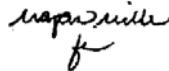


TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION LETTER

ID/No:	WD 22-08
Date:	June 24, 2008
Keyword:	Child Care
Effective:	Immediately

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



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

Subject: Updates to the Texas Rising Star Provider Certification Guidelines

PURPOSE:

To provide Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with updates and guidance regarding the Texas Rising Star (TRS) Provider Certification Guidelines established pursuant to Texas Government Code §2308.315. The following revisions are included in the *Texas Rising Star Provider Certification Guidelines, Updated June 2008* (TRS guidelines):

- Change in name of national accreditation organization;
- Additional national accreditation organizations recognized;
- Change in child care licensing agency name;
- Changes in child care provider categories and names;
- Changes in minimum child care licensing standards regarding primary caregiver qualifications for licensed child care homes (LCCH) and registered child care homes (RCCH);
- Changes regarding annual training based on Child Development Associate (CDA) competencies and Certified Childcare Professional (CCP) ability areas; and
- Changes in TRS monitoring and recertification time frames.

BACKGROUND:

Since the Texas Workforce Commission (Commission) last updated the TRS guidelines in October 2000, there have been changes in child care licensing rules and Commission-approved national accreditations requiring updates to the TRS guidelines.

Updates to Eligible Providers

- *Change in Name of National Accreditation Organization*
In 2000, the Commission approved the national accreditation of the National School Age Care Alliance (NSACA) to a Four-Star level in the TRS provider

certification system. NSACA subsequently changed its name to the National AfterSchool Association (NAA).

- *Additional National Accreditations Recognized*
The Commission recognizes the National Accreditation Commission for Early Child Care and Education Programs (NAC) and the Association of Christian Schools International (ASCI) as Four-Star level in the TRS provider certification system.

Update to Align with Minimum Child Care Licensing Standards

Updates to the TRS guidelines include child care licensing rule changes from 2003 regarding licensed child care center (LCCC) director qualifications (Appendix I) and LCCH primary caregiver qualifications (Appendix J).

Additionally, the revised TRS guidelines:

- increase TRS training requirements for LCCH caregivers from 20 clock hours per year to 22 clock hours per year to be in uniformity with TRS training requirements for RCCH caregivers; and
- change the number of allowed RCCH training hours using self-instructional materials to align with Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) standards, which limit annual training hours using self-instructional materials to 16 of the required 22 clock hours of annual training for RCCH and LCCH primary caregivers.

Updates to Include Guidance Previously Issued in TA Bulletins

- *Changes Regarding Staff Training Based on CDA Competencies and CCP Ability Areas*
Technical Assistance (TA) Bulletin 52, issued January 30, 2004, and entitled “Texas Rising Star Provider Certification: Staff Training” added CCP ability areas to be used as a guide, with CDA competencies, for assessing the appropriateness of the subjects included in each caregiver’s training plan. The intent is not to limit countable training to CDA or CCP classes, or to courses that have titles that exactly match one of the CDA competencies or CCP ability areas, but instead to provide a guide to the required content of the training.
- *Changes in TRS Monitoring and Recertification Time Frames*
TA Bulletin 44, issued October 3, 2003, and entitled “Child Care Service Delivery Application: Texas Rising Star Changes” extended the TRS recertification period and reduced the frequency of assessment visits to reduce the administrative burden on Boards and contractors. TA Bulletin 44 includes the following:
 - Recertification frequency for Four-Star, nationally accredited, or U.S. military-operated providers changed from once annually to once every three years. The time frame for verifying the good standing of nationally accredited or U.S. military-operated providers changed from once quarterly to once annually;

- Recertification frequency for Three-Star providers changed from once annually to once every two years; and
- Recertification frequency for fully certified (LCCH and RCCH) providers changed from once annually to once every two years.

In addition, the Commission reduced the monitoring requirements to:

- align with the updated recertification time frames; or
- take place at intervals determined by Board policy.

Technical Changes

- *Change in Child Care Licensing Agency Name*
The former Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services is now named the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.
- *Changes in Child Care Provider Categories and Names*
The Commission aligned TRS child care provider categories and names with DFPS' new categories, effective September 2003. These include:

Old Category

Licensed Group Day Home
Registered Family Home

New Category

Licensed Child Care Home
Registered Child Care Home

- *Other Changes*
The TRS guidelines changed the terms *vendor management staff* and *specialists* to *child care contractor staff* and *contractor staff*. The Commission renamed the *Designated Vendor* program *TRS* in 2000 and is updating these references throughout the TRS guidelines.

PROCEDURES:

Boards must be aware of the following:

- The updated TRS guidelines are available at <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/childcare/provcert.html>;
- The National School Age Care Alliance changed its name to the National AfterSchool Association and the Commission recognizes NAA's accreditation at a Four-Star level in the TRS provider certification system;
- The LCCC director qualifications (Appendix I) and the LCCH primary caregiver qualifications (Appendix J) of the TRS guidelines have been revised; and
- The TRS guidelines have been updated with the new TRS child care provider categories and names.

NLF

Boards must recognize licensed child care centers that are accredited by NAC or ASCI and are in good standing with their accreditation entity at the TRS provider certification system's Four-Star level.

NLF

Boards must require LCCH caregivers to meet 22 clock hours of training per year.

NLF

Boards must limit the allowed hours of RCCH and LCCH training using self-instruction materials to 16 clock hours per year.

NLF

Boards must use CDA competencies and CCP ability areas as a guide for assessing the appropriateness of the subjects included in each caregiver's training plan.

NLF

Boards must extend the TRS recertification frequency to the following:

NLF

- For Four-Star, nationally accredited, or U.S. military-operated providers—once every three years;
- For Three-Star providers—once every two years; and
- For fully certified (LCCH and RCCH) providers—once every two years.

INQUIRIES:

Direct inquiries regarding this WD Letter to wfpolicy.clarifications@twc.state.tx.us.

RESCISSIONS:

None

REFERENCE:

Texas Government Code §2308.315

TA Bulletin 44, issued October 3, 2003, and entitled “Child Care Service Delivery Application: Texas Rising Star Changes”

TA Bulletin 52, issued January 30, 2004, and entitled “Texas Rising Star Provider Certification: Staff Training”

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. All information with an NLF rating is indicated by “must” or “shall.”

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.”