

TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION
Workforce Development Letter

ID/No:	WD 29-22
Date:	December 23, 2022
Keyword:	Administration
Effective:	Immediately

To: Local Workforce Development Board Executive Directors
Commission Executive Offices
Integrated Service Area Managers

Courtney Arbour

From: Courtney Arbour, Director, Workforce Development Division

Subject: **Ban of TikTok and Other Nonwork-Related Social Network Services**

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this WD Letter is to provide Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with guidance on banning and removing TikTok and other nonwork-related social network services on government-issued devices or devices used to access Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) information and systems.

RESCISSIONS:

None

BACKGROUND:

On December 7, 2022, Governor Greg Abbott directed every state agency in Texas to ban its officers and employees from downloading or using TikTok on any government-issued devices, including cell phones, laptops, tablets, desktop computers, and other devices capable of internet connectivity. TikTok is a video-sharing mobile application that has been determined to be a potential security issue for any entity using it.

TWC Information Security Manual §3.2.18, Internet Content Filtering, requires TWC to have an internet filtering system that blocks access to websites and protocols that are deemed inappropriate for the agency's environment, including social network services.

Agency Board Agreement (ABA), Attachment C, Board Guidelines for Security, provides guidelines for the minimum acceptable standards for the Texas Cybersecurity Framework control objectives to ensure the security of TWC data entrusted to each Board.

PROCEDURES:

No Local Flexibility (NLF): This rating indicates that Boards must comply with the federal and state laws, rules, policies, and required procedures set forth in this WD Letter and have no local flexibility in determining whether and/or how to comply. All information with an NLF rating is indicated by "must."

Local Flexibility (LF): This rating indicates that Boards have local flexibility in determining whether and/or how to implement guidance or recommended practices set forth in this WD Letter. All information with an LF rating is indicated by “may” or “recommend.”

NLF: Boards must ban the use of TikTok on all Board-issued systems and devices, as Boards have access to sensitive material that could potentially be available to TikTok’s database. If TikTok is currently installed on any such devices, it must be removed immediately.

NLF: Boards must be aware that Attachment C, §2.9.1 of the ABA prohibits Board employees from using their personal devices (personal computing devices and removable media, including, but not limited to, smart phones) to access or store agency data, unless a specific exemption is granted by an authorized executive of the Board.

NLF: Boards must be aware that the Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR) and the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) have been directed to develop a model plan that other state agencies can deploy with respect to the use of TikTok on personal devices. TWC will issue further guidance after this plan has been provided to other state agencies.

INQUIRIES:

Send inquiries regarding this WD Letter to wfpolicy.clarifications@twc.texas.gov.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: State Agencies Letter

REFERENCES:

TWC Information Security Manual, Version 3.0

Agency Board Agreement, Attachment C—Board Guidelines for Security