

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

<b>ID/No:</b>	WD 20-21
<b>Date:</b>	September 28, 2021
<b>Keyword:</b>	AEL; TANF/Choices; ES; SNAP E&T; TAA; WIOA
<b>Effective:</b>	September 1, 2021

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



**From:** Courtney Arbour, Director, Workforce Development Division

**Subject:** Digital Skill Building

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**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this WD Letter is to provide Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with guidance and information on providing digital skill building services relating to programs administered by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

**RESCISSIONS:**

None

**BACKGROUND:**

With the rapid growth in online and virtual services, workers and job seekers need to build the cognitive and technical skills necessary for effective use of the internet, smartphones, and other digital resources to find, evaluate, create, transmit, and communicate information. The General Appropriations Act (Senate Bill 1, Article VII, Texas Workforce Commission, Rider 46, 87th Legislature, Regular Session (2021)) requires TWC to “ensure that digital skill building is an explicitly permitted use of existing workforce development grant programs” and “utilize federal funds to provide digital skill building, device access, and digital support for workers in workforce development programs.”

Within this context, TWC defines “digital skill building” as staff support, workshops, and, when appropriate, training services that enable job seekers to use the internet, smartphones, and other digital resources to gain employment and to function productively in today’s technology-heavy workplace. “Device access” and “digital support” are defined as the availability of technology, such as computers, laptops, tablets, and internet access, that allows customers to engage in workforce development activities based on the program’s allowable expenditures and applicable cost principles. The law does not constitute a new blanket authorization to purchase tablets or other devices for customers’

own permanent use; any such purchases continue to be subject to review for allowability on a case-by-case basis.

Boards currently administer a number of workforce services that address digital skill building and access to technology.

**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” or “shall.”

**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 be aware that providing digital skill building, device access, and digital support for job seekers and workers in workforce development programs is explicitly permitted by state law. Such activities must be consistent with and conform to applicable program requirements and cost principles governing such programs, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Adult Education and Literacy
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/Choices
- Employment Service
- Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program Employment and Training
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

**LF:** Based on the program’s allowable expenditures and requirements, Boards may offer the following activities and resources, among others, to improve a worker’s digital skill building capacity:

- Access to workshops, and, if appropriate, courses focusing on basic computer skills, electronic communication, online job search resources, and submitting online applications
- Resource rooms in Workforce Solutions Offices equipped with computers, printers, and internet connectivity

**INQUIRIES:**

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

**REFERENCES:**

Senate Bill 1, General Appropriations Act, 87th Texas Legislature, Regular Session (2021)