

TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION LETTER

ID/No:	WD 29-11
Date:	August 24, 2011
Keyword:	Project RIO; TWIST
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: **Closeout of Project Reintegration of Offenders Services**

PURPOSE:

To provide Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with information and guidance on the closeout of Project Reintegration of Offenders (Project RIO) services, effective September 1, 2011, specifically:

- financial contract closeout;
- Project RIO services in The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST);
- continuation of services to ex-offenders;
- ex-offender release information;
- confidentiality of youth information; and
- fidelity bonding.

BACKGROUND:

The General Appropriations Act, 82nd Texas Legislature, Regular Session (2011) eliminated funding for Project RIO effective September 1, 2011. The Texas Workforce Commission (Commission) will initiate the required process to repeal 40 TAC, Chapter 847, the Project RIO Employment Activities and Support Services rules.

While the loss of funding eliminates Project RIO-specific services, the Commission's intent is that ex-offenders be served as universal customers and the appropriateness of enrolling them in other employment and training programs such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Workforce Investment Act be determined.

PROCEDURES:

Boards must be aware that effective September 1, 2011:

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- Project RIO services will be discontinued;
- the Project RIO assistance line, (800) 453-8140, will be disconnected; and
- memoranda of understanding with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) and the Texas Youth Commission (TYC) will no longer be required.

Financial Contract Closeout

Boards must be aware that current Project RIO contracts will end October 31, 2011, and that Project RIO funds will continue to be available through that date.

NLF

Boards must submit the final expenditure report and financial contract closeout package in the Cash Draw and Expenditure Reporting system by December 30, 2011, in accordance with the regular expenditure reporting and financial contract closeout procedures set forth in WD Letter 03-11, issued March 1, 2011, and entitled “Fiscal Year 2011/Program Year 2010 Cash Draw and Expenditure Reporting System Instructions” and WD Letter 44-05, issued August 9, 2005, and entitled “Texas Workforce Commission Online Contract Closeout Process,” and subsequent issuances.

NLF

Project RIO Services in TWIST

The Commission has initiated the necessary changes to TWIST for Project RIO fund codes, services, and reports. Boards must ensure that all Project RIO services recorded in TWIST are closed with an end date of no later than October 31, 2011—with the exception of Boards whose Board Contract Year 2011 Project RIO contracts have been extended.

NLF

Continuation of Services to Ex-Offenders

Boards must ensure that effective September 1, 2011:

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- active Project RIO customers are enrolled in other workforce programs, as appropriate; and
- adult and youth ex-offenders are served as universal customers and enrolled in the appropriate workforce services.

Ex-Offender Release Information

Boards must be aware that TDCJ and TYC will continue to provide release information on adult and youth ex-offenders through the daily TWIST interface located in the TDCJ/TYC Query in TWIST.

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Boards must ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff is aware that the release information on adult and youth ex-offenders will still be available and can be used, as appropriate, to assist ex-offenders with employment planning needs.

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Confidentiality of Youth Information

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The confidentiality requirements associated with serving adjudicated youth, as specified in Texas Family Code §58.005, remain in effect. Boards must ensure that all security agreements signed by Workforce Solutions Office staff include a statement that provides for the confidentiality of youth information relating to:

- adjudication history;
- TYC records and information related to vocational and educational services; and
- parole information relevant to securing employment or continuation of education.

Boards must ensure that executed security agreements are maintained on file.

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Fidelity Bonding

Boards must be aware that the Commission will continue to provide free fidelity bonding services for certain at-risk applicants in Fiscal Year 2012.

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Boards must ensure that, effective September 1, 2011, Workforce Solutions Office staff continues to:

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- provide information on fidelity bonding services to all at-risk job seekers;
- complete the Fidelity Bond Certification Form (Attachment 1); and
- e-mail the Fidelity Bond Certification Form to fidelity.bonding@twc.state.tx.us.

For additional information on fidelity bonds, see Technical Assistance Bulletin 243, issued August 3, 2011, and entitled “Fidelity Bonding Services,” and subsequent issuances.

INQUIRIES:

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

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Fidelity Bond Certification Form

RESCISSIONS:

WD Letter 51-04	Technical Assistance Bulletin 42
WD Letter 48-05	Technical Assistance Bulletin 91
WD Letter 69-07	Technical Assistance Bulletin 127
WD Letter 30-10	Technical Assistance Bulletin 164

REFERENCE:

Texas Family Code §58.005
Texas Workforce Commission Project RIO Employment Activities and Support Services Rules:
40 TAC, Chapter 847
Technical Assistance Bulletin 243, issued August 3, 2011, and entitled “Fidelity Bonding
Services”
WD Letter 44-05, issued August 9, 2005, and entitled “Texas Workforce Commission Online
Contract Closeout Process”
WD Letter 03-11, issued March 1, 2011, and entitled “Fiscal Year 2011/Program Year 2010 Cash
Draw and Expenditure Reporting System Instructions”

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.”