

Employer Assistance Toolkit



Serving the counties of:

Bosque

Falls

Freestone

Hill

Limestone

McLennan



About Us

Workforce Solutions for the Heart of Texas assists employers in finding, developing, training, and retaining a quality workforce. In addition, we assist jobseekers in gaining the skills and education necessary to obtain and retain employment. Our services assist in creating more educated and skilled workers while assisting employers in reaching such a workforce.

Our Vision A highly valued workforce system that meets the economic demands of the Heart of Texas communities.

Our Mission To provide a well-trained workforce for employers in order to ensure the economic growth of the region.

Heart of Texas Workforce Development Board
Comprised of members appointed by the chief elected officials from the six counties served and approved by the Governor of Texas, members of the Board represent business, labor, education, community organizations, and government.

The primary function of the Workforce Development Board is to make clear decisions about the direction of workforce development programs for our local area, as well as planning and providing oversight to the workforce system.

Workforce Centers Workforce Solutions offers six Workforce Centers to better serve you. One Workforce Center is located in each of the counties we serve. You can find each of the Workforce Center locations on the Contact Us page at the back of this toolkit.

Industry Clusters

Currently, the Industry Cluster Initiative is in place to better position the Heart of Texas and State of Texas workforce to compete nationally and internationally for jobs. By focusing on these clusters, we will be able to maximize certain limited resources and develop plans of action to bring new jobs to the Heart of Texas region. As success in these core clusters increases, long-term competitiveness and regional prosperity will increase in other industries.

The Industry Cluster Initiative is designed to stimulate long-term sustained growth and focus the allocation of state resources on key industry clusters. The following are the industry clusters we are currently working to support and grow:

Advanced Technologies and Manufacturing

The integration and utilization of technologies to improve processes and techniques that produce goods and services faster, cheaper, and cleaner. Includes nanotechnology and materials, micro-electromechanical systems, semiconductor manufacturing, and automotive manufacturing, among others.

Aerospace and Defense

Includes defense, security, space, manufacturing, general aviation, military bases and activities, and airport operations. Service companies that directly support the core industries are a significant component of this cluster and include maintenance of infrastructure and facilities, advancement of technology, associations, and institutions.

Biotechnology and Life Science

Includes pharmaceutical manufacturing, electronic instrument manufacturing, scientific research and development, and market research. This cluster does not include medical services. Though this cluster does not currently generate the number of jobs of more traditional industries, current trends indicate that this cluster will grow rapidly.

Information and Computer Technology

Includes communications equipment, computing equipment and semiconductors, and information technology. It has become evident that many of the technologies represented by the industry were also embedded in and core to other clusters and industries.

Petroleum Refining and Chemical Products

Texas is the nation's largest chemical producer, manufacturing 14% of the nation's value of chemical output. Refining and petrochemicals are typically dependent on natural gas and other hydrocarbon derivative products as both feedstocks and fuels. Breakthrough initiatives in the industry will require more focus on skills training.

Energy

Includes oil and gas production, power generation and transmission, and manufactured energy systems. The Industry Cluster Initiative's current vision is for Texas to not only be associated with oil and gas but also a leader in energy. It encompasses the advantages of Texas' geography, its highways and ports, its railways and airways, and its many natural resources that make up the diversity of the opportunities in the energy industry.

The Industry Cluster Initiative is leading the state toward realizing Governor Rick Perry's vision to build the future economy of Texas by strengthening our competitive advantage through these six target industry clusters. Workforce Solutions is dedicated to growing the industry clusters that have been outlined by Governor Rick Perry. However, the Heart of Texas region has additional high-growth, high-demand industry sectors and occupations we are focused on developing. These targeted occupations include:

- *Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians*
- *Auto Service Techs/Mechanics*
- *Automotive Body/Related Repairer*
- *Avionics Technicians*
- *Bookkeeping/Accounting/Auditing*
- *Bus/Truck Mechanic/Diesel Specialist*
- *Computer-Controlled Mach Tool Operators (CNC Machinist)*
- *Computer Support Specialist*
- *Customer Service Representative*
- *Dental Assistants*
- *Dental Hygienists*
- *Heating/Air Conditioning/Refrigerator Mechanics*
- *Industrial Machinery Mechanics*
- *Industrial Truck/Tractor Operator*
- *Inspector/Tester/Sorter/Sampler*
- *Lathe/Turning Mach Tool Operator*
- *Licensed Practical/Voc Nurses*
- *Machinists*
- *Maintenance/Repair Workers, General*
- *Medical Assistants*
- *Medical/Clinical Lab Techs*
- *Medical Secretaries*
- *Nursing Aides/Orderlies/Attendants*
- *Office Clerks*
- *Plumbers/Pipefitters/Steamfitters*
- *Radiological Technologists/Technicians*
- *Registered Nurses*
- *Respiratory Therapy Tech*
- *Sales Reps, except Tech/Science Products*
- *Secretaries, Executive Legal, Medical*
- *Sheet Metal Workers*
- *Team Assemblers*
- *Truck Drivers, Heavy/Tractor-Trailer*
- *Welders/Cutters/Solderers/Brazers*

Workforce Solutions for the Heart of Texas is committed to improving the skills and knowledge of our labor force and assisting employers in obtaining the most qualified applicants.

Our Goal

Workforce Solutions is dedicated to helping employers maintain a competitive advantage in the local and global economy. Your business' workforce is an essential component to your success in the marketplace. Workforce Solutions' Business Services Unit can assist you in finding, developing, and retaining a quality workforce.

Workforce Solutions is convinced that successful partnerships with employers and other industry partners yield highly satisfied customers. Our Business Services Unit is committed to ensuring that employers' needs are met by offering a variety of products and business solutions. We partner with local training organizations and industry groups to develop business solutions that are specific to a single company or an entire industry.

The Business Services Unit of Workforce Solutions can impact and influence your business operations in one or more categories:

- *Cost of Doing Business*
- *Quality/Customer Satisfaction*
- *Productivity/Efficiency*
- *Competitive Stature/Market Share*

Workforce Solutions is committed to helping your business succeed.

Business Services

Workforce Solutions recognizes that our employers are our most valuable customers. Our Workforce Centers offer services to assist employers in meeting their workforce needs. Whether you are a large or small employer, the Workforce Centers have programs and services to help you succeed.

The Workforce Centers provide access to employment and training programs in a single service delivery system. This means business owners and employers can now turn to one source to help fulfill many of their personnel and training needs.

We are pleased to offer our workforce and employers the following services:

- *Business Services*
- *Career Exploration*
- *Career Planning*
- *Child Care Information*
- *Community Resource Information*
- *Computer Tutorials*
- *Copier, Fax, Telephone and Computers*
- *GED Assistance*
- *Informational Seminars on Topics Pertinent to Employers*
- *Internet Access*
- *Job Listings*
- *Job Referrals*
- *Job Search Workshops*
- *Labor Market Information*
- *Resume Assistance*
- *Unemployment Insurance Information*
- *Veteran Services*
- *Youth Services*

This Employer Assistance Toolkit describes the programs, services, and benefits that Workforce Solutions provides to employers.

Finding Employees

The first step to building a successful business is finding qualified workers. Our Workforce Centers can assist your organization in this effort by providing the following services:

Candidate Referrals

A one-stop resource for placing job orders and obtaining referrals drawn from a large applicant pool.

Labor Market Information

Local labor market data to track skill availability, industry trends, industry forecasts, and wage survey information.

Testing and Assessment

Testing of employees is provided to determine current skill levels and recommend training for skill upgrades, if needed.

Employer Resource Amenities

Certain amenities within our Workforce Centers have been designated for employer usage. Employers are encouraged to use computers, a copy machine, telephones, a color printer, a fax machine, and various periodicals on employment issues. Individual interviewing and meeting rooms are also available to employers who use the Centers' services to recruit employees.

Job Fairs

The Workforce Centers sponsor job fairs to help employers recruit and interview candidates using the Workforce Centers' resources. Job fairs are held for both individual employers and as multi-employer events.

WorkInTexas.com

Allows employers to be in control of their own job postings. Employers can enter their job postings, run a match, view the resumes of job seekers, and close their job postings, all online. Technical assistance is also provided in using the automated system.

Outplacement Services for Business Downsizing

Employers have the opportunity to use the outplacement services that are offered by the Workforce Centers to assist their former employees in the transition.

Training Employees

Once you find the workers you need, Workforce Solutions can help your business take the next step by providing training services. Workforce Solutions was established to connect jobseekers with employment opportunities through an integrated employer-driven system. Workforce Solutions can also link you to state programs that will offset the costs of training. These programs include:

The Skills Development Fund assists businesses and labor unions by designing, financing, and implementing customized job-training programs in partnership with public community and technical colleges for new or existing jobs in local businesses. The fund successfully merges business needs and local job training opportunities into a winning combination.

The Self-Sufficiency Fund Program, administered by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), assists businesses by designing, financing, and implementing

customized job-training programs in partnership with public community and technical colleges, a higher education extension service, and community-based organizations for the creation of new jobs and/or the retraining of existing workforce members.

Customized Training further benefits an employer by tailoring a training program to the specific needs of the employer, especially in the area of introducing new technologies or procedures. Training can be offered to incumbent employees in order to upgrade their skills and knowledge.

Outplacement Services & WARN Notices

If your business is facing massive layoffs or plant closures, Workforce Solutions can help your business and employees make a smoother transition into the future. Our Rapid Response Team will visit your organization at your convenience and provide the following services at no cost to you:

What You Can Expect As An Employer:

- Confidentiality concerning business decisions
- Better worker morale and productivity during your company's transition period
- No red tape
- On-site assistance
- Coordination with the outplacement services you have already set in place
- Services designed according to your company's and employees' needs

What Your Workers Can Expect:

- Information about all state and federal services available to help them find new jobs
- Professional help with their job search, which includes interview classes and resume preparation
- Financial planning and stress management workshops on-site
- Information about training opportunities
- Use of computers, telephones, and fax machines for their job search
- Customized job fairs
- Services provided at no cost to you or them

Worker Adjustment and Retraining

Notification (WARN) is an advanced guide for large plant closings and massive layoffs. WARN offers protection to workers, their families, and their communities by requiring employers to provide notice 60 days in advance of covered plant closings and covered mass layoffs. This notice must be provided to either affected workers or representatives (e.g., a labor union), to the State Dislocated Worker Unit, and to the appropriate unit of local government.

In general, employers are covered by WARN if they have 100 or more employees, not counting employees who have worked less than 6 months in the last 12 months and not counting employees who work an average of less than 20 hours per week. Private, for profit employers and private, non-profit employers are covered, as are public and quasi-public entities.

Tax Credits

Participating in Workforce Solutions' Business Services can earn business owners valuable tax credits, which can save money and add to the bottom line. Tax credits provide benefits for hiring jobseekers in the greatest need of employment and hiring long-term welfare recipients. The tax credit is as much as \$8,500 per new hire.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) provides benefits of up to \$2,400 per hire for hiring:

- Short-term welfare recipients
- Veterans who have received food stamps
- 18-24 year-old food stamp recipients
- 18-24 year-old residents of federally designated Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC)
- 16-17 year-old EZ/EC residents hired as Summer Youth Employees Vocational Rehabilitation referrals

Project RIO Fidelity Bonding Program is a unique tool to help a job applicant get and keep a job. The community tends to wash its hands of the convicted felon sent to prison, thinking the problem has been solved, sent away never to return. Approximately 98 percent of those sentenced to the Institutional Division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice return to the community. Ex-offenders need employment opportunities to help support their families and to become contributing members of the community.

Resources

If you have any questions about the information in this toolkit or any of the other services that Workforce Solutions provides, please contact one of the six Workforce Centers listed below. In addition to your local Workforce Center, the following are some useful resources for Heart of Texas employers:

Department of Labor

www.doleta.gov

Employment Review Weekly

www.employmentreview.com

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

www.eeoc.gov

*Fairfield Industrial
Development Corporation*

www.fairfieldtx.com

*Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce
Economic Development Division*

www.waco-chamber.com

Texas Workforce Commission

www.twc.state.tx.us

WorkInTexas

www.workintexas.com

Contact Us

Workforce Solutions has six convenient Workforce Center locations to help businesses in the Heart of Texas region obtain the resources they need to be successful.

Visit us online at: www.hotworkforce.com

Bosque County Workforce Center

702 S. Avenue G
Clifton, TX 76634
p: 254 / 675 2024
f: 254 / 675 4435

Falls County Workforce Center

230 Coleman Street
Marlin, TX 76661
p: 254 / 883 5678
f: 254 / 883 3778

Freestone County Workforce Center

517 Main Street
Teague, TX 75860
p: 254 / 739 2887
f: 254 / 739 5151

Hill County Workforce Center

233 E. Elm Street
Hillsboro, TX 76645
p: 254 / 582 8588
f: 254 / 582 8182

Limestone County Workforce Center

507 E. Yeagua
Groesbeck, TX 76642
p: 254 / 729 8775
f: 254 / 729 8277

McLennan County Workforce Center

1416 S. New Road
Waco, TX 76711
p: 254 / 754 5421
f: 254 / 754 8914

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Equal Opportunity Employer/Program: auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Texas Relay 800 / 735 2989 TDD • 800 / 735 2988 (VOICE)