Adult Education, ECTC awards credit in clock hours pursuant to Rule 6A-14.030(6) and (9), Florida Administrative Code. The College is accredited by the Council on Occupational Education and by Cognia and certified by the ASE Education Foundation.

## Merit-Based Access and Admissions Transparency

ECTC states its admissions requirements in full in the Student Handbook and Program Catalog, available at www.ectc.edu, and applies them uniformly. Admission to most career and technical education programs is open to applicants who are at least 16 years of age, are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance, and hold a standard high school diploma, a GED or other recognized equivalent, or who qualify under one of the alternative pathways set out in the Handbook: a special diploma, the special admission provisions of sections 1007.264 and 1007.265, Florida Statutes, a home-education affidavit under section 1002.41, demonstrated prior postsecondary competency, or dual enrollment under section 1007.271.

Admissions and enrollment decisions are based on written criteria and free of illegal preferences. ECTC's Equity/Equal Rights provisions commit the College to equitable access to workforce education programs, and any student who believes he or she has been discriminated against may file a complaint under the Student Grievance Procedure with the Equity Officer, Walton County Schools, 145 Park Street, DeFuniak Springs, Florida 32435. The district retains filed grievances for seven years.

Applicants to programs longer than 450 clock hours must present current TABE scores unless they qualify for one of the exemptions listed in the Handbook. Program-specific entrance assessments, including the TEAS/ATI for practical nursing, the Wonderlic for cosmetology, and the PERT or TABE for other programs, are clearly communicated in advance and administered consistently to every applicant. Six programs are limited access and require an interview with program staff before admission: Applied Cybersecurity, Computer Systems and Information Technology, Cosmetology, Network Support Services, Patient Care Technician, and Practical Nursing. ECTC maintains waiting lists for limited-access programs, and students enroll only after receiving a program acceptance letter. The general application carries no cost.

## Free Inquiry, Viewpoint Diversity, and Protection of College Operations

Because a technical college depends on candid exchange between instructors and the industries they train for, ECTC protects the lawful expression of ideas among students, instructors, and industry partners, and backs that protection with written, enforceable policy. The Student Code of Conduct in the Student Handbook and Program Catalog, together with the Walton County School District Student Code of Conduct, governs student conduct and is available at www.walton.k12.fl.us and in Student Services.

Those policies expressly prohibit the intentional disruption or obstruction of the learning environment; harassment or physical or verbal abuse on campus or at sponsored events; theft or willful destruction of property; and failure to comply with duly authorized staff acting in performance of their duties. Bullying and harassment are prohibited as required by section 1006.147, Florida Statutes, including conduct originating off campus that substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the College. Sanctions are set in advance and graduated: verbal admonition or warning, written admonition or warning, probation, suspension, administrative withdrawal or expulsion, and report to civil authorities. Under the District Code of Conduct, any student who makes a threat or false report is referred to district-identified mental health services.

ECTC will not permit the occupation, obstruction, or shutdown of its campuses, classrooms, laboratories, or operations. Every disciplinary action is subject to due process: students must be afforded the right to be heard before punishment is issued, the administrator documents in writing that this occurred, and a decision may be appealed from instructor to director to Superintendent.

## Intellectual Pluralism in Curriculum and Hiring

ECTC affirms intellectual pluralism in both curriculum and hiring. ECTC recruits, hires, and evaluates instructors on occupational expertise, industry credentials, licensure where the field requires it, and demonstrated instructional competence. The College does not require, solicit, or consider ideological statements, political affiliation, or diversity statements at any point in recruitment, hiring, evaluation, or promotion.

ECTC does not set its own curriculum. Every program follows the Career and Technical Education curriculum frameworks adopted by the Florida Department of Education and available at fldoe.org/workforce and is measured against the standards of the relevant industry and licensing bodies. ECTC does not substitute ideological content for occupational instruction. When a field involves legitimate professional debate, students are taught to reason from evidence and applicable standards and are never evaluated on personal opinions.

## Affordability, Cost Discipline, Pricing Transparency, and Student Outcomes

Tuition is set under guidelines established by the Florida Legislature. For 2026–2027:

| Cost of attendance, 2026–2027 | Amount |
|---|---|
| Tuition — Florida resident | $2.92 per clock hour |
| Basic tuition | $2.44 |
| Student financial aid fee (10%) | $0.24 |
| Capital improvement fee (5%) | $0.12 |
| Technology fee (5%) | $0.12 |
| Tuition — Alabama border-state resident (s. 1009.22(4), F.S.) | $2.97 per clock hour |
| Tuition — out-of-state resident | $11.71 per clock hour |
| Lab fees | $2.25 per clock hour |
| Registration fee — new program enrollment | $60.00 |
| Registration fee — returning student | $30.00 |

| Cost of attendance, 2026–2027 | Amount |
|---|---|
| Parking permit | $10.00 |
| Official transcript | $5.00 |
| Estimated total, 900-clock-hour program (Florida resident) | $2,628 tuition + $2,775 books, supplies, and lab fees |

A net price calculator is available at www.ectc.edu/net-price-calculator.htm, Gainful Employment disclosures are posted at www.ectc.edu, and the Handbook includes a student worksheet for planning the full educational investment. Fee exemptions are provided for technical dual enrollment students and for students in approved apprenticeship programs under sections 1009.25, 1007.27, and 446.021, Florida Statutes.

Students who need help paying for a program have access to the Federal Pell Grant, the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship, Florida Prepaid, the Florida Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant, the Florida Work Experience Program, funding through CareerSource Okaloosa Walton, the ECTC Opportunity Scholarship, veterans' benefits, and institutional payment plans for programs of 600 clock hours or more. ECTC graduates do not carry federal student loan debt because ECTC does not offer federal student loans.

For 2025, the ECTC Annual Report compiled for the Council on Occupational Education reports:

**Completion 94% · Placement 78% · Licensure 94%**

ECTC also puts its own tuition behind those outcomes. Under the Money-Back Guarantee Program established by section 1011.803, Florida Statutes, an institution must refund tuition to a student who completes a qualifying program and cannot find employment in the field within six months. Florida requires each institution to designate at least three such programs. ECTC designates six: Cosmetology, Welding Technologies, Practical Nursing, Electricity, Pharmacy Technician, and Phlebotomy.

We review outcomes, not merely report them. The Annual Report includes completion rates for every program, and faculty and staff review it each spring. The Director examines completion and retention data with each program instructor during instructor evaluations, and those findings feed the annual School Improvement Plan. The Institutional Advisory Committee reviews both documents at its twice-yearly meetings. ECTC surveys both students and employers at program exit, collecting wage information and employer judgments about how well the training prepared the graduate.

## Academic Rigor, Honest Assessment, and the Rejection of Grade Inflation

ECTC rejects grade inflation. Successful program completion is based on demonstrated competence rather than seat time, effort alone, or enrollment pressure. An Occupational Completion Point is awarded only upon satisfaction of five criteria set out in the Handbook: demonstrated mastery of the OCP competencies; documented attendance and participation meeting the minimum hours required by ECTC and by any licensure or regulatory agency; participation in an exit interview; attainment of the designated academic skill levels; and satisfaction of all financial obligations. Where competency-based delivery is approved, it must maintain equivalency with Florida Department of Education clock-hour requirements in instructional content, rigor, and outcomes. A clock hour means a minimum of fifty minutes of supervised instruction within a sixty-minute period.

Competency is verified by parties other than the instructor wherever a credential exists. ECTC students sit for the NCLEX-PN and NCLEX-RN, ASE certification, NCCER credentials, CompTIA A+, Network+, and Security+, NATE certification, and the Prometric Florida CNA examination. ECTC is an approved regional Prometric and NATE testing center and an authorized Pearson VUE test center. The Florida Board of Nursing approves the Practical Nursing program; the Department of Business and Professional Regulation approves Cosmetology; the Electricity program is an NCCER-accredited training and education facility; and ECTC is a CompTIA Authorized Academy Partner. Students must also earn the TABE exit scores set for their program before receiving a certificate of completion and must complete the program within 150 percent of its scheduled length.

Academic dishonesty is not tolerated. Cheating, collusion, plagiarism, and forgery are subject to sanctions up to an "F" and dismissal from the program.

A written policy governs the use of artificial intelligence. AI-generated content may never replace a student's own work, thinking, or competencies, and submitting unmodified AI output as one's own is academic dishonesty. Students must disclose when and how they used AI, in the format the instructor requires; faculty may require a statement of AI use, citation of prompts and tools, and submission of both the AI-assisted and the student-edited versions. Students remain responsible for verifying accuracy, since AI output can be incomplete, biased, or wrong. AI may not be used to create deceptive, harmful, or discriminatory content; impersonate individuals; violate intellectual property standards; or circumvent required assignments, competencies, or licensure skills.

## Prioritizing American Students and Florida's Workforce Needs

ECTC prioritizes providing the education, workforce training, and career preparation that meets the needs of the students, residents, and employers we serve in Walton County and Northwest Florida. Programs are chosen and maintained on demonstrated labor market demand, using wage and growth data from the Employ Florida Marketplace and the judgment of the Institutional Advisory Committee.

The College's program portfolio centers on Florida's high-demand occupations and this region's talent needs: health care, the skilled construction trades, information technology, transportation, and personal services.

| Program | Clock hours |
|---|---|
| Electricity | 1,200 |
| Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning/Refrigeration (HVAC/R) 1 | 750 |
| Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning/Refrigeration (HVAC/R) 2 | 600 |
| Plumbing | 1,080 |
| Patient Care Technician | 600 |
| Pharmacy Technician | 1,050 |
| Phlebotomy | 165 |
| Practical Nursing | 1,350 |
| Professional Nursing (LPN–RN), hybrid | 900 |
| Cosmetology | 1,200 |

| Program | Clock hours |
|---|---|
| Applied Cybersecurity | 750 |
| Computer Systems & Information Technology | 900 |
| Network Support Services | 1,050 |
| Welding Technology | 1,050 |
| Welding Technology – Advanced | 750 |
| Master Automotive Service Technology 1 | 1,050 |
| Master Automotive Service Technology 2 | 750 |
| Specialized Career Education, Comprehensive | 900 |
| Specialized Career Education, Extended | 1,800 |
| Watersound: Applied Cybersecurity / Applied Information Technology / Practical Nursing | 750 / 600 / 1,350 |

Programs range from 165 to 1,800 clock hours; the shortest puts a credential within reach in a single term. Pathways are built to stack: a student who completes the first 290 clock hours of the Patient Care Technician program and earns CNA certification receives 150 clock hours of articulated credit toward Practical Nursing. Student Services and faculty assist with applications, résumés, interview preparation, and referrals, and CareerSource Okaloosa Walton maintains staff on the main campus in Building 100.

## National Service

Much of the workforce that keeps this region running is trained here. ECTC prepares the practical nurses, registered nurses, patient care technicians, pharmacy technicians, and phlebotomists who staff local hospitals and clinics, and the electricians, plumbers, HVAC/R technicians, welders, and automotive technicians who build and maintain its infrastructure. Nursing and health science students complete supervised clinical rotations in local facilities as a required condition of completion. ECTC's main campus is approved for veterans' benefits by the State Approving Agency, and the College administers the tuition waivers and exemptions available to veterans under Florida law. Through the Specialized Career Education programs, ECTC serves students with disabilities in structured career preparation alongside its other offerings.

ECTC is a teaching- and workforce-focused institution. It conducts no sponsored research and holds no federal research awards. ECTC complies with all state and federal requirements applicable to a district postsecondary technical college governing foreign gifts, contracts, and partnerships.

## Accountability

This statement is published on ECTC's website at www.ectc.edu pursuant to the Commissioner of Education's directive of August 18, 2026, and has been submitted to the Office of the Commissioner. ECTC's career education programs operate under section 1004.92, Florida Statutes, under the governance of the Walton County School Board, and are subject to Florida law's accountability provisions and the standards of the Council on Occupational Education.