

# Prioritization of COVID Frontline Essential Worker Care

## Discussion Paper

### 1 Background

2 On March 24, 2020, the Texas Workforce Commission’s (TWC) three-member Commission  
3 authorized TWC and Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) to implement emergency  
4 child care in response to the global pandemic of COVID-19. The Commission’s actions included  
5 the following:

- 6 • Expansion of TWC’s definition of children needing protective services to include  
7 children of COVID-19 Frontline Essential Workers
- 8 • A statewide modified income eligibility threshold for frontline essential workers that  
9 require child care subsidies in order to work
- 10 • A supplemental distribution to Boards for additional costs related to COVID-19 child  
11 care

12 On March 31, 2020, Governor Abbott issued [Executive Order GA 14](#) relating to statewide  
13 continuity of essential services and activities during the COVID-19 disaster. This executive order  
14 limits in-person interactions and work activity outside of one’s household, except where  
15 necessary to provide or obtain essential services, and references the Cybersecurity and  
16 Infrastructure Security Agency’s (CISA) [Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure](#)  
17 [Workforce: Ensuring Community and National Resilience in COVID-19](#) to identify essential  
18 workers. The guide deems dependent care services, in support of workers in other essential  
19 products and services, as essential.

### 20 Issue 1: Prioritization of Child Care Services for COVID-19 Frontline Essential Workers

21 There are thousands of workers who will qualify as COVID-19 Frontline Essential Workers. In  
22 order to help prioritize funding that is available to support subsidized child care, the following  
23 prioritization may be considered:

- 24 1. Workers in child care services, in support of workers in other essential functions
- 25 2. Pharmacy and healthcare workers
- 26 3. First responders
- 27 4. Critical infrastructure workers in grocery, utilities, and trucking
- 28 5. Other identified infrastructure workers, which include critical state and local government  
29 staff; mail/delivery services; nursing homes, home health care and other direct care  
30 providers; banks; gas stations; military; and restaurants and other food delivery.
- 31 6. Other critical occupations identified by the Local Workforce Development Board.

32 TWC notes that other workers are considered essential, as defined by CISA. TWC will consider  
33 an expansion of subsidized child care, based on available funding, in the future. Attachment 1  
34 provides a crosswalk from CISA essential workers to TWC essential workers for subsidized  
35 child care.

### 36 Decision Point 1

37 Staff seeks direction on Board prioritization of COVID-19 Frontline Essential Workers child  
38 care as described.

1 **Issue 2: Centers for Disease Control Directive**

2 The Centers for Disease Control has noted that the key to slowing the spread of COVID-19 is to  
3 limit contact as much as possible. The safest place for children is at home.

4 In order to support this health directive, if an essential worker is part of a two-parent household,  
5 and the second parent is not an essential worker, that second parent should be caring for the  
6 children at home.

7 **Decision Point 2**

8 Staff seeks the direction on two-parent COVID-19 Protective Child Care eligibility as follows:

- 9     • For essential workers in a two-parent family, if the other parent is not an essential worker  
10       or has the capability to care for the child, then he or she will be considered to be available  
11       to care for the children at home, and the family will not be eligible for subsidized child  
12       care.

**Attachment 1**

<b><u>CISA Industry Sectors</u></b>	<b>TWC</b>	<b>Prioritization (See Issue 2.)</b>
Residential/Shelter Facilities and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Child Care, Home Health, Other Caregiver</li> <li>✓ Other</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	1 (Child Care)
Health Care and Public Health Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Health Care</li> <li>✓ Pharmacy</li> </ul>	2 (Pharmacy and Health Care)
Law Enforcement, Public Safety, and Other First Responders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ First Responders</li> </ul>	3 (First Responders)
Food and Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Restaurant or Food Delivery</li> <li>✓ Other</li> </ul>	4 (Grocery)
Transportation and Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Mail/Delivery</li> <li>✓ Other</li> </ul>	4 (Trucking)
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Gas Station</li> <li>✓ Other</li> </ul>	4 (Utilities)
Water and Wastewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Other</li> </ul>	5 (Other)
Public Works and Infrastructure Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Local or State Government</li> <li>✓ Other</li> </ul>	5 (Other)
Communications and Information Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Other</li> </ul>	5 (Other)
Other Community or Government-Based Operations and Essential Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Local or State Government</li> </ul>	5 (Other)
Critical Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Other</li> </ul>	5 (Other)
Hazardous Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Other</li> </ul>	5 (Other)
Financial Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Other</li> </ul>	5 (Other)
Chemical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Other</li> </ul>	5 (Other)
Defense Industrial Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Military</li> </ul>	5 (Other)
Commercial Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Other</li> </ul>	5 (Other)
Hygiene Products and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Other</li> </ul>	5 (Other)