



Employer Services

Our world-class workforce system enables Texas to compete successfully in the global market.

Texas Workforce System Vision

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) was created in 1993 by the 73rd Texas Legislature. It is charged with promoting the development of a highly skilled and well-educated workforce for Texas and with assisting the Governor and the legislature with strategic planning for and evaluation of the state's workforce system. The 19-member Council includes representatives from business, labor, education, and community-based organizations.

The workforce system comprises the workforce programs, services, and initiatives administered by eight state agencies and 28 local workforce boards, as well as independent school districts, community and technical colleges, and local adult education providers. System partners are responsible for the delivery of 24 programs and services focused on education, workforce education, and workforce training. Many system partners provide *direct* services to employers, while others provide *indirect* benefits such as educating students who comprise the future workforce.

The Council and workforce system partners recognize employers as a key customer. The current system strategic plan, *Advancing Texas: Strategic Plan for the Texas Workforce System (FY2010-FY2015) (Advancing Texas)*, outlines 14 long term objectives, most of which directly or indirectly benefit employers. Two objectives address data gaps regarding employer needs and customer satisfaction. These objectives will improve the system's ability to assess whether workforce programs and services are adequately meeting customer requirements. To be effective, programs and services must address and adapt to changing employer needs in a timely and efficient manner.

Many Texas agencies provide workforce-related programs or services to Texas employers. Since 2007, and in association with the Council's System Integration Technical Advisory Committee, several partner agencies have worked to increase their efforts to become more familiar with employers' awareness and perception of existing services to more effectively meet employer needs.

This brief provides information on employer-based workforce programs and services provided by partner agencies and local workforce boards, grouped as noted below:

The strategic intent of the Texas workforce system is to create a world-class workforce. Workforce system partners provide employers, current, and future workers of Texas convenient and ready access to relevant and comprehensive workforce services.

Mission

The Texas workforce system creates a globally competitive workforce through collaborative workforce system partner relationships that align, leverage and integrate system services.

* * *

The plan and quarterly implementation updates are posted on the Council's website at:

www.governor.state.tx.us/twic/workforce_system

Page	
2	Texas Workforce Solutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Texas Workforce Commission ● Local Workforce Development Boards
5	Educating Current and Future Workers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Texas Education Agency ● Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
6	Focus on Target Populations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Texas Health and Human Services Commission – Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services ● Texas Juvenile Justice Department ● Texas Department of Criminal Justice and Windham School District ● Texas Veterans Commission
9	Economic Development and Tourism

Texas Workforce Solutions

Texas Workforce Solutions is a market-driven, statewide network, composed of the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC); local workforce development boards (local boards) and board staff; and contractors, service providers, and subcontractors including educators, Workforce Solutions office operators, and staff.

Texas Workforce Commission

www.texasworkforce.org

TWC provides workforce development services to Texas employers and job seekers and works closely with the 28 boards that are responsible for local-level planning and service delivery.

- Direct services to employers include recruiting, retention, training, retraining, and outplacement services.
- Texas Business Conferences, held across the state each year, provide participants with information on topics such as employment law, workers' compensation law, health insurance benefits, and workforce development updates. For additional information, go to www.twc.state.tx.us/events.html.
- The employer commissioner's office represents the Texas business community, providing a variety of employer services including informational materials, employment law seminars, an 800 number, and a quarterly newsletter. Employers may contact the employer commissioner's office for information, advocacy and assistance with unemployment compensation and wage claim cases, and other workplace concerns such as employee policy issues.



Internet-Based Services

Internet-based services are available through:

- *WorkInTexas.com* – Launched in 2004, this website is one of the most comprehensive online resources available for both employers and job seekers. Through this free service, employers can post job notices, search resumes, check labor availability, and access recruitment tools. A mobile-friendly version of the site went online for job seekers in 2013, offering the most-frequently used features of the website.
- *Texas Industry Profiles* – This website provides industry-based information and tools for regional analysis designed to assist workforce and economic development professionals to better understand Texas' regional industry structure and workforce dynamics. To access information on industry clusters, employment dynamics, labor supply, and related analyses, go to www.texasindustryprofiles.com.
- *Unemployment Tax Services* – Employers with 1,000 or fewer employees can use this free online service to file and adjust wage reports and pay unemployment insurance contributions, www.twc.state.tx.us/ui/tax/emtaxinfo.html.
- *Unemployment Insurance Claims* – Employers can respond to notices of claims and earnings verification requests at www.twc.state.tx.us/customers/bemp/bemsub2.html.



Focus on Skills Development

Through direct services to employers, Texas Workforce Solutions emphasizes employee training designed to develop skilled workers needed to attract and sustain economic competitiveness. Established programs provide dedicated funds for key initiatives, and in 2013, the legislature authorized a new program to address rapidly changing employer needs.



The Skills Development Fund (SDF) is a key funding source for employee training. By operating in partnership with community and technical colleges (CTC), SDF programs assist private employers with the design, financing, and implementation of customized training programs for new or existing jobs. TWC works closely with the employer and training provider to ensure that training meets specific performance measures and serves to benefit both the employer

and the trainees. In fiscal year (FY) 2013, TWC awarded 40 grants to 28 CTCs in partnership with 70 employers to provide job training for more than 14,000 newly hired and incumbent workers. As a result, the trainees received an average hourly wage of \$25.15.

Recognizing that a highly skilled workforce is the key to giving Texas employers a competitive edge in the global marketplace, the Texas Legislature allocated \$47.9 million to fund SDF collaborative training efforts for the 2014–15 biennium. A complete program overview is available at skills.texasworkforce.org.



TWC dedicates up to \$2 million from the SDF to implement the Skills for Small

Business program to assist the nearly 460,000 businesses that employ 100 or fewer workers. Smaller employers can address their workforce training needs through training classes provided by local CTCs. The program emphasizes training newly hired employees—those who have been hired by the business up to three months prior to the date that TWC receives an application. More information about the program is available at ssb.texasworkforce.org.



The Skills for Veterans initiative dedicates \$1 million from the

SDF to address the training needs of post-9/11 veterans entering the Texas workforce. The program covers tuition and fees for course offerings at local community colleges for veterans who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn or Operation Enduring Freedom. Additional information is available at www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/funds/skills-veterans-initiative.html.



While the SDF responds to industry and workforce training needs, the purpose of the Self-Sufficiency Fund (SSF) is to provide training for targeted employment opportunities, primarily for adult Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients as well as those individuals at risk of becoming dependent on public assistance. SSF also assists

businesses and trade unions by financing the development and implementation of customized job training projects for new and incumbent workers. Participating businesses commit to interviewing SSF trainees who successfully complete the training project and employing trainees who meet their hiring qualifications for the identified job openings. Additional information can be found at www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/funds/self-sufficiency-fund-employers.html.

To complement current programs and to support rapid delivery of workforce education, the legislature created the Texas Fast Start Program. TWC, in partnership with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), is working to identify and develop methods to support competency-based, rapid-deployment education delivery models for use by public junior colleges, state colleges, and technical institutes to better meet the needs of Texas employers. One-time grants will support the development or expansion of programs that are responsive to changing needs identified by employers and other interested parties for fast-track, affordable certification programs in high-growth target industries.

Adult Education and Literacy

Texas employers indirectly benefit from the provision of adult education and literacy programs that help students acquire the skills needed to succeed in the workforce, earn a high school equivalency, or enter college or career training. Funded under the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998, this program provides English language, math, reading, and writing instruction to out-of-school youth and adults. Additional information is available at www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/adultlit/adult-basic-education.html.

Profile: Skills Development Fund

"The Skills Development Fund will help Weatherford provide customized training opportunities for Texas workers to advance the skills needed to perform their daily jobs, as well as prepare them for the future of the industry."

Gabe DeGabriele, Weatherford U.S. QHSSE Training Manager

The Alamo Colleges is partnering with Weatherford U.S., L.P., to provide job training under a \$1.5 million SDF grant. The grant will be used to provide 673 new workers with technical training to operate oilfield equipment properly. Those trained will include field engineers, operators, and technicians as well as mechanics and equipment operators. These in-demand jobs are needed for the area to fully benefit from the economic impact of the Eagle Ford Shale development.



Weatherford considers the training programs provided by the grant as instrumental in expanding the company's focus on providing a higher quality of operational performance while ensuring environmental safety beyond basic regulatory standards. Workers are expected to earn an average hourly wage of \$17.34 following training completion.

Local Workforce Development Boards

www.twc.state.tx.us/dirs/wdbs/wdbmap.html

To meet the needs of employers, incumbent workers, and job seekers, local workforce boards use funding from a variety of federal, state, and local sources to create innovative services designed to address regional demand and to support economic growth. Twenty-eight local boards are responsible for program planning, oversight, and evaluation of local service delivery.

As frontline partners in the workforce system, the boards provide programs and services through a network of workforce centers and offices. In 2013, a total of 859,061 workers entered employment after obtaining services at over 200 workforce centers and satellite offices operating across Texas. Workforce Solutions offices provide a variety of online, in-house, and on-site services including employer services, job search resources, labor market information, and customized training referrals. In addition to these traditional brick-and-mortar offices, mobile workforce units provide on-site services to area employers and communities.

The boards work together and collaborate with business, economic development, educational, and other entities to provide services that meet regional and industry needs. Continuous improvement efforts and exchange of best practices are both encouraged and facilitated by the Texas Association of Workforce Boards, TWC-sponsored events, and other informal means.

Boards have business services units that directly address the ever-increasing need for skilled workers in high-demand fields by offering job search assistance, skills training, and other workforce development services. Supported by state and federal funds, most basic services are provided free of charge to employers registered with the state and federal government. Some boards also provide certain services, including workshops and seminars, at nominal fees. Services are designed to help employers with hiring and training needs in order to maximize their competitiveness and profitability, and include:

- information resources (e.g., labor market and business data, employment and labor law, unemployment insurance);
- applicant recruitment, screening, and referral;
- job fair participation and assistance;
- testing and pre-screening of job candidates;
- listing and maintenance of job orders through WorkInTexas.com and other job banks;
- training in basic employment skills and referral to education and training providers;
- customized and on-the-job skills training;
- assistance with and information on accessing incentive programs such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, a federal income tax benefit that reduces a business's federal tax liability as an incentive to select job candidates who may be disadvantaged in their efforts to find employment;
- meeting and technology facilities; and
- rapid response and downsizing assistance in the event of closings or mass layoffs.

Profile: Tailored "Business Solutions"

"Developing value-added Business Solutions insures success for everyone—businesses, community partners, and taxpayers."

*Jerry Haisler, Workforce Centers Director,
Workforce Solutions of Central Texas*

Central Texas Workforce



Workforce Solutions of Central Texas boosted its business-focused services by developing the "Business Solutions" concept to focus more intensively on outreach and engagement of business leaders interested in services designed to meet their business needs. The newly launched Business Solutions was marketed to businesses using branded marketing materials including logos, taglines, business cards, and brochures.

Since implementing the Business Solutions concept, high-profile businesses have used Business Solutions' services to coordinate off-site recruitment and targeted job fairs, negotiate office space, and support staffing and recruitment activities. The minimal investment resulted in an expected \$566 million in economic benefit generated by these businesses in the Central Texas area.

The initiative was awarded the Service to Business Award at the 2013 Annual Workforce Conference.

Educating Current and Future Workers

Efficient alignment of secondary, postsecondary, and workforce training benefits Texas employers by providing a ready supply of well-prepared workers. In addition to programs and services outlined below, several acts passed by the Texas Legislature in 2013 support the need to ensure that the state's education systems provide programs that help meet employer demand for qualified workers. To effectively meet this need, the Texas Education Agency (TEA), THECB, and TWC are working together to provide timely information on the location of jobs in Texas and on the educational degrees or certificates students should acquire in order to fill them.

Texas Education Agency

www.tea.state.tx.us

TEA provides students with the skills and knowledge needed for future success in postsecondary education or employment. The agency provides direction for the state's career technical education (CTE) programs. CTE programs are designed to enable students to continue their education or gain entry-level employment in a high-skill, high-wage job by gaining relevant knowledge and skills during their secondary education. Employers can contribute by actively participating in the design of programs of study, assisting with review of the CTE Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS, state-mandated curriculum), and sponsoring job-shadowing and internship opportunities.

The Texas Workforce Innovation Needs Program, created by the legislature in 2013, allows selected school districts and institutions of higher education to establish innovative programs designed to prepare students for in-demand careers. Programs will focus on competency-based learning that supports earning postsecondary technical certificates or degrees.

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

www.thecb.state.tx.us

THECB and the state's institutions of higher education play an important role related to the development and revision of worker training programs at two- and four-year schools. The institutions partner actively with the local boards to develop and implement a variety of programs funded by federal, state, and local dollars.

The agency's mission is to work with the legislature, Governor, governing boards, higher education institutions, and other entities to help Texas meet the goals of the state's higher education plan, *Closing the Gaps by 2015*. Many THECB mandates directly benefit employers, including:

- overseeing the state's CTCs, which are major providers of job training and skills enhancement programs, and
- reviewing all customized training programs financed through the TWC-administered SDF.

Texas has 50 public community college districts, as well as four colleges in the Texas State Technical College System. For a list of institutions, go to www.collegefortexans.com/cfbin/inst.cfm. These institutions provide a variety of academic and technical skills training programs, including:

- technical programs up to two years in length that lead to certificates or associate degrees;
- continuing adult education programs for occupational upgrading;
- customized training designed to help companies become or remain competitive by meeting their content, schedule, and location needs; and
- workforce development programs tailored to meet state and/or local needs.



Focus on Target Populations

To meet the demands of Texas' employers, everyone must be part of the critical pool of potential employees. Specialized services are provided by partner agencies to several target populations, including the blind and disabled, veterans, and adult and youth offenders.

Texas Health and Human Services Commission – Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services

www.dars.state.tx.us

The Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) works in partnership with disabled Texans to improve the quality of their lives and to enable their full participation in society. The vocational rehabilitation program assists the blind and visually impaired, as well as individuals with physical disabilities. The program partners with businesses to help workers with disabilities keep their jobs and to cultivate new employment opportunities. As part of that effort, the agency offers job placement services and assistance with getting accommodations from employers.

DARS focuses on ensuring that employers are aware of and understand the capabilities of current and future workers who receive DARS services. DARS works with employers to develop and deploy assistive technologies after assessing disabled workers' specific needs, thus broadening the range of employment options. Business services include:

- jobsite and job requirement analysis to better understand employer needs;
- applicant screening, evaluation, and referral services;
- new employee preparation about expectations for the business and job;
- follow-up to ensure satisfaction of both employer and new hire and to establish a mutually beneficial relationship;
- job retention services for some employees who have developed a disability due to accident or sickness and need assistance to keep their job or return to work;
- leading edge technology and assistance to provide job accommodation provisions for qualified employees; and
- consultation and training on disabilities, as well as information on available tax incentives and credits.

Profile: Partnerships with Business

"DARS has taken the time to understand our company's culture and workforce needs and has customized models and helped develop strategies for a more inclusive workforce. Overall, we look to DARS as a resource and expert that will help us to further understand this important pool of potential applicants."

Sonia Canales, Diversity Manager, H-E-B

Over the past several years, DARS and H-E-B have formed a partnership with an overall objective of hiring individuals with disabilities. DARS has presented on many occasions to a variety of audiences, from hiring managers to employees, to raise awareness about the value and high work ethic individuals with disabilities can bring to the workplace.



In addition, DARS has consulted with the company on topics ranging from hiring best practices to accommodation strategies and has provided access to qualified applicants, job readiness training, and on-the-job supports. Across Texas, hiring of DARS consumers increased from 115 in FY 2012 to 124 in FY 2013, and is on track to rise again in FY 2014.

Texas Juvenile Justice Department

www.tjjd.texas.gov

The Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) is the state's juvenile corrections agency, charged with providing for the care, custody, rehabilitation, and reestablishment into society of juvenile offenders. All juveniles housed at TJJD have committed felony offenses and a high percentage of them are violent offenders. Many of the juvenile offenders have substantial academic deficiencies.

The agency partners with youth, families, and communities to provide a safe and secure environment where youth receive individualized education, treatment, life skills, employment training, and positive role models to facilitate community reintegration. Workforce development programs that offer vocational and skills development include:

- *CTE* programs provide an introduction to career planning, an opportunity to learn entry-level to advanced skills in a particular occupation, and training on how to successfully gain and maintain employment. CTE programs are developed for instruction and training in high-demand occupations and, where applicable, are aligned with industry certification requirements and incorporate the use of green industry equipment such as welding booths. Such efforts increase employability following release and provide workers for high-demand occupations.
- *Workforce Development Reentry Specialists* work closely with youth in halfway houses or on parole to provide assistance with obtaining and maintaining employment and accessing occupational skills training. Established at three parole offices in major metropolitan areas, these specialists build relationships with local boards and community-based organizations.
- *Prison Industry Enhancement (PIE)* programs create partnerships between private sector employers and juvenile detention facilities, with employers involved in program planning. PIE participants gain training and practical work experience that increase their post-release employment potential and also earn wages that they are required to use for court/victim restitution; child support, if applicable; and for a savings account.

Profile: Career Academies

Community partnerships with businesses and institutes of higher learning and technical/vocational education.

Career academies are small, personalized learning communities that increase opportunities for TJJD students to gain exposure to work-based career, technical, and college preparatory experiences. Designed for students who have earned their high school diploma or GED, the academies combine college prep, ongoing academic support, and career tracks designed to make education relevant, personalized, and hands-on and to make certain that students are career-ready upon release.

Through partnerships with businesses, workforce centers, and other community organizations, career enhancement courses provide additional instruction on soft skills and introduce students to a variety of industry professionals.



Academies opened at three facilities in September 2013, and additional programs and academies may be added in the future. TJJD is also pursuing a partnership with Texas State Technical College to offer additional career pathways at academies, and to provide dual credit for all satellite campuses.

Texas Department of Criminal Justice and Windham School District

www.tdcj.state.tx.us/index.html

www.windhamschooldistrict.org

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) manages offenders in state prisons, state jails, and private correctional facilities that contract with TDCJ. The Windham School District (Windham) provides academic and vocational education to eligible offenders incarcerated within TDCJ, providing education services in prison units across the state. Several TDCJ and Windham initiatives provide indirect benefits:

- *Employer Input* – Employers are involved in Windham's service delivery planning and review efforts, as training curricula are designed and/or revised to meet industry standards and entry-level skill requirements. Windham also surveys employers and local boards to determine training effectiveness.
- *Reentry and Integration* – Voluntary reentry programs help offenders prepare for a successful return to the community. TDCJ's reentry case managers conduct a pre-release assessment and develop a reentry plan in cooperation with the offender, community providers, and family support systems. Windham provides a 60-day life skills program for offenders who are within two years of projected release. The program addresses topics such as living responsibly, drug education, health maintenance, emotional development, employment, and related life skills.

Both institutions offer education and training programs for eligible offenders. In 2013, the legislature transferred administrative responsibility for postsecondary education programs from Windham to TDCJ.

- *General Education* – Individualized treatment plans prioritize participation in recommended programs based on the offender's age, needs, projected release date, and program availability. In all programs, emphasis is placed on workplace skills including tolerance, teamwork, and problem solving. Programs include CTE, basic academics with emphasis on literacy training and GED preparation, special education for students with disabilities, and English as a second language.

- **Skills Training** – The CTE program integrates career path planning and technical training to prepare offenders for today's labor market. Career and technical training, offered in more than 30 occupations, is designed to meet entry-level industry standards, including certification and licensure requirements. The CTE program also supports registered apprenticeship and on-the-job training programs.
- **Industry Certification** – Through partnerships with certification and licensing agencies, Windham provides training and certifications that meet business and industry standards. Windham offers industry certification testing for nearly every trade and pays certification testing fees for eligible students, enabling more students to have industry certification in-hand when seeking post-release employment. Coordination with certification entities helps the district stay informed about potential job opportunities for ex-offenders.
- **Postsecondary Education** – TDCJ offers postsecondary programs to provide marketable job training skills so offenders can reenter society as successful, productive citizens. Programs are provided through contracts with colleges and universities serving the geographic areas where units are located. Offenders wishing to participate in postsecondary programs must meet the applicable school's admissions criteria, as well as criteria set by TDCJ.



Texas Veterans Commission

www.tvc.state.tx.us

The Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) offers employment services to Texas veterans and helps employers find qualified veteran job applicants. Through the Veterans Employment Services (VES) program, veterans receive assistance with job matching, resume preparation, and intensive services. The program is integrated with programs administered by other system partners, with staff located statewide in workforce centers supported through Texas Workforce Solutions, the partnership of TWC and the 28 local boards. This relationship provides veterans with ready access to other employment, training, and support services. Intensive services are available for veterans who are disabled, economically or educationally disadvantaged, homeless, or facing other barriers to employment.

Employers and VES staff use TWC's WorkInTexas.com online job search resources, which allow job postings to be designated for veterans only; however, employers, or staff on their behalf, can also browse for job seekers and opt to attach a non-veteran to a job posting flagged for veterans only.

Veteran business representatives are strategically located in central Texas, the Dallas/Ft. Worth area, San Antonio, and Houston. They assist employers through no-cost personalized services such as:

- assisting with WorkInTexas.com job postings;
- pre-screening candidates to match employer job requirements;
- creating and maintaining relationships with businesses, corporations, local boards and their business service units, the military, Veterans Service Organizations, colleges and universities, and other workforce partners;
- providing hiring support and follow up services; and
- providing information on programs such as Work Opportunity Tax Credit.

Profile: Hiring Red, White and You!

"Military candidates have an amazing ability to get things done. They overcome many obstacles and are very much willing to roll up their sleeves and do the job."

Jennifer Hackel, Luminex Recruiting Manager

TVC sponsors and participates in numerous job fairs for veterans and their families. The agency partners with TWC and the 28 local boards to host the annual *Hiring Red, White & You!* veterans job fairs. The most recent event was held in November 2013 at 27 locations across Texas.



The *Hiring Red, White and You!* job fairs are designed to help veterans and their spouses connect with their next career opportunity. Employers participate at no cost.

TVC prepares veterans by conducting workshops designed to assist with applications, resumes, and interviewing techniques, and also offers one-on-one counseling services.



The On-the-Job-Training (OJT) program allows individuals who are eligible for GI Bill educational benefits to be in training while performing a new job and earning wages. Employers directly benefit through recruiting assistance, company-directed training, and increased employee retention. Participating employees receive a monthly subsistence benefit while learning work processes, equipment, company policies, and skills under the direct supervision of a skilled trainer. TVC is the state agency that approves GI Bill OJT programs in Texas, with programs ranging from six months to two years in length.

In December 2013, a veterans employment liaison was hired to serve as a resource for state and local government agencies. The liaison assists agencies in the process of employing more veterans. TVC also provides a full range of employment services to spouses and caregivers of active duty service members, with family employment assistance counselors based in Killeen and San Antonio.

Economic Development and Tourism

Economic Development and Tourism Division

www.governor.state.tx.us/ecodev
www.texaswideopenforbusiness.com

The Economic Development and Tourism division of the Office of the Governor, officially branded Texas Wide Open for Business, globally markets Texas as the premier business location and travel destination. Several division units and programs offer direct services to employers, including:



- *Texas Enterprise Fund* – Established by the legislature in 2003, the fund was created to attract new business to the state or assist with substantial expansion of an existing business. The fund is used as a final incentive tool for projects that demonstrate strong local support and a significant return on investment.
- *Texas Business Development* – Services are provided in three areas: (1) domestic expansion and recruitment assistance for companies planning to expand existing operations or relocate to Texas; (2) international business and recruitment information and assistance for foreign companies planning to establish business in Texas, and to Texas companies planning to export goods to foreign countries; and (3) business research support with economic and demographic data, analyses, and information on industries and communities.
- *Economic Development Bank* – The bank provides competitive financial incentives to expanding businesses operating in or relocating to Texas. It is also charged with ensuring that communities and businesses in Texas have access to capital for economic development purposes and administering incentives such as the Texas Product/Business Fund, designed to aid development, production, and commercialization of new or improved products and to foster and stimulate small business in the state.
- *Emerging Technology Fund* – Created by the legislature in 2005, grants are awarded in three areas: (1) commercialization activities that help companies take ideas from concept to development to ready for the marketplace; (2) research award matching to create public-private partnerships which leverage the unique strengths of Texas universities, federal government grant programs, and industry; and (3) acquisition of research superiority by funding Texas higher education institutions to recruit the best research talent in the world.
- *Small Business Advocacy* – This section identifies legal and financial barriers for small, medium, and historically underutilized businesses; provides assistance with expansion programs, policies, and directives; and develops strategies for small business development throughout the state.
- *Governor's Small Business Forums* – Offered in partnership with TWC, local workforce boards, and regional economic development agencies, forums are held throughout the state to provide information, resources, and networking opportunities to Texas entrepreneurs and small businesses. Attendees obtain valuable information on workforce development, marketing, hiring and managing employees, and training and growth opportunities.

Texas Workforce Investment Council

1100 San Jacinto, Suite 100 – Austin, Texas 78701
 512.936.8100
www.governor.state.tx.us/twic