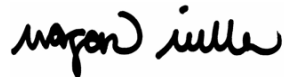


**TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION**  
**Workforce Development Letter**

<b>ID/No:</b>	WD 25-23
<b>Date:</b>	December 4, 2023
<b>Keyword:</b>	Child Care
<b>Effective:</b>	December 31, 2023

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



**From:** Reagan Miller, Director, Child Care & Early Learning Division

**Subject:** **Local Participation in the Texas Infant-Toddler Specialist Network**

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**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this WD Letter is to provide Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with guidance on requirements for participation in the Texas Infant-Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN).

**RESCISSIONS:**

None.

**BACKGROUND:**

On January 6, 2023, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) approved the [Texas Child Care Workforce Strategic Plan 2023–2025](#) (Plan), which includes specific goals, strategies, and action plans. One action item listed in the Plan requires Boards to designate at least one staff member to become certified as an Infant-Toddler Specialist and participate in the [Texas Infant-Toddler Specialist Network](#) (ITSN) to provide support to child care programs in their local workforce development area.

**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 designate at least one contractor or Board staff member to serve as the Board’s primary ITSN subject matter expert and to attain certification as an Infant-Toddler Specialist.

**LF:** Boards may designate multiple staff members as Infant-Toddler Specialists.

**NLF:** Boards must ensure that Infant-Toddler Specialists are responsible for the following:

- Mentoring and training child care program staff serving infants and toddlers, particularly classroom teachers
- Providing technical assistance and cross-training on infant and toddler-focused topics to local Texas Rising Star mentors who are not certified Infant-Toddler Specialists

**NLF:** Boards must be aware that Infant-Toddler Specialists must meet the following requirements:

- Complete the required Infant-Toddler Specialist training through the Children’s Learning Institute’s (CLI) ITSN program
- Be actively involved in ongoing CLI-facilitated Infant-Toddler Specialist professional learning communities
- Attain and maintain Texas Infant-Toddler Specialist certification

**NLF:** Boards must ensure that the primary Infant-Toddler Specialist attains Infant-Toddler Specialist certification by January 31, 2025.

**NLF:** If submitting multiple staff members to participate in the Texas ITSN, the Board must designate one of the staff members to serve as the primary Infant-Toddler Specialist. CLI will ensure availability of training and onboarding of the primary Infant-Toddler Specialist in order to meet the January 31, 2025, certification deadline. Because there is limited availability, TWC will work with CLI and Boards to prioritize and coordinate training of any additional staff members designated by the Boards.

**NLF:** Boards must submit the following information about their designated primary and any additional Infant-Toddler Specialists to TWC at [TexasRisingStar@twc.texas.gov](mailto:TexasRisingStar@twc.texas.gov) by January 15, 2024:

- Name
- Job title
- Email address
- Type of Infant-Toddler Specialist (primary or additional)

**NLF:** Additionally, Boards must report any changes to Infant-Toddler Specialist staff designations to TWC at [TexasRisingStar@twc.texas.gov](mailto:TexasRisingStar@twc.texas.gov) and to the ITSN via a CLI Help Ticket.

**NLF:** Boards also must report the number of child care programs to which Infant-Toddler Specialists provided specific infant and toddler support, beginning with the Fiscal Year 2024 CCQ Quarterly Report.

**LF:** Board-designated Infant-Toddler Specialists may support quality activities that are not specific to improving the quality of child care for infants and toddlers. For example, a Board may designate one of the following to serve as an Infant-Toddler Specialist:

- a Texas Rising Star mentor who continues to provide regular mentoring to programs in addition to Infant-Toddler-focused work; or
- a Children with Disabilities Specialist who continues to evaluate the need for inclusion assistance for children with disabilities in addition to Infant-Toddler-focused work.

**NLF:** Boards must be aware that Infant-Toddler Specialists are not required to be Texas Rising Star mentors and that the Board has flexibility to employ staff with 4 percent quality funding to serve in the Infant-Toddler Specialist role. Infant-Toddler Specialists who are not also Texas Rising Star mentors are not required to meet the education and experience requirements detailed in Texas Workforce Commission Chapter 809 Child Care Services rule §809.134(c).

**NLF:** Infant-Toddler Specialists with other duties must provide targeted Infant-Toddler supports to other quality staff and child care providers.

**NLF:** Boards must report the amount of time an Infant-Toddler Specialist spends on Infant-Toddler-specific activities under the Infant-Toddler category SUP-Infant and Toddler Activities in the Cash Draw and Expenditure Reporting (CDER) system.

**LF:** Boards may use a cost allocation methodology to determine the amount of Infant-Toddler Specialist personnel or contract costs to charge as SUP-Infant and Toddler Activities in CDER.

**INQUIRIES:**

Send inquiries regarding this WD Letter to [childcare.programassistance@twc.texas.gov](mailto:childcare.programassistance@twc.texas.gov).

**ATTACHMENTS:**

None.

**REFERENCES:**

Texas Labor Code, [§302.0062](#)

[Texas Workforce Commission Chapter 809 Child Care Services Rule §809.134\(c\)](#)

[Texas Child Care Workforce Strategic Plan 2023–2025](#)