

## TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION LETTER

**ID/No:** WD 09-07

**Date:** January 24, 2007

**Keyword:** WIA

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



**From:** Laurence M. Jones, Director, Workforce Development Division

**Subject:** **Workforce Investment Act Local Incentive Awards for Local  
Coordination and Regional Cooperation Activities  
for Program Year 2006**

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### **PURPOSE:**

To provide Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with guidance on Program Year 2006 (PY'06) Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Local Incentive Awards for local coordination and regional cooperation activities.

### **REFERENCE:**

Workforce Investment Act  
Texas Workforce Commission General Administration Rules: 40 TAC §800.102  
and §800.107

### **FLEXIBILITY RATINGS:**

**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. Federal and state laws, rules, policies, and required procedures with a “No Local Flexibility” rating are indicated by the acronym, **NLF**, in the margin to the right of the applicable paragraph. Additionally, all information with a “No Local Flexibility” rating is indicated by “must” or “shall.”

Failure to comply with the federal and state laws, rules, policies, and required procedures with a “No Local Flexibility” rating may result in corrective action, up to and including sanction and penalty.

**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 guidance or recommended practices with a “Local Flexibility” rating are indicated by the acronym, **LF**, located in the margin to the right of the applicable paragraph. Additionally, guidance or recommended practices with a “Local Flexibility” rating are indicated by “may” or “recommend.”

Boards are not subject to corrective action for failure to comply with guidance or recommended practices with a “Local Flexibility” rating.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Section 800.107 of the Texas Workforce Commission’s (Commission) General Administration rules provides Board eligibility criteria for WIA Local Incentive Awards, which are awarded to Boards for activities in local coordination, regional cooperation, or both.

### **Local Coordination Activities**

Commission rule §800.102(4) defines “local coordination” as the process by which Boards foster leadership and cooperation to achieve the most effective customer service results for their employers and residents through one or more of the following:

- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with required partners that achieve active implementation and integration of related services;
- MOUs with partners required by WIA §121(b)(1), but not required by Commission rule §801.27(b) that include active implementation and integration of related services;
- Ongoing or regular communication and training on the best practices and benchmarks in building systems or delivering services; or
- Demonstrating local coordination through other means as determined by the Commission, including coordination with demonstration grants, youth opportunity grants, self-sufficiency grants, skills development grants, and other similar opportunities.

### **Regional Cooperation Activities**

Commission rule §800.102(5) defines “regional cooperation” as the methods and activities by which Boards work together as a collaborative unit to provide excellence in customer service in a region through one or more of the following:

- Submitting joint plans or agreements;
- Engaging in ongoing and regular communication concerning best practices and working together to implement those practices by sharing ideas, data, staff, and other resources;
- Providing opportunities for joint training, conferences, and staff interaction; or
- Demonstrating regional cooperation through other means as determined by the Commission.

In 2007, the Commission will issue a Request for Applications to identify the amount of funds available for awards, the maximum number of awards, and instructions for submitting applications for the PY’06 WIA Local Incentive Awards for local coordination and regional cooperation. This WD Letter provides Boards with advance guidance on the areas of focus for these awards.

This WD Letter supersedes and rescinds WD Letter 53-03, issued December 11, 2003, and entitled “Workforce Investment Act Local Incentive Awards for Local Coordination and Regional Cooperation Activities for Program Year 2003.”

**PROCEDURES:**

Boards must be aware of the two focus areas for the PY’06 WIA Local Incentive Awards, approved by the Commission on January 9, 2007.

NLF

I. Addressing the Needs of Employers

Examples include:

- training programs that address the needs of business in the region and positively impact the local workforce development area, such as:
  - working cooperatively with other Boards in the region, local chambers of commerce, and community colleges to meet the training needs of new businesses;
  - building a force of new workers or addressing the skill gaps of incumbent workers;
  - retaining existing businesses; and
  - providing assessment tools and training to ensure workers have the skills that employers need;
- activities that result in higher employer participation in the Texas workforce system; and
- activities that result in Unemployment Insurance claimants returning to the workforce as quickly as possible.

II. Addressing Integration, Administrative Efficiencies, and Collaboration

Examples include:

- activities that increase services to customers or reduce administrative costs through innovative partnerships, such as working with local service providers or nonprofit organizations to share facility costs or other operating expenses;
- projects that consolidate activities among Boards, which may include:
  - regional planning;
  - combined purchasing efforts that achieve cost savings;
  - collaboration that provides health benefits to employees at a reduced cost; and
  - implementation of technology that streamlines services to customers in the region;
- projects that involve industry cluster and economic analysis of the region conducted in order to better target workforce development resources; and
- projects that further system integration as set forth by the Texas Workforce Investment Council’s State Strategic Plan, such as, projects that integrate education, workforce preparation, and economic development.

**ACTIONS REQUIRED:**

Boards must ensure that appropriate staff is apprised of and complies with the requirements in this WD Letter.

**INQUIRIES:**

Direct inquiries regarding this WD Letter to the assigned contract manager for your local workforce development area.

Rescissions: WD Letter 53-03	Expiration: Continuing
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