



Parent

Handbook

Child Care Services
P.O. Box 6009
Texarkana, Texas
75505-6009
(903) 794-8999
or
(800) 874-3226

Equal Opportunity Employer/Programs
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.
Relay Texas TDD/TTY: 800.735.2989 Relay Texas Voice: 800.735.2988

Serving Bowie, Cass, Delta, Franklin, Hopkins, Lamar, Morris, Red River and Titus Counties

www.netxworkforce.org

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FOREWORD

Finding the right place and the right people to care for your child while you work or go to school is an important decision. When it comes to finding child care, there are a number of options from which to choose. Care may be provided by an eligible relative, by individual providers who are licensed or registered with the state licensing agency, or by licensed child care centers. The choice is yours.

Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas provides child care services through the Child Care Services Contractor. Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas offers a network of child care facilities throughout the nine-county Northeast Texas service area which are all licensed or registered by the State of Texas. The Northeast Texas area includes: Bowie, Cass, Delta, Franklin, Hopkins, Lamar, Morris, Red River, and Titus counties. Workforce Solutions customers include parents who live in our nine-county service area and are currently working, participating in a job training program, or enrolled in school for at least twenty-five (25) hours per week for a one parent household and fifty (50) hours per week for a two parent household.

This Parent Handbook has been developed to provide you information about child care services, to explain your rights and responsibilities, and to help you obtain affordable, quality child care. The book serves as a substitute for several forms previously required. Please read this handbook carefully. Keep it handy as a reference for questions you may have later about your child care assistance. Our telephone number is: **(903) 794-8999** in the Texarkana area or **toll free (800) 874-3226**. Feel free to call from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

PURPOSE

This handbook has been written for parents receiving child care assistance through Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas. It will:

- Provide you with an overview of the child care services available;
- Provide you with a reference guide you can keep at home;
- Make certain you understand you are responsible for choosing arrangements for your children that meet your family's needs;
- Make certain you understand your responsibilities;
- Explain the conditions upon which child care services and payments are based;
- Make certain you understand you may appeal a denial, reduction or termination of child care services;
- Explain procedures for requesting fair hearings if child care services are denied, reduced, or terminated;
- Make certain you understand that you may be prosecuted for obtaining or attempting to obtain, by fraudulent means, child care services to which you are not entitled; and
- Make certain you understand that it may be considered stealing if you do not report all changes within 10 calendar days that would make you ineligible or cause you to owe money back to Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas;
- Make certain you understand that you will be required to pay back any child care funds you received if you received child care when you were ineligible.

APPLYING FOR CHILD CARE SERVICES

Parents may access child care services by telephone, mail, or fax. A client services specialist conducts a one-on-one interview with parents/caretakers and:

- Explains to parents the need to ask the person caring for their child/children many questions in order to help make lasting and satisfactory arrangements;
- Determines whether the parent(s) are eligible to receive child care services;
- Determines the needs of the child(ren) and the parents;
- Offers the parent(s) available options that meet the needs of both the children and parents;
- Gives the parent the 2-1-1 Texas INFO*LINE telephone number for child care resource and referral to help them in locating a provider within their area. Cell phone users need to dial (361) 882-4636 for 2-1-1 services;
- Gives the parent the licensing website to assist in locating a provider www.txchildcaresearch.org;
- Allows the parent to choose the child care option the family will use;
- Respects parental choice;
- Encourages the parent(s) to visit with the provider of child care services prior to enrollment;
- Calculates the parent share of cost, if applicable;
- Summarizes with the parent the required documentation, timeframe constraints, parent's rights and responsibilities, parent share of cost, attendance policy, appeal procedures; and
- Authorizes enrollment following submission of the eligibility documentation.

SELECTING A CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT

The following information will help you choose the child care arrangements to meet your needs and the needs of your children*.

Regulated Child Care Providers – The provider can be a:

Licensed Child Care Centers (LCCC) – licensed facilities that are routinely monitored and inspected by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). Center may care for 13 or more children under age 14 for less than 24 hours. The application process requires that child care center providers receive orientation and background check. A license is issued after DFPS licensing staff completes on-site inspection(s) to ensure minimum standards are met. Centers are inspected every 5-12 months, or more frequently if a report is received related to child abuse or neglect or standards violations.

Licensed Child Care Homes (LCCH) – licensed facilities that are routinely monitored and inspected by DFPS. Licensed homes provide care for 7-12 children under the age 14 for less than 24 hours per day. The application process requires that a licensed home provider complete an orientation class and receive clearances on background checks. A license is issued after DFPS licensing staff completes on-site inspection(s) to ensure minimum standards are met. Licensed homes are inspected every 5-12

months, or more frequently if a report is received related to child abuse or neglect or standards violations.

Registered Child Care Homes (RCCH) – Registered child care homes provide care for up to 6 children under age 14 in the caregiver’s home. They may also take in up to 6 more school-age children. The number of children allowed in a registered home is determined by the ages of the children. The application process requires that a registered home provider complete an orientation class and receive clearances on background checks. A registration certificate is issued after DFPS licensing staff completes on-site inspection(s) to ensure minimum standards are met. Registered homes are inspected every 1-3 years, or more frequently if a report is received related to child abuse or neglect or standards violations.

*Note: Providers who are “listed” with the DFPS cannot be a regulated child care provider with Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas with the exception of relative providers.

A child care provider may be a **Texas Rising Star Provider (TRSP)** – this indicates the provider voluntarily meets requirements that exceed the state’s minimum licensing standards for health and safety, group size, child/staff ratios, caregivers training, and age-appropriate curricula and activities for child care facilities. Certification as a Texas Rising Star Provider is available to licensed centers and homes and registered child care homes that meet the certification criteria.

A regulated provider may be in the **Texas School Ready! certification program**. Texas School Ready! replaced the Texas Early Education Model (TEEM). Texas School Ready! encourages school readiness programs to share certified teachers and to integrate facility space; professional development; and funding from child care, Head Start, and prekindergarten sources. Preschool classrooms eligible for Texas School Ready! certifications are composed of children who will be attending kindergarten the following school year and include: licensed child care centers (for profit, nonprofit and faith-based), school districts and charter school prekindergarten, and Head Start. For additional information about Texas School Ready!, visit: <http://www.childrenslearninginstitute.org/our-programs/program-overview/TX-school-ready/default.html> or <http://www.childrenslearninginstitute.org/our-programs/program-overview/TX-state-center/default.html>.

Parents are encouraged to inquire whether a chosen regulated provider is a Texas Rising Star Provider or Texas School Ready! Certified Provider.

Relative Care – Certain relatives, eighteen (18) years of age and older, may also care for your child(ren). The relative must be related by blood, marriage, or court decree, and be one of the following:

- The child’s grandparent, great-grandparent, aunt, uncle, or sibling
- Live in a separate household from the child (unless meets TWC exception rules)
- Not on the Texas Department of Public Safety’s Sex Offender Registry.
- Must be a listed provider with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

Parents requesting relative care must give Workforce Solutions the name, address and phone number of the relative providing child care. Documents such as copies of birth certificates, marriage certificates, and/or court decrees must be supplied to verify the provider is an eligible relative. Proof of residency for the relative provider and the parent must be submitted to verify the relative’s eligibility. Proof of listing status must be provided.

CHECKLIST FOR SELECTING A CHILD CARE FACILITY

Selecting a child care provider is one of the most important decisions for a parent. Before visiting a facility, it is helpful to identify the basic family needs that parents look for in a child care program. These may be the location of the program, the hours of operation, transportation services, etc.

After selecting child care programs that meet your basic needs, you are urged to visit the programs to learn first-hand if it is the right program for the child/children and the family. There is no substitute for a

“walk through” visit. Take the time to talk to the child care provider and ask questions about the children’s day-to-day activities and meals and/or snacks served.

When choosing a child care arrangement and monitoring a choice after enrollment, you may want to use the following checklist:

- Staff members are warm and friendly.
- The children seem happy and relaxed.
- My child felt comfortable during the visit.
- The child care facility accepts children my child’s age.
- The hours of operation fit my schedule.
- Transportation is available if needed.
- Activities are available for children of different age groups.
- There are enough staff members to care for the children.
- There are enough toys, books, paint and games in good condition.
- The classrooms are nicely arranged to allow for active and quiet play.
- The staff is trained to care for children.
- All fees are clear and concise.
- The facility is clean and safe.
- The program’s mission is appropriately focused on children.
- Parents are welcome and can visit without notice at any time.

PROVIDERS CHARGING THE DIFFERENCE:

Effective October 1, 2010, a child care provider cannot charge the difference between their published rate and the amount of Workforce Solutions’ reimbursement rate. The provider will make no additional charges to Workforce Solutions referred parents above their parent share of cost for any differences between the published rate and the reimbursement rate. This does not include charges to parents for picking children up late or for special activities not included in the published rate that the parents elect to pay for on their own. The parent will still be responsible for paying their parent share of cost.

Providers who are not reimbursed by Workforce Solutions may collect reimbursement up to the provider’s published rate from parents who fail to accurately report attendance or absences using the CCAA system.

CHANGING CHILD CARE ARRANGMENTS

You have the right to contact Workforce Solutions to request to transfer your child to another child care provider. Often, however, you can talk with the provider to try to work things out before making this decision. Make sure your parent share of cost (PSOC) is paid up to date at your current provider.

If you are changing from one regulated provider to another one, call Workforce Solutions to request the transfer. If the regulated provider you selected does not already have the required paperwork on file with Workforce Solutions, the provider must provide the required paperwork before care can be authorized. Our staff will call your present provider to verify the parent share of cost is up to date and give them the drop date of the child(ren). The new regulated provider will be called to start care.

If you are changing relative providers, you must call Workforce Solutions with the new relative provider's name, address and telephone number. A provider packet will be mailed to them and must be returned before the transfer can be made. Copies of birth certificates, marriage certificates, or court decrees must be supplied that verify the chosen provider is an eligible relative. Proof of residency for the relative provider and the parent must be submitted to verify the relative's eligibility. The relative provider must also be listed with the Department of Family and Protective Services.

Two providers cannot be paid on the same day. The date you call will be the date care will end at the current provider unless you request a future date.

WORKFORCE CENTER REFERRALS

Parents who are authorized to receive child care services by Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas center staff do not have the same rights and responsibilities as parents who apply for child care services directly.

- Workforce center staff determines eligibility for child care services for parents who participate in the Choices, Workforce Investment Act (WIA), and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) programs.
- Workforce center staff emails the required forms to the Client Services Specialist to authorize child care. The parent must call and speak with a Client Services Specialist to enroll child(ren).
- The Client Services Specialist provides information regarding program requirements and the parent must sign a form that acknowledges the parent's rights and responsibilities.
- Child care services may be denied or reduced by the workforce center staff.
- Workforce center staff may request to close child care services immediately if the parent is no longer participating in workforce programs.
- Parents who are referred by workforce center staff and are participating in the Choices program will not be required to pay a parent share of cost. Parents in the other workforce center programs may be required to pay a parent share of cost based on income.

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS)

Parents who are referred to Workforce Solutions by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to receive child care assistance do not have the same rights and responsibilities as parents who apply for child care services directly. DFPS is the state agency that oversees Child Protective Services (CPS).

- CPS caseworkers determine child care eligibility for children in protective care.
- CPS families must choose a child care provider that is a Texas Rising Star Provider or if a Texas Rising Star Provider is unavailable, a waiver must also be received from CPS to use another provider.
- Foster parents may use an *authorized regulated* child care provider.
- CPS/Foster Care parents do not pay a parent share of cost.
- CPS/Foster care families do not have the right to appeal the reduction, denial, or termination of services through Workforce Solution: however, the parent may follow the procedures for appeals as established by DFPS.

TEEN PARENTS

To qualify for the teen parent child care assistance:

- You must be eighteen (18) years of age or younger, or nineteen (19) years of age and attending high school or the equivalent (pursuing General Equivalency Diploma or G.E.D.);
- You must receive a high school diploma or G.E.D. by your twentieth (20th) birthday;
- Your income must not exceed the income guidelines.

Teen parents pay a parent share of cost for child care:

- Based on the teen parent's monthly income; or
- If the teen parent participates in the Choices program or has no income, there is no cost to the teen parent.

A teen parent may receive child care during the summer months if:

- He or she meets the eligibility requirements; and
- He or she is working or going to school during the summer and is planning on going back to school in the fall.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

If you have met all other requirements to receive child care assistance and your child has a disability that requires special assistance to function in a group child care setting, be sure to discuss that information with your Client Services Specialist.

PARENT ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT

1. I must be in school, training, or employed the required number of hours to be eligible. I understand that only Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas can authorize a child care arrangement for my child, including changes in the provider of care.

2. In advance or within 10 calendar days after the change occurs, I will inform Workforce Solutions and the child care facility about changes (either temporary or permanent) in:

- Work (adding a 2nd job, changing jobs, no longer working, hours fall below twenty-five (25) hours per week, hours increase, raise, maternity leave, other medical leave, etc.).
- School/Training (dropping classes or not attending twenty-five (25) hours per week).
- Marital status or 2nd parent's participation hours.
- Family composition.
- Change in other income.
- No longer receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
- Change in child support.
- Residence.
- Telephone number.
- Emergency contact information.

3. I will comply with all Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas, and provider requirements or have child care services denied or terminated.

4. If I do not notify Workforce Solutions that I (or 2nd parent) no longer work or attend school or training the required number of hours per week, I will be responsible for repaying all child care payments made while I was ineligible.

5. I must pay the monthly parent share of cost amount as specified to remain eligible.

Child Care Facility Requirements

1. I will meet the enrollment requirements and all other policies specified by the child care facility in which my child is enrolled.

2. I will provide information, including health and immunization records, authorization to secure medical assistance, and parent contact information to be used in case of an emergency.

3. I will be on time and honor the child care facility's opening and closing hours. I will be responsible to pay any overtime fees charged if I am late picking up my child from the facility.

4. I will report to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) licensing office any complaints about a possible violation of licensing standards, which affects the care of children in the facility.

5. If I need child care on any of the child care provider's nine paid holidays, I will arrange my own child care for those days.

Transportation Requirements

If the child care facility is providing transportation for my child:

1. I will stay with my child or make sure another adult does until the bus arrives each morning.

2. I will be at home or make sure another adult is at home when my child arrives home from the child care provider.

3. Any day my child will be absent from the child care facility, I will call the facility early enough to keep the bus from coming to my home.

Requirements for Notification of Absence

1. I will notify the child care facility when my child is going to be absent and tell them the reason for the absence.

2. I understand that there is a limit on the number of absences my child may have in a twelve (12) month period.

3. I understand that my child's care will end if my child is absent for thirty (30) days or more in a twelve (12) month period.

4. I understand that my child's care will end if my child is absent for five (5) or more consecutive days and I have not called the child care facility or Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas to explain the reason for the absence.

5. I understand that if my child is under court order to visit a non-custodial parent, they may be absent for a court ordered visit. I must notify the provider before the visit and provide them with a copy of the court order.

Use of Automated Attendance Card

1. I understand that use of the Child Care Automated Attendance card (attendance card) is mandatory.

2. I must use the attendance card to report attendance and absences.

3. If I do not report attendance or absences using the attendance card:

- my child care services may be terminated; and
- I may be responsible for paying my provider.

4. I can designate up to three (3) individuals as secondary cardholders to report attendance and absences on my behalf.

5. The secondary cardholder must be at least 18 years old, unless the individual is the child's parent.

6. I must not designate the owner or director of the child care facility as a secondary cardholder.

7. I am responsible for any misuse of the attendance card by any secondary cardholder.

8. I am responsible for informing any secondary cardholders of these requirements and their responsibility for using the attendance card.

9. I also understand that my child care services can be terminated if I or the secondary cardholder:

- gives the attendance card to someone else—including the child care provider; or
- gives the personal identification number to someone else.

PARENT SHARE OF COST (PSOC) OR PARENT FEE

A parent share of cost (PSOC) is assessed on the basis of the family income, the number of children in the household, and the number of children in care. A fee of nine percent (9%) of the family's gross monthly income is assessed if only one child in the family is receiving care. When two or more children are receiving care, a fee of eleven percent (11%) of the family's gross monthly income is assessed for child care. For families with seven or more members, the fees shall be reduced to sixty-five percent (65%) of the amounts stated above. If all the children are school age, the parent share of cost will be reduced to fifty-five percent (55%). If all children are to attend part time (less than six (6) hours per day), the parent share of cost will be reduced to fifty-five percent (55%).

A parent share of cost cannot be waived. It is a fixed fee that is not adjusted for the number of days per week that care is provided. It is not reduced when children are absent.

The parent share of cost assessed by Workforce Solutions will not exceed the cost of the child care.

Parents agree and understand:

- Parents must pay the parent share of cost in advance before receiving the child care;
- Parents must pay the parent share of cost as determined by a Client Services Specialist at the initial determination of eligibility, and agree to pay the parent share of cost if it changes due to increase/decrease in income, family size, etc;
- Any child care subsidy that the parent receives from another agency must also be paid to the child care facility where their child receives care;
- The parent share of cost is based on the family's total monthly gross income, family size, and the number of children enrolled in child care;
 - The parent share of cost must be paid even when the child is absent; and
 - If the parents do not pay, or arrange to pay, the amount required, Workforce Solutions will not continue to pay for child care services.

REPORTING A CHANGE TO WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

Parents must report changes to Workforce Solutions within **ten (10) calendar days of the change**. Some of the changes may include, but are not limited to: loss of a job, change of jobs, adding a second job or other income, wages increased or decreased, parent went on maternity leave, change in child support payment, number of employment hours increased or decreased, change in marital status, change in family size, withdrawal from college classes, etc.

Failure to report changes within ten (10) calendar days may result in the termination of services and/or recovery of payments made for child care during the time of ineligibility. The receipt of services for which the parent is no longer eligible constitutes grounds on which to suspect fraud and may be considered to be stealing.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITY AGREEMENT (PRA)

State and federal laws require families receiving assistance abide by the Parent Responsibility Agreement.

The parent responsibility agreement requires each parent, or both parents in a two parent family, must cooperate with Workforce Solutions if necessary to:

- Cooperate with the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) if child support has not been established, on an on-going basis by: providing information about the absent parent, helping to locate the absent parent, and appearing in court hearings or other meetings to establish child support;
- Establish paternity of the parent's children;
- Ensure parents shall not use, sell, or possess marijuana or any other controlled substance;
- Ensure parents shall not abuse alcohol; and
- Ensure each child in the family ages six (6) through seventeen (17) years attends school regularly, unless the child has a high school diploma equivalency certificate or is specifically exempted from school attendance by the Education Code.

Workforce Solutions will require documentation to verify compliance with the Parent Responsibility Agreement information. If parents do not comply, Workforce Solutions will impose sanctions until documentation of compliance is received. Parents who participate in the Child Protective Services, Choices, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training, Workforce Investment Act programs, or receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits will be required to complete the parent responsibility information with their respective caseworkers at Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) or the workforce center.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITY AGREEMENT SANCTIONS

At initial determination of eligibility, parents will be required to provide documentation showing compliance with the Parent Responsibility Agreement (PRA). If the parent is eligible for the child care program but does not provide the required documentation of compliance, they may be placed into the program. However, the parent will be sanctioned twenty-five (\$25) dollars per month for non-compliance of each component of the PRA. These sanctions will be added to their parent share of cost each month until documentation is received showing the parent is in compliance.

At recertification, the parent must show continued compliance with the Parent Responsibility Agreement, as listed above, by signing the Parent Acknowledgement Form and providing additional documentation on compliance of child support and/or cooperating with the Office of the Attorney General in establishing paternity and child support. They must also sign the self declaration of compliance for school attendance on all school age children ages six (6) through seventeen (17) (Grades 1-12) and also sign that they have not used, sold, or possessed marijuana or any other controlled substance and have not abused alcohol. If documentation is not provided, the parent will be sanctioned twenty-five (\$25) dollars per month for each non-compliant component until documentation is received showing the parent is in compliance.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES SUMMARY

Rights of Parents or Guardian

1. To have persons represent them when applying for child care services.
2. To be notified about their eligibility for services within twenty (20) calendar days from the date all eligibility documents are received by Workforce Solutions.
3. To select the child care arrangement they desire from the options open to them and to visit facilities before making their choice.
4. To visit the facility in which their child is enrolled and to participate in activities.
5. To receive assistance in choosing initial or additional child care referrals including information about policies regarding transferring their child from one facility to another.
6. To appeal denial, reduction or termination of services. This does not apply to parents who have children from Child Protective Services (CPS) in-home cases and did not request child care. The procedure for requesting an appeal will be provided by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).
7. To have information used to determine eligibility for child care services treated as confidential by Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and Workforce Solutions.
8. To receive services without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, age, political beliefs, religion, or disability.
9. To reject an offer of child care services or voluntarily withdraw their child from child care services. This does not apply to families who have children from CPS in-home cases.
10. To be informed by Workforce Solutions of the possible consequences of rejecting or ending child care that is offered.
11. To be notified in writing by Workforce Solutions at least fifteen (15) calendar days before the denial, delay, reduction, or termination of services, except in cases in which the workforce center staff or a CPS caseworker has authorized child care to end immediately.

Responsibilities of Parents or Guardian

1. To provide Workforce Solutions with all information necessary to establish eligibility to receive child care services.
 - This information must be provided by the deadline stated in the cover letter or child care will be terminated.
2. To report changes in income, job, or family size, loss of cash assistance grant or Medicaid benefits, or any other change in circumstances which may affect eligibility. Changes must be reported to Workforce Solutions (and workforce center staff, if applicable) within ten (10) calendar days of the change.
3. To understand that child care services will be denied or terminated for failure to submit all information requested in items 1 and 2 above within the time frames listed above.
4. To comply with all Texas Workforce Commission and Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas policies and procedures and child care provider requirements.

CHILD CARE AUTOMATED ATTENDANCE

Child Care Automated Attendance (CCAA) is a new way of reporting child care attendance. All clients receiving child care assistance through Workforce Solutions will be issued a swipe card and can request up to three (3) additional cards for others who would be dropping off or picking up the child(ren). When the children are dropped off or picked up, they will have to be checked in and out with the use of the card. The only person allowed to use the card is the cardholder. If anyone else uses the card it could be considered fraud.

The parents will either swipe their card through the Point of Service (POS) machines or call the toll free number on the back of their card and follow the prompts for checking in and out.

POS Machine: Providers with the POS machines must be a licensed child care center. These providers are not allowed to use the automated phone system. The POS machine requires thermal paper to print out the reports. The first two rolls are supplied by ACS and the remaining rolls must be purchased by the providers. Reports may be printed from the POS machine to keep up with the parents' process.

Automated Phone System: Providers required to use the automated phone system are licensed or registered child care homes. These providers will not receive a POS machine.

The parent has six (6) days plus the current day to go back to do an absence, previous check in and/or out the child(ren). In most cases, if the parent does not make sure the child(ren)'s attendance is reported, they would be responsible for paying the provider in full for those days.

Providers currently notify Workforce Solutions if a parent fails to use the swipe card or call in to report attendance or absences. If Workforce Solutions receives 5 reports from a provider within a one month period that a parent is not using the swipe card, or if there are 5 days when the parent did not go back and complete previous check in's for days missed, the parent will receive 15 days notice before being removed from the child care assistance program. If the parent reports attendance/absences every day during those 15 days, the child care will continue. If attendance is not reported every day, child care assistance will end.

In the event of a lost swipe card, a parent may request a new card up to 3 times. Upon the fourth request for a new card, child care will end.

If a provider does not receive payment from Workforce Solutions for a day of care in which the parent did not use the swipe card to report attendance, the child care provider may require the parent to pay private pay for the cost of the care. If the provider reports that a parent did not pay as required, the parent will receive 15 days notice that payment is required or the child care will end. The parent must provide Workforce Solutions with a receipt from the provider stating payment has been made to remain in the program. If the parent does not provide a receipt, child care will end.

ABSENCE POLICY

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the child care provider of a child's absence during normal participation hours.

Workforce Solutions automatically stops paying for a child's care if one of the following occurs:

- Three (3) days consecutive absences on a new placement;

- Five (5) days consecutive absences with no contact from the parent with the provider or Workforce Solutions; or
- Thirty (30) days absence in a one year period.

A child may be absent for court-ordered visits with a non-custodial parent. However, documentation of the court order and notification to the provider is required *before* the court ordered visit.

When the child(ren) are absent, the parent can call from any phone to the toll free number on the back of the swipe card to report the absence or they can report the absences on the POS machine. Absences can be reported up to three (3) days in advance.

WORK AND EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Twenty-Five (25) Hours Minimum Requirement for child care services:
(This does not include Choices, Child Protective, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training Programs)

Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas requires that parents must work a minimum of twenty-five (25) hours per week or be enrolled in non-degree (certificate), post secondary vocational education training, or be enrolled in college, or have a combination of employment/education that totals twenty-five (25) hours for a one parent household or fifty (50) hours for a two parent household per week in order to receive subsidized child care. One (1) semester hour of college equals three (3) hours of participation. If in training, the parent must maintain a 2.00 GPA.

For parents twenty (20) years of age or older, GED will count as ten (10) hours toward the twenty-five hour participation requirement. The parent must be working at least an additional fifteen (15) hours to meet the minimum requirement to qualify for child care services.

CHILD CARE DURING JOB SEARCH

Parents who are currently receiving child care services and whose job is terminated, or whose employment hours are decreased to below twenty-five (25) hours, will be allowed to receive child care services for four weeks to job search. The job loss or decrease in hours must be reported within ten (10) calendar days of the change in order to receive the child care services during the job search. There is a limit of four weeks to job search in the fiscal year (October 1st to September 30th).

RE-CERTIFICATION OF CHILD CARE SERVICES

Parents whose children are enrolled in subsidized child care services must be re-certified to determine continued eligibility for child care on a regular schedule. Workforce Solutions will notify the parent by sending a Re-Certification Packet with a cover letter at least fifteen (15) calendar days before the re-certification information is due from the parent. The cover letter will list what the parent must provide for re-certification such as documentation of income, family size, minimum hours worked, hourly wage, child support, training or college semester hours (if applicable), etc. The parent must return all of the information/paperwork by the stated deadline. Also, at least fifteen (15) calendar days before the re-certification date, a Notice of Possible Termination of Services, along with a right to appeal notice, will be mailed to the parent. If the information/ paperwork is not returned to Workforce Solutions within the fifteen (15) calendar days or the documentation shows the parent is no longer eligible, child care services will be terminated on the recertification date.

TERMINATION OF CHILD CARE SERVICES

Parents who do not comply with the eligibility criteria (verification of income, family size, minimum hours, etc.) or who may be over the income limit will be given a fifteen (15) calendar day notice and a right to appeal notice prior to his/her child care services being terminated.

APPEALS

Parents have 14 calendar days from the termination/denial date on Form 2052 to file an appeal with Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas (Board) requesting a review. The appeal must be submitted in writing and include:

- a. the parent's name, mailing address, and phone number,
- b. a copy of the termination/denial letter and
- c. a brief justification of the appeal request.

The Board will provide an opportunity for an informal resolution in an attempt to resolve the issue. If the parent is not satisfied with the informal resolution, a Board hearing will be scheduled. Parents have the right to have a representative during the informal resolution and at the Board hearing. The representative may include an attorney (at your expense), friend, co-worker, or family member. If the parent chooses to have a representative during the informal resolution and/or Board hearing, the parent must submit a written authorization.

Parents may mail or fax the appeal to the following:

<p style="text-align: center;">Appeals Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas Centre West, 911 Bishop Rd., Building A100 Wake Village, TX, 75501 Fax: 903-223-0449</p>
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If parents should have any questions regarding this matter, please call 903-794-9490 ext 103. Appropriate accommodations (auxiliary aids and services) will be made available, upon request, to individuals with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency.

ORIENTATION TO COMPLAINT

**This Orientation to Complaint Form addresses complaint procedures for the listed programs and services administered in the local workforce development area by Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas and its contractors:
Child Care Services**

The recipient of the federal financial assistance is:

**Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas
911 N Bishop, Building A Ste. 100
Wake Village, Texas 75501**

**Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer: Sharon Davis
Telephone Number: (903) 794-9490 x103
TDD /Relay Texas (800) 735-2988**

Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas (the Board) shall resolve complaints in a fair and prompt manner. Acts of restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisal towards complainants exercising their rights to file a complaint under this procedure are prohibited. This procedure applies to all applicants and participants who have cause to file a complaint related to activities or programs administered by the Board. If you have a complaint concerning any of these programs, you may submit your written complaint to the Board's EO Officer or Contractor, as appropriate.

After your complaint has been received, the EO Officer will notify you of the next step in the complaint procedure. As long as you wish to pursue your complaint, the Board or Contractor will follow the steps described in the Complaint Procedure. You should study the Complaint Procedure carefully, and if you feel that steps required by the Complaint Procedure are not being followed, contact the EO Officer. Remember that at any stage of the Complaint Procedure you feel that you are not being provided enough help, you should contact:

**Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)
Subrecipient Monitoring Department
101 E. 15th St., Room 242-T
Austin, Tx 78778-0001**

**Telephone Numbers:
(512) 463-2400
Relay Texas TDD: 1-800-735-2989
Relay Texas Voice: 1-800-735-2988**

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IS THE LAW

It is against the law for this of Federal financial assistance to discriminate on the following bases: against any individual in the United States, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief; and against any beneficiary of programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), on the basis of the beneficiary's citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States, or his or her participation in any WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. The recipient must not discriminate in any of the following areas: deciding who will be admitted, or have access, to any WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity; providing opportunities in, or treating any person with regard to, such a program or activity; or making employment decisions in the administration of, or in connection with, such a program or activity.

What to do if you believe you have experienced discrimination. If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination under a WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, you may file a complaint within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation with the Equal Opportunity Officer (or the person whom the recipient has designated for this purpose), or with: The Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC), U.S. Dept. of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room N4123, Washington, D.C. 20210. If you file your complaint with the recipient, you must wait either until the recipient issues a written Notice of Final Action, or until 90 days have passed (whichever is sooner), before filing with the Civil Rights Center. If the recipient does not give you a written Notice of Final Action within 90 days of the day on which you filed your complaint, you do not have to wait for the recipient to issue that Notice before filing a complaint with CRC. However, you must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the 90-day deadline (in other words, within 120 days after the day on which you filed your complaint with the recipient). If the recipient does give you a written Notice of Final Action on your complaint, but you are dissatisfied with the decision or resolution, you may file a complaint with CRC. You must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the date on which you received the Notice of Final Action.

IGUALDAD DE OPORTUNIDADES ES LA LEY

La Ley requiere igualdad de oportunidades: El destinatario de asistencia financiera del Gobierno Federal tiene prohibido por ley discriminar, con base en los conceptos a continuación: discriminar a cualquier persona en los Estados Unidos por motivos de su raza, color, religión, sexo, origen nacional, edad, incapacidad, filiación o ideología política; discriminar a cualquier beneficiario de programas que cuenten con apoyo financiero a tenor del Título I de la Ley de Inversión en la Fuerza Laboral (Workforce Investment Act o WIA) de 1998, por motivo de la ciudadanía o calidad migratoria del beneficiario en tanto inmigrante legalmente autorizado para trabajar en los Estados Unidos; o por motivo de su participación en cualquier programa o actividad que cuente con apoyo financiero a tenor del Título I de la WIA. El destinatario de tal asistencia no debe discriminar en ninguno de los conceptos a continuación: en decidir quiénes han de ser admitidos o tener acceso a cualquier programa o actividad que cuente con apoyo financiero a tenor del Título I de la WIA; en la provisión de oportunidades en tal programa o actividad y en el trato a cualquier personal con respecto al programa o actividad; o en la toma de decisiones de empleo en la administración de tal programa o actividad o con respecto a lo mismo.

Qué hacer si usted cree haber sido discriminado/a: Si cree haber sufrido discriminación en un programa o actividad con apoyo financiado a tenor del Título I de la WIA, puede presentar una queja, dentro de los 180 días subsiguientes a la fecha de la supuesta infracción, con el Oficial de Igualdad de Oportunidades del destinatario de asistencia federal (o la persona designada por el destinatario para ese efecto), o bien, con el: Director del Centro de Derechos Civiles (CRC), Civil Rights Center (CRC), Dept. Federal Del Trabajo (U.S. Dept. of Labor), 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room N4123, Washington, D.C. 20210. Si presenta su queja con el destinatario de asistencia federal, tendrá que esperar a que éste le expida un Aviso de Acción Definitiva por escrito, o hasta transcurridos 90 días (en la más temprana de las dos fechas) antes de presentar su queja al Centro de Derechos Civiles). Si el destinatario de asistencia federal no le entrega un Aviso de Acción Definitiva por escrito dentro de los 90 días de la fecha de presentación de su queja, usted no tiene obligación de esperar a que el destinatario le expida dicho Aviso para presentar una queja con el CRC. Por otra parte, la queja con el CRC debe presentarse dentro de los 30 días del vencimiento del plazo de 90 días, es decir, dentro de 120 días a partir de la fecha en que presentó su queja con el destinatario. Si éste le entrega un Aviso de Acción Definitiva por escrito con respecto a su queja y usted sigue inconforme con la decisión o resolución, puede presentar una queja con el CRC. Hay que presentarla dentro de los 30 días subsiguientes a la fecha en que recibió el Aviso de Acción Definitiva.

FRAUD AND IMPROPER PAYMENTS

Fraud can be defined as: the intentional deception or misrepresentation that a parent makes, knowing it to be false, which could result in some unauthorized benefit (such as child care services) to the parent. If a parent knowingly and intentionally gives false information or does not give the necessary information (such as income from other sources) to Workforce Solutions during eligibility determinations, this may be considered possible fraud and the parent may be prosecuted.

Additionally, 18 U.S.C. 641 states:

“Whoever embezzles, steals, purloins, or knowingly converts to his use or the use of another, or without authority, sells, conveys or disposes of any record, voucher, money or thing of value of the United States or of any department or agency thereof, or any property made or being made under contract for the United States or any department or agency thereof; or whoever receives, conceals, or retains the same with intent to convert it to his use or gain, knowing it to have been embezzled, stolen or purloined or converted shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than ten years or both; but if the value of such property does not exceed the sum of \$1,000, he shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.”

It may be considered stealing child care services if a parent continues to receive child care and does not notify Workforce Solutions within 10 calendar days of any changes in work, training, or education status, income, benefits, family size, or marital status. The parent will be required to pay back any money paid for child care during the period of time the parent was ineligible because of not working, or participating in education a minimum of 25 hours per week. If the parent does not report all of their household income, they will have to pay back the difference in the parent share of cost owed during that time frame.

REDUCTION OF CHILDREN IN CHILD CARE

The general principle of "continuity of care" is that enrolled children shall receive child care services for the duration of the time the parent remains eligible for Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) subsidized child care.

An exception would be if children in income eligible child care must be removed from care in order to make room for children in one of these three required priority groups:

- (1) Choices Child Care,
- (2) Transitional Child Care
- (3) Workforce Orientation Applicant Child Care.

If Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas implements this policy of reducing income eligible/self-referred children in child care, all parents will receive a letter thirty (30) calendar days before the reduction of children in care begins.

NOTE: The reduction of children in child care would only be done if absolutely necessary.

ADDRESSES, TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND RESOURCES

Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas

Child Care Services

P.O. Box 6009

Texarkana, TX 75505-6009

Phone: (903) 794-8999 or (800) 874-3226

Fax: (903) 794-8012 or (877) 329-6772

All programs and employers under the auspices of Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas are equal opportunity entities. Auxiliary aids and services are available, upon request, to individuals with disabilities. Texas Relay: (800) 735-2988 Voice, (800) 735-2989 TDD

Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas locations

Texarkana

1702 St. Michael Drive

Texarkana, TX 75503

Phone: (903) 794-4163

Fax: (903) 792-2976

Mount Pleasant

1902 W. Ferguson Rd.

Mt. Pleasant, TX 75455

Phone: (903) 572-9841

Fax: (903) 572-0159

Paris

5210 SE Loop 286

Paris, TX 75460

Phone: (903) 784-4356

Fax: (903) 784-7267

Sulphur Springs

1716 Posey Lane.

Sulphur Springs, TX 75482

Phone: (903) 885-7556

Fax: (903) 439-1012

Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas provides excellent resources for job seekers. Each location provides assistance with career assessment and planning, vocational training at local community colleges, job search assistance, and work certification classes to help job seekers in finding a job. Each center provides free computer, fax and telephone usage to customers searching for a job. Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas is an equal opportunity employer/program.

Child Care Provider Information

2-1-1 Texas INFO*LINE

To receive assistance in finding a child care facility in your area to meet your need, you can call 2-1-1 (toll free) to talk with a child care resource and referral representative. Cell phone users need to dial (361) 882-4636 for 2-1-1 services.

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

For information on any child care facility in Texas, you may visit the licensing website: www.txchildcaresearch.org Choose "Search For A Day Care".

Child Care Licensing: (903) 233-5237

ADDRESSES, TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND RESOURCES

Office of the Attorney General of Texas

Paris Office Serves Delta, Franklin, Hopkins, Lamar, and Red River counties.

Phone: (903) 784-4322 or (800) 687-8259

Fax: (903) 784-6893

Physical Address:
2625 S. Church Street
Paris, TX 75460-7613

Mailing Address:
P. O. Box 859
Paris, TX 75461-0859

Texarkana Office Serves Bowie, Cass, Morris, and Titus Counties

Phone: (903) 223-5000 or (800) 687-8260

Fax: (903)334-7779

Physical/Mailing Address:
122 Plaza West, Suite 2
Texarkana, TX 75501-5917

The Office of the Attorney General internet site is www.oag.state.tx.us

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Please remember while receiving child care assistance through Workforce Solutions, you must meet certain deadlines. Please find listed below several important dates, that if forgotten, will cause the child care services you receive to be denied, reduced, terminated or delayed. You may respond with your paperwork by mail or by fax. Remember:

- Your eligibility re-certification date;
- Paperwork and other documentation must be returned to the client services specialist as required;
- During re-certification, you have until the stated deadline to return the eligibility forms, Parent Acknowledgement Form, and other eligibility information (i.e. verification of income, family size, etc.) or your child care services will be terminated;
- You must call your child's provider (day care facility) immediately to **report when your child is absent** and the reason your child will not be in that day; you must also call the number on the back of your attendance card to report the absence.
- Change of status must be reported to Workforce Solutions within **ten (10) calendar days of the change**;
- Parent share of cost is to be **paid in advance** on a schedule determined by your provider;
- Appeals must be requested within **fourteen (14) calendar days of denial, reduction, or termination of child care services** as indicated on the appeal notice.

SAMPLE

Parent Acknowledgement Form Certification Statement

Case Name: _____ Case # _____

Before you sign this form, please read it carefully to be certain that all of your questions are answered. When you have finished reading this form, please sign and date the form. The signed and dated Acknowledgement Form must be returned to Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas before placement and at each recertification.

SECTION I

A child care representative will answer any questions you may have regarding the Parent Handbook. The Parent Handbook has been developed to help parents understand their rights and responsibilities to receive child care assistance through Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas.

SECTION II

I ACKNOWLEDGE:

- I spoke with a child care representative, who explained available services and the intake process for accessing those services; (Page 4 in Parent Handbook).
- My rights and responsibilities were explained; (Page 13 in Parent Handbook)
- I was given information about different types of child care; (Page 4-6 in Parent Handbook).
- I was allowed to select the child care arrangement that my family needs; (Page 4-6 in Parent Handbook)
- I understand my responsibilities regarding my child's child care arrangements; (Pages 6-13 in Parent Handbook)
- I was given an explanation of my parent share of cost; (Page 10 in Parent Handbook)
- I was informed that I must report a change within 10 calendar days; (Page 10 in Parent Handbook)
- I was given an explanation of the attendance/absences policy; (page 12 in Parent Handbook)
- I was informed that 25 hours per week is the minimum number of employment and/or education hours for a single parent household and 50 hours per week for a two parent household; (Page 12 in Parent Handbook)
- I was given an explanation of orientation to complaint, the fraud policy, and the appeals process; (Pages 14-16 in Parent Handbook)
- I was given the address and telephone number for contacting Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas Child Care. (Page 3 and Page 17 in Parent Handbook)

SECTION III

I AGREE to pay a Parent Share of Cost (Parent Fee), if applicable, to the child care provider where my child is receiving care, in advance of my child receiving child care services. I understand that my parent fee is based on my family's gross income, family size, and the number of children enrolled in child care.

I AGREE to comply with the provisions of the Parent Enrollment Agreement (Page 9 in Parent Handbook).

I UNDERSTAND my Rights and Responsibilities (Page 6-13 in Parent Handbook).

SAMPLE

**Parent Acknowledgement Form
Certification Statement**

SECTION IV

I HEREBY CERTIFY under penalty of perjury, that the information I provide to Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas is true and accurate. I understand that: (1) a person who obtains or attempts to obtain, by fraudulent means, services to which the person is not entitled may be prosecuted under applicable state and federal laws, (2) I am entitled to be notified about my eligibility for services within 20 calendar days from the date all of my eligibility documents are received by Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas; (3) I, or my representative, may appeal denial, reduction, or termination of services; (4) services will be provided without regard to sex, race, creed, color, national origin, or disability; and (5) the information I provide or a third party provides regarding my income and circumstance is confidential.

I GIVE PERMISSION TO THE Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas, (or the agency under contract), to contact a third party to verify income, family size, residence, education, training, Attorney General compliance, and any other information needed to determine eligibility and to use Social Security numbers provided by me for identification and verification of benefits, child support payments which the family receives, and UI income information. I give the child care staff authority to share information with other agencies working with me such as Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and TWC.

I UNDERSTAND that by signing this form, I am applying for services from Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas. All information/documents I provide to Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas to complete my eligibility determination for child care services represents a complete and accurate statement of my (the client's) family's circumstances at the time of application.

I CERTIFY that I will comply with all of the requirements, policies, and procedures of the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas, and the child care provider while my child is enrolled in child care.

I AGREE to comply with the provisions of the Parent Responsibility Agreement (PRA) (Page 11 in Parent Handbook). At placement and at each recertification, I will supply Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas with the necessary documentation to show I am cooperating with the Office of the Attorney General if child support has not been established for each child in my household. I will provide documentation of the amount of child support payments received for each child in my household. I will sign form 2042A certifying that my school age children are attending school regularly and also certifying that I have not used, sold, or possessed marijuana or any other controlled substance and have not abused alcohol. I understand I will be required to pay a \$25 per month sanction for each component of non-compliance.

Parent Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

Client Services Specialist Signature

Date