



MEETING OF THE
TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION

DATE

JULY 29, 2025

1 Tuesday, July 29, 2025

2 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right. Good morning.

3 Is my microphone on? This meeting is called to order. Has anyone
4 signed up for public comment? I wasn't sure who was going to be
5 here. I would have called your name but I wasn't sure.

6 JEWELL PATRICIO: Jewell Patricio, Office of
7 General Counsel. We have one individual who has registered for
8 public comment this morning. [Inaudible]. Let's try that again.
9 Excuse me. We have one individual who's registered for public
10 comment this morning. Good morning, Lisa Governale. Please
11 unmute your microphone, introduce yourself, and then begin.

12 LISA GOVERNALE: [Inaudible].

13 JEWELL PATRICIO: Yes, we can hear you.
14 Thank you.

15 LISA GOVERNALE: All right, great. Thank
16 you. Yes, I'm Lisa Governale. I'm here today to comment and
17 advocate for my final appeal to my unemployment hearing. Uh,
18 this has been going on well over a year and this is the final
19 attempt to, uh, see if this can be approved. Uh, I will tell you
20 that I did suffer from a hostile work environment, uh, and I had
21 good cause to leave, uh, according to a reasonable person
22 standard, uh. Anyone would have done that in my situation. Uh,
23 I, uh, was a victim of a work, workplace in which I was made to
24 feel uncomfortable, scared, and intimidated, and harassed. It
25 was offensive and unwelcome conduct for which I tried to seek

1 resolution. It was a behavior displayed by my supervisor of
2 which my employer allowed to continue. Uh, I am not required by
3 law to endure a hostile work environment, uh, when an employer
4 fails to take action to remedy the situation. The psychological
5 abuse that was suffered over time that a reasonable person would
6 find unsuitable to perform regular duties and tasks is a premise
7 upon which at the very least unemployment benefits should be
8 granted. Uh, I also would like to note that, uh, uh, I suffered
9 from verbal abuse, long hours of work trying to meet
10 expectations, being treated differently than other coworkers,
11 lack of sleep, difficulty concentrating, focusing, and anxiety.
12 It is a cumulative effect of which I decided to resign and not
13 necessarily one incident which seems to be the focus of the last
14 hearings. Uh, I'd also like to point out that during my time at
15 Rice University I had the privilege of building really positive
16 relationships with numerous campus resources, professors,
17 students, alumni, and coworkers. These connections were a
18 testament to my dedication to the university community and its
19 mission. It is disheartening that such a positive and fulfilling
20 experience would be overshadowed by a hostile, hostile work
21 environment that continued to escalate. Uh, I also want to point
22 out that, uh, I, I did love my job at Rice. The last thing I
23 wanted to do was resign. I was committed to making the situation
24 work but I realized that it was not possible. Uh, and I would
25 also like to point out that, uh, in the January appeal my

1 employer did not show up for that, uh, and so to me that means
2 that they weren't contesting the appeal. Uh, I do want to thank
3 you for the opportunity to provide this public comment today.
4 Uh, I really do appreciate that opportunity and I hope that
5 you'll make the decision in my favor today. Thank you.

6 JEWELL PATRICIO: Thank you. And that's the
7 last of our comments today.

8 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you, Ms. Patricio.

9 MS. MILLER: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: No, thank you. We'll take
11 a short recess.

12 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right. This is Agenda
13 Item 9, fiscal year 26, ES and SNAP supplemental allocations.

14 CHRIS NELSON: Good morning, chairman,
15 commissioners, Mr. Serna. For the record, Chris Nelson, chief
16 financial officer. Uh, this morning you have before you the
17 fiscal year 2026 SNAP and Employment Service allocations in
18 accordance with Chapter 800 of the TWC rules regarding
19 allocations. The SNAP allocation is in the amount of \$11,883,508
20 and includes a small board distribution of \$30,515, and the
21 Employment Services allocation is in the amount of \$27,439,218
22 and includes small board, uh, distribution of \$71,709. That
23 concludes my remarks and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

24 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Comments or questions?

25 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, none.

1 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: No, chairman.

2 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion?

3 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Chairman, I move that
4 we adopt the fiscal year 2026 Employment Services and
5 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program allocations as
6 recommended today by staff.

7 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: I second.

8 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and
9 seconded and the motion carries. This is Agenda Item 10, RESEA
10 supplemental distribution.

11 SUZETTE ROBINSON: Good morning, chairman,
12 commissioners, and Mr. Serna. For the record, I am Suzette
13 Robinson of Workforce Development Division. For fiscal year
14 2024, TWC received an RESEA performance outcome payment in the
15 amount of \$2,880,907. In the commission meeting on July 9, 2025,
16 the commission approved distributing a portion of this year's
17 outcome payment as performance incentives. New this year USDOL
18 requires that a portion of the state's outcome payment be used
19 to serve additional RESEA customers. Staff has developed a
20 discussion paper for your consideration that distributes the
21 remaining balance of the performance outcome payment and a
22 portion of prior year grant funds as supplemental funding for
23 boards that are experiencing increases in their profile pool and
24 need to either cost allocate or hire additional staff to provide
25 RESEA services to those additional customers. Staff recommends

1 amending the board contract year 2025 contracts to distribute
2 \$1,382,513 to boards for the provision of services to additional
3 customers in their profile pool as described in the discussion
4 paper.

5 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Comments or questions?

6 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, none here.

7 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: No, chairman.

8 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion?

9 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Chairman, I move that
10 we approve the fiscal year 2024 Reemployment Services and
11 Eligibility Assessment performance outcome payment and
12 supplemental allocation as described in the discussion paper and
13 recommended today by staff.

14 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: I second.

15 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and
16 seconded and the motion carries. This is Agenda Item 11, TWC
17 ethics policy.

18 DEBRA SIMPSON: Good morning, commissioners,
19 Mr. Serna. Uh, my name is Debra Simpson. I'm an assistant
20 general counsel with TWC coming to you today to bring forth a
21 TWC ethics policy readoption for your review and consideration.
22 The commission last readopted the ethics policy on July 30,
23 2024. After readoption Governor Abbott issued an executive order
24 that among other things requires state agencies to revise their
25 ethics policies to include certain provisions regarding foreign

1 adversaries. Because the executive order [inaudible] the ethics
2 policy, we made some additional improvements, uh, to the policy.
3 Most of the sub, revisions are nonsubstantive and are made to
4 improve clarity, to ensure the accuracy of links within the
5 document to relevant policies, procedures, and forms, and
6 external sources, and to remove references to the ethics advisor
7 which is a now defunct position. We've also added a placeholder
8 for inserting a link to an ethics policy on the use of TWC data
9 and artificial intelligence, which is currently in process, and
10 once that policy is finalized and approved, we will insert a
11 link to the document in the ethics policy. Only seven edits are
12 substantive. The first four are found in Section 1.10.2. The
13 first one of those is Subsection 2, has been revised to
14 expressly prohibit access to TWC's systems for non-TWC purposes
15 or for purposes outside the scope of the employee's employment.
16 Subsection 5 has been revised to expressly prohibit employees
17 from participating or engaging in fraud, theft, waste, abuse or
18 corruption, and the revised language further states that
19 employees who violate Section 1.19 of the TWC personnel manual
20 also violate this section of the ethics policy. Subsections 7
21 and 8 have been revised to remove the phrase for compensation.
22 These changes make clear that the prohibitions in Subsections 7
23 and 8 apply to all self-employment activities regardless of
24 whether the employee receives compensation. And that last
25 revision to Section 1.10.2, Subsection 11, has been revised to

1 add a sentence that states violations of Subsection 11 would
2 include employees misrepresenting their role within TWC. To
3 comply with the executive order, we revised Section 1.11.1 to
4 expand the definition of prohibited sources to include entities
5 on the U.S. Department of Commerce's foreign adversaries list
6 and to provide a reporting mechanism for employees who are
7 approached by anyone representing a country on the foreign
8 adversaries list offering a gift or who become aware of any
9 violations of the policy regarding prohibited gifts from foreign
10 adversaries. Section 1.12.1 has been revised to remove ambiguity
11 and to clarify circumstances when employees must submit a P-44
12 form to request approval of outside activities. Most of the
13 changes are reflected in Subsection 3 which requires employees
14 to submit a P-44 form for approval of any outside employment or
15 dual employment, any outside activity that could be perceived
16 be, to be within the purview of or overlaps with TWC's
17 operations or any outside activity that involves a leadership
18 position, even if that position is unpaid. The revised language
19 provides additional guidance that an, a leadership position
20 includes but is not limited to positions where a TWC employee is
21 an officer, partner, or director of an organization or entity or
22 a member or manager of a limited limit, liability company even
23 if the role is on a voluntary basis. The final substantive
24 change was made to comply with the executive order. New Section
25 1.15.3 prohibits travel to for professional purposes a country

1 on the foreign adversaries list and provides a reporting
2 mechanisms for employees who are approached by anyone
3 representing a country on the foreign adversaries list offering
4 travel or who become aware of any violations of the policy
5 regarding prohibited travel. With that I'm happy to answer any
6 questions you might have about the revisions to the ethics
7 policy.

8 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Any comments or questions?

9 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, none here.

10 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: No questions.

11 DEBRA SIMPSON: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion?

13 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Chairman, I move that
14 we approve the readoption of the Texas Workforce Commission
15 ethics policy as presented today by staff.

16 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: I second.

17 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and
18 seconded and the motion carries. This is Agenda Item 12, board
19 nominations.

20 PATRICIA MARTINEZ: Good morning, chairman,
21 commissioners, Mr. Serna. For the record, Patricia Martinez,
22 Workforce Development Division. Today for your consideration we
23 have Workforce Board nominations for Workforce Solutions Brazos
24 Valley, Cameron County, Capital Area, Concho Valley, Deep East
25 Texas, and Southeast Texas. Staff recommends approval on the

1 presented nominees and I'm here to answer any questions you may
2 have.

3 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Comments or questions?

4 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, none here.

5 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: No, chairman.

6 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion?

7 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Chairman, I move that
8 we approve the local Workforce Development Board member nominees
9 presented today for the following: Workforce Solutions Brazos
10 Valley; Cameron County; Capital Area; Concho Valley; Deep East
11 Texas; and Southeast Texas.

12 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: I second.

13 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and
14 seconded and the motion carries.

15 PATRICIA MARTINEZ: Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: An executive director's
17 report.

18 MR. SERNA: No report other than to say I
19 will be out of the office on personal leave the next, the first
20 two weeks in August. Uh, Randy Townsend, our deputy, will be in
21 charge or if he's not around, I'm sure he'll leave someone
22 competent in charge like Chris Nelson.

23 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: So go to Randy and Chris
24 for everything?

25 MR. SERNA: Or anybody else.

1 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Do you have cellphone
2 service where you're going?

3 MR. SERNA: Yes, sir. I do. I always do for
4 y'all. Anyway, that's all I have.

5 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you, sir. Is there
6 any other order of business to come before the commission?

7 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Uh, nothing here.

8 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: No, chairman.

9 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion to
10 adjourn?

11 COMMISSIONER TREVIÑO: Chairman, I move to
12 adjourn.

13 COMMISSIONER ESPARZA: I second.

14 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: The vote is unanimous and
15 we are adjourned.

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