

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
Workforce Policy and Service Delivery Branch
Technical Assistance Bulletin 266

Keyword: SNAP E&T; TANF/Choices; TWIST

Subject: Texas Health and Human Services Commission Data Discrepancies

Date: February 12, 2014

This Technical Assistance (TA) Bulletin provides Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with information on the following:

- Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) errors resulting in The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) data discrepancies
- Resolving data discrepancies
- County code data discrepancy
- Monthly eligibility verification and clarification of data validation requirements

HHSC Errors Resulting in TWIST Data Discrepancies

Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) staff expends significant resources researching, analyzing, and manually correcting inaccurate data received through data interfaces from HHSC. The following errors are noted as priority for resolution by HHSC:

- Incorrect work codes provided to TWC by HHSC result in eligibility errors for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) individuals. When Choices disability exemptions in the HHSC Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS) selections are not disabled on the HHSC system, TANF eligibility coding is incorrectly entered by HHSC staff.
- Eligibility denials for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and TANF individuals are not consistently provided to TWC through the HHSC data interface, which results in individuals continuing to appear, incorrectly, as eligible for employment services.

Resolving Data Discrepancies

TWIST is the primary source for making determinations on customer eligibility for employment services.

The TWIST Support Desk no longer accepts the following requests:

- Template *request_to_change_a_tanf_work_code*, to change a customer's TANF work code in TWIST to correspond with a TIERS workforce registration reason; and
- Template *request_to_insert_a_denial*, for insertion of a denial into the TWIST TANF or SNAP outreach pool to correspond with TIERS.

Services provided to customers are based on eligibility verified in TWIST. A discrepancy between TWIST and TIERS will not result in a monitoring finding.

If evidence has been provided that is counter to information in TWIST, Workforce Solutions Office staff can work with local HHSC liaisons to resolve the data discrepancies. Attachment 1 provides the current list of HHSC liaisons. If a discrepancy cannot first be resolved through the HHSC liaison, Workforce Solutions Office staff can contact their assigned TWC technical assistance adviser.

To address data discrepancies related to TANF work codes and ensure the dissemination of correct training information, HHSC has implemented a system to identify and link coding errors to the office and/or staff responsible for creating them.

Monthly Eligibility Verification and Clarification of Data Validation Requirements

The following policy is in place to ensure that eligibility information is documented and current in TWIST:

- The Choices Guide sections A-103.d and B-602 and the SNAP Employment and Training Guide section B-105 require Boards to ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff verifies monthly eligibility through TWIST for all TANF and SNAP recipients who are, or will be, enrolled in employment services.
- The Choices Guide section B-602 also requires that verification of continued eligibility be consistently documented in TWIST *Counselor Notes*. If TWIST does not show evidence of continued eligibility and there is a reason to believe that the customer is otherwise eligible, Workforce Solutions Office staff can then check TIERS. The requirement to use TWIST as the primary source of documentation eligibility also is addressed in policy clarification #768, dated July 7, 2012.

As set forth in WD Letter 06-13, issued January 29, 2013, and entitled “Documenting Services and Participant Contact in The Workforce Information System of Texas *Counselor Notes*,” and in the Choices Guide section B-602, Workforce Solutions Office staff must continue to enter all documentation into TWIST *Counselor Notes* and follow all other local documentation procedures.

County Code Data Discrepancy

Another common data discrepancy occurs when a customer has moved from one local workforce development area (workforce area) to another. The county code is updated through the nightly interface with HHSC and appears in the TWIST *intake common* section at that time. However, the change does not update in the TANF and SNAP history sections until the next benefit month.

Therefore, unless more than two months have passed since a customer’s county code has changed, *it is not appropriate to report a county code error.*

It is a best practice for Boards to communicate any known county transfers so customers can be outreached in the new workforce area, while Workforce Solutions Office staff in the previous workforce area closes known cases to facilitate the new outreach.

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