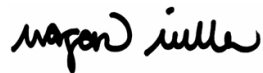


**TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION**  
**Workforce Development Letter**

<b>ID/No:</b>	WD 08-23, Change 2
<b>Date:</b>	December 7, 2023
<b>Keyword:</b>	Child Care
<b>Effective:</b>	December 1, 2023

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



**From:** Reagan Miller, Director, Child Care & Early Learning Division

**Subject:** **Texas Child Care Connection and Child Care Automated Attendance—  
Update**

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**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this WD Letter is to provide Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with updated guidance on the implementation of the new automated attendance tracking and child care case management system—the Texas Child Care Connection (TX3C)—and on the management of excessive child absences.

**RESCISSIONS:**

WD Letter 08-23, Change 1

**BACKGROUND:**

TX3C, powered by KinderSystems, includes automated attendance tracking functionality and was introduced on May 17, 2023. The new system allows parents and/or caregivers (sponsors) to report child care attendance in an automated manner through the following suite of KinderSystems products:

- [KinderConnect](#)—A web-based provider portal that collects child attendance data for providers and state or Board staff to view
- [KinderSign](#)—An application for child care providers' iPad and Android tablets that makes it easier for a parent and/or caregiver (sponsor) to enter a child's attendance status at the child care provider location
- [KinderSmart](#)—A mobile application for iPhone and Android devices that allows parents and/or caregivers (sponsors) to enter attendance information using a personal smartphone

On April 25, 2023, the Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) three-member Commission [voted](#) to reinstate all child care attendance requirements and procedures in conjunction with the implementation of the full case management system. The launch date for TX3C case management functionality is scheduled for February 5, 2024.

Boards notified all subsidy-accepting child care providers that the new automated attendance tracking system, which consists of KinderConnect, KinderSign, and KinderSmart, became available on May 17, 2023, and that automated attendance collection began on May 17, 2023, or as soon as the child care provider completed its setup.

The updated guidance in this WD Letter extends the timelines and deadlines for providers to begin using the new automated attendance system by two weeks.

**PROCEDURES:**

**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.”

**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.”

**Absence Reporting Responsibility and Information**

**NLF:** Boards must be aware that KinderSystems began to ship tablets in May 2023 to providers that stated in the Subsidy/Scholarship Child Care Provider survey that they did not have a tablet to use for attendance entry. These state-issued devices arrive ready to use, with the appropriate software already loaded.

**NLF:** Boards must also be aware that providers that use case management software supported by an application programming interface connection may choose to continue to use their current case management system for attendance collection. Only attendance information for children receiving child care subsidies will be uploaded to KinderSystems. The following child care management software programs are currently supported:

- Brightwheel
- ChildPilot
- Family
- HiMama
- Playground
- Procure Desktop
- Procure Web (coming soon)
- SmartCare
- WonderSchool (coming soon)

**NLF:** Boards must provide parents and/or caregivers (sponsors) with information on how to access the automated attendance tracking system through the KinderSmart or KinderSign applications. Parents and/or caregivers (sponsors) may plan to download the KinderSmart application on their personal device from the appropriate App store (iPhone or Android). Additionally, parents and/or caregivers (sponsors) must be informed of how to use KinderSign on the provider’s tablet if they choose not to use the KinderSmart application.

**NLF:** Boards must notify parents whose child care provider will continue to use their existing case management software that they will continue using their provider’s existing attendance system.

**LF:** Boards may use Attachment 1 or determine other methods of communication to inform providers of the new automated attendance tracking system and that automated attendance collection has resumed.

**NLF:** Boards must notify Child Care Services (CCS) providers of the following timelines and penalties:

- Providers that are not using the attendance system as of December 14, 2023, will be placed on a Service Improvement Agreement (SIA) effective December 15, 2023, notifying them that they have one month to use the new system.
- The SIA will also notify providers that if they are not using the new attendance system by Friday, January 12, 2024, CCS payments will be withheld until they come into compliance.
- Beginning in the second half of January 2024, Boards will withhold CCS payments until providers come into compliance with attendance requirements.

**NLF:** Boards must be aware that if a provider is unable to use the automated attendance system through no fault of their own (for example, they have not yet received a tablet), the provider must not be placed on an SIA or have their payments withheld. The provider must supply documentation of their due diligence to connect to and use the system.

**NLF:** Boards must be aware that an informational website, [TX3C Information Site](#), and help desk support will be available to help child care parents, caregivers (sponsors), and providers in using the new child care automated attendance tracking system.

**NLF:** Boards must also be aware that providers are required to report when a child stops attending a child care provider location, so that staff may take appropriate action and reach out to the parent and/or caregiver (sponsor) to determine whether the child still requires child care.

**NLF:** Additionally, Boards must continue to pay providers based on enrollment, with the exception of relative providers. Boards must ensure that a relative child care provider is not reimbursed for the days that a child is absent, as set forth in TWC Child Care Services rule [§809.93\(c\)](#).

#### **Child Care Absence Tracking and Notification Process**

**NLF:** Boards must be aware that attendance standards and notice and reporting requirements, as set forth in [§809.78](#), will become effective in conjunction with the implementation of the full case management system, scheduled for February 5, 2024.

**NLF:** Boards also must be aware that pursuant to [§809.2\(11\)](#) “excessive unexplained absences” are defined as more than 40 unexplained absences in a 12-month eligibility period.

**NLF:** Furthermore, Boards must be aware that absence notifications to families and providers must begin with the launch of the new system.

**NLF:** Boards must continue to ensure that Form 2450 or a locally developed notification of enrollment is sent to the provider and documented in The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) Counselor Notes. Beginning May 17, 2023, Boards and providers have access to view authorized referrals in the new system, KinderConnect.

**NLF:** Boards must be aware that a relative provider will report a child's attendance using the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system. The IVR phone number is (713) 242-1606.

**INQUIRIES:**

Send inquiries regarding this WD Letter to [childcare.programassistance@twc.texas.gov](mailto:childcare.programassistance@twc.texas.gov).

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1: Child Care Provider Template KinderConnect

Attachment 2: Revisions to WD 08-23, Change 1, Shown in Track Changes

Attachment 3: Revisions to Child Care Provider Template Kinder Connect Shown in Track Changes

**REFERENCES:**

Texas Workforce Commission Chapter 809 Child Care Services Rules

Texas Workforce Commission Child Care Services Guide