

Discussion Paper on WIOA and TANF Program Results and Evaluation

Background

As directed by the Chairman Bryan Daniel at the July 5th TWC Commission meeting, staff are bringing forward a proposal to track performance for all statewide programs funded by WIOA and TANF Statewide sources. It is incumbent upon the Texas Workforce Commission that programs funded by WIOA and TANF Statewide funds are not only successfully administered, but beneficial to the citizens of Texas as well. For each initiative, staff evaluates program objectives for relevance to current economic and workforce trends, incorporating meaningful, measurable outcomes. While the majority of WIOA and TANF funded programs include such outcomes, opportunities for strengthening required reporting elements and analyzing and presenting program data exist. In three sections, this discussion paper identifies a comprehensive approach for strategically assessing program effectiveness and success, with specific focus on numerical performance, program outcomes, and the return on investment.

Issue

Clearly Defined Objectives, Goals and Standards of Success for Each Program

Staff will follow a procedure for establishing clearly defined objectives and goals for each WIOA and TANF funded program. Program objectives will be developed in accordance with the TWC strategic plan and the current economic landscape to ensure alignment with intended program purpose. Program goals will be revised, updated, or added to provide a clear explanation of the expected benefit to the Texas workforce. This project uses the following definitions:

- **Objectives** are defined as specific actions required to achieve a goal; also referred to as measure.
- **Goals** are defined as the desired results of an objective or measure.
- **Outcomes** are defined as the quantitative or qualitative end results of an initiative; only quantitative data can be captured in ECPS.

Staff will establish an objective standard for success for each program. The standard will be determined based on prior performance and return on investment.

Clear, Measurable Outcomes for each Program

Prior to program start, staff will define program outcomes to determine program success, and existing metrics will be revised, updated, or supplemented to ensure appropriate data is gathered. Programs funded by TWC through WIOA and TANF can be grouped into three broad categories, with different outcome measurement opportunities. These three categories are defined below based on a departmental common-sense approach.

Direct Intervention with Immediate Effect

Programs providing immediate effects include those that concentrate on workforce training and employment services. Outcomes for these interventions are focused on obtaining and keeping a job or receiving a wage increase. These outcomes can be directly measured and reported on throughout the period of performance. Examples of programs that provide direct intervention with immediate effects are Building Construction Trades and Critical Occupation and Healthcare Apprenticeships.

1 Direct Intervention with Long Term Effect

2 Programs with long-term effects are intended to create outcomes that are far enough in the future so that
3 direct reporting on those outcomes is not feasible. TWC requires these programs to conduct short term
4 assessments as an immediate measure of success, as reported by the participant. The results of these
5 assessments can be correlated with longer term studies demonstrating program effectiveness. TWC is
6 exploring collaboration efforts with other state agencies to identify data collection opportunities that will
7 allow TWC to directly evaluate long-term outcomes. Many youth initiatives are considered to have long
8 term effects after direct intervention, with results that cannot be measured in the short term. Examples of
9 such programs include Camp Code, Governor’s Summer Merit Program, and Careers in Texas Industries.

10 Indirect Intervention

11 Indirect intervention programs increase student access to or increase quality of new or existing training
12 programs. Outcomes for these programs measure benefits provided to students by indirect intervention.
13 The High Demand Job Training Program is an example of an indirect intervention program. Awards made
14 under this program support HDJT by funding equipment to train and prepare students to alleviate the
15 shortage of skilled workers in high-demand occupations. Data collected will be relative to program
16 objectives and will measure short-term impact.

General Initiatives

Track Number	Program Title	Funding Source	Intervention Category
74008	Governor’s Small Business Initiative	WIOA	Indirect Effect
74034	College Credit for Heroes	WIOA	Direct, Immediate Effect
74046	Externship for Teachers	WIOA	Indirect Effect
74048	High Demand Jobs	WIOA	Direct, Long Term Effect
74055	Texas Industry Partnerships	WIOA	Direct, Long Term Effect
74056	Innovation Academies	WIOA	Direct, Long Term Effect
74058	Building and Construction Trades	WIOA	Direct, Immediate Effect
75005	Non-Custodial Parents (NCP)	TANF	Direct, Immediate Effect
75028	Entrepreneurship Bootcamps	TANF	Direct, Long Term Effect
79024	Apprenticeship Initiative	TANF	Direct, Immediate Effect

Veterans Initiatives

Track Number	Program Title	Funding Source	Intervention Category
74010	Veterans Workforce Outreach	WIOA	Direct, Immediate Effect
74017	Veterans Network	WIOA	Indirect Effect
74057	Military Family Support	WIOA	Direct, Immediate Effect
74062	We Hire Vets Campaign	WIOA	Indirect Effect

Youth Initiatives

Track Number	Program Title	Funding Source	Intervention Category
74005	Texas Science Engineering Fair	WIOA	Indirect Effect
74006	Governor’s Science and Technology Champions Academy	WIOA	Indirect Effect

75006	Foster Youth Workforce Transition Centers	TANF	Direct, Immediate Effect
75011	Governor's Summer Merit Program	TANF	Direct, Long Term Effect
75016	Youth Robotics	TANF	Direct, Long Term Effect
75024	Camp Code	TANF	Direct, Long Term Effect
75025	Careers in Texas	TANF	Direct, Long Term Effect
75027	Texas Internship Initiative	TANF	Direct, Long Term Effect

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2 **Annual or Biennial Review of Each Program's Success**

3 Using collected data, staff will analyze outcomes to determine program success. Success will be
 4 determined based on a comparison of final results to the defined success standard. Staff will also assess
 5 monetary value of that success as return on investment where feasible. Successful programs will be
 6 evaluated for opportunities for scaling, while unsuccessful programs will be evaluated to determine
 7 changes to make the program successful or replace the program with an alternative to achieve the same
 8 goals. Staff will conduct this review annually or biennially depending on the duration of the program.

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10 **Plan and Timeline**

11 The majority of statewide programs funded by WIOA and TANF include objectives relative to current
 12 economic conditions and workforce trends, and incorporate meaningful, measurable outcomes.
 13 Opportunities to strengthen objectives exist, as does the need to track performance using TWC's
 14 Enterprise Contract and Procurement System, ECPS. Clearly defined objectives and performance measure
 15 data entry will allow WGI Grant and Unit Managers to effectively track and analyze performance and
 16 determine program effectiveness. Project tasks and timeline are identified in the following table.

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TASKS	STATUS / TIMELINE
1. Review Objectives and Goals to ensure relevant, appropriate data is collected	In process, and will continue into FY23 as initiatives are executed
2. Performance Measure Data Entry Project Phase 1: Planning and Testing	In process, to be completed FY23 Q1
3. Performance Measure Data Entry Project Phase 2: Implementation	Will begin FY23 Q1
4. Performance Measure Data Entry Project Phase 3: Quality Assurance, Maintenance, and Analysis	Will begin FY23 Q1 and continue in perpetuity

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19 **Implementation**

20 Strategies to strengthen objectives and goals began in FY21 with RFA 32021-00010, Building and
 21 Constructions Trades and the introduction of performance-based granting. As new initiatives are
 22 introduced, and existing initiatives are reproced, staff will review objectives and goals to ensure data
 23 collected is relevant to determining program success.

1 The data entry project for collecting quantitative performance and expenditure data was implemented
2 FY22 Q2 and will continue in perpetuity.

3 **Guided Decision Making**

4 Thorough, accurate analyses of performance and expenditure measures resulting from automated queries
5 and clearly defined objectives can inform program and funding decisions, as well as identify efficient use
6 of resources and expose inefficiencies.

7 Using ECPS to track quantitative performance measure data will allow managers and staff to quickly
8 analyze program performance and effectiveness using automated reports and queries, eliminating the need
9 to manually pull data from multiple sources such as solicitations, applications, and quarterly reports.

10 Examples of data to be entered and analyzed include, but are not limited to:

- 11 • Number of Participants Enrolled
- 12 • Demographics of populations served
- 13 • Number of Participants Receiving Supportive Services
- 14 • Number of Participants Enrolled in Training
- 15 • Number of Participants Receiving an Industry Recognized Certificate (IRC)
- 16 • Number of Participants Placed in Employment
- 17 • Number of Participants still employed after 60 days, 90 days, and 120 days

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19 **Decision Point**

20 This item is brought for Commission consideration.