

TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION
Workforce Development Letter

ID/No:	WD 04-24
Date:	May 9, 2024
Keyword:	TANF/Choices
Effective:	30 days from issuance

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



From: Courtney Arbour, Director, Workforce Development Division

Subject: Choices Services

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this WD Letter is to provide Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with guidance on the use of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds to provide comprehensive Choices services.

RESCISSIONS:

None

BACKGROUND:

Human Resources Code Chapter 31, Financial Assistance and Service Programs, requires that employment services such as job readiness training, job search assistance, internships, subsidized employment, and job training be provided to recipients of TANF financial assistance. Due to fewer applicants being coded as mandatory participants, recent reductions in Choices caseloads has created an opportunity to provide robust and comprehensive Choices services. This includes Boards increasing their outreach efforts to voluntary and mandatory participants in order to fully utilize TANF/Choices funding and help individuals find self-sustaining employment.

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.”

Outreach to TANF Recipients

NLF: Boards must increase outreach efforts for all TANF recipients who are coded by the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) as mandatory and do not attend a scheduled appointment. This outreach must include phone calls and home visits. The goal is to provide detailed information about vocational education, training, subsidized employment, incentives, and support services that are available through the Choices program.

LF: Boards may increase outreach efforts for TANF recipients who are coded by HHSC as exempt. This outreach may include home visits and phone calls. The goal is to provide detailed information about vocational education, training, subsidized employment, incentives, and support services that are available through the Choices program.

NLF: Boards must send outreach letters to all TANF recipients who are coded by HHSC as mandatory or exempt that provide detailed information about vocational education, training, subsidized employment, incentives, and support services available through the Choices program.

NLF: Boards must ensure that comprehensive Choices information is provided to the community by developing and distributing outreach materials, such as pamphlets and flyers, to local community organizations and partners such as Goodwill and childcare providers.

Choices Services

NLF: Boards must ensure that comprehensive Choices services, such as vocational education, training, subsidized employment, incentives, and support services, are offered and provided to Choices participants.

NLF: Boards must adopt nonmonetary incentive policies that provide incentives for Choices participants according to the requirements set forth in WD Letter 15-19, Change 1, issued March 18, 2024, and titled “Guidelines for the Provision of Incentives for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth and Choices, including NCP Choices Participants—Update.” Incentives may be provided to applicants who are coded exempt but who voluntarily participate in Choices services and to mandatory Choices participants, as described in the Choices Guide B-708, Incentives for Choices Participants.

NLF: Boards must adopt Choices support service policies that include items such as rent assistance, car repairs, utility assistance, and other expenses that would allow a person to participate in Choices activities.

Choices Funds

NLF: Boards must be aware of the following requirements for Choices funds established in TWC rule:

- No more than 10 percent of the Board’s Choices expenditures may be used for administrative costs, as required by Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Part 20, Chapter 800, Subchapter B, §800.53.

- TANF Choices funds are subject to deobligation as set forth in Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Part 20, Chapter 800, Subchapter B, §800.74.

INQUIRIES:

Send inquiries regarding this WD Letter to wfpolicy.clarifications@twc.texas.gov.

ATTACHMENTS:

None

REFERENCES:

Human Resources Code, Chapter 31. Financial Assistance and Service Programs

Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Part 20, Chapter 800, Subchapter B, §800.53

Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Part 20, Chapter 800, Subchapter B, §800.74

TWC Choices Guide

WD Letter 15-19, Change 1, issued March 18, 2024, and titled “Guidelines for the Provision of Incentives for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth and Choices, including NCP Choices Participants—Update”