WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
Workforce Policy and Service Delivery Branch
Technical Assistance Bulletin 241

Program: **TWIST; WorkInTexas.com**

Subject: **Pseudo Social Security Numbers**

Date: **July 27, 2011**

This Technical Assistance (TA) Bulletin provides Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with information on pseudo Social Security numbers (SSNs), specifically:
- the Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) discontinuation of pseudo SSNs; and
- automation changes in The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) and WorkInTexas.com.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) has amended its rules, and has made the following changes to SSN ranges and assignments:
- The first three digits (prefix) of the SSN—previously known as the area number—no longer have geographical significance; therefore, prefixes will not be assigned based on an individual's location; and
- Previously unassigned prefixes, beginning with 773 or higher, will now be assigned to SSNs. (Prefix numbers beginning with 000, 666, and all numbers between 900 and 999, will remain invalid.)

Previously, TWIST and WorkInTexas.com required SSNs to be entered for all job seekers. When a job seeker did not provide an SSN, a pseudo SSN was created. Because SSA did not assign SSNs in the 800 series, pseudo SSNs used an 800-series prefix for the first three digits. The change in SSA methodology means that valid SSNs are now being issued with the 800-series prefix.

Discontinuation of Pseudo Social Security Numbers
SSNs are used for outcome tracking; thus, obtaining a valid SSN for each job seeker is essential. Because pseudo SSNs impact accountability by making the lack of a valid SSN less obvious—making it less likely a valid SSN will be obtained—TWC has discontinued the use of pseudo SSNs.

Automation Changes in TWIST and WorkInTexas.com
TWIST and WorkInTexas.com job seeker records no longer require the SSN field to be populated in the absence of a valid SSN.

TWIST

Previously, TWIST did not support blank SSN fields. When a job seeker's valid SSN was unavailable, a pseudo SSN in the 900 to 999 prefix series was assigned. Additionally, TWIST received pseudo SSNs in the 850 to 899 prefix series from WorkInTexas.com and pseudo SSNs with all zeroes from the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC).

Changes in TWIST:
- All pseudo SSNs have been removed;
- TWIST searches are allowed using:
  - WorkInTexas.com Applicant ID number;
  - HHSC EDG number; and
  - HHSC Client number;
- The name search contains additional criteria to narrow the result set by gender and date of birth;
- A new input screen allows for the creation of a record with a blank SSN;
- TWIST batch interfaces along with HHSC interfaces turn HHSC-generated pseudo SSNs to blank values; and
- The TWIST interface with WorkInTexas.com allows blank values; invalid SSNs from WorkInTexas.com are no longer allowed.

A new screen handles all new functionality. The only change to existing TWIST screens is the addition of an *Advanced Search* button below the *Search* button in the *Customer Search* box.

WorkInTexas.com

Previously, WorkInTexas.com automatically assigned job seekers a pseudo SSN if one was not provided during registration. Pseudo SSN prefixes in WorkInTexas.com fell within the 850 to 899 range and could be updated to a valid SSN by Workforce Solutions Office staff or job seekers at any time.

Changes in WorkInTexas.com:
- Pseudo SSNs are no longer assigned;
- Existing pseudo SSNs have been removed;
- All SSNs displayed in the system are considered valid; therefore, knowledge of SSN ranges is no longer necessary; and
- Entered SSNs will be tested to ensure conformity with SSA's new SSN validity rules.

Direct inquiries regarding this TA Bulletin to wfpolicy.clarifications@twc.state.tx.us.

RESCISSIONS:
WD Letter 114-98