

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Board Definition of Timely and Reasonable Attempt to Contact Public Assistance Customers

Background: Consistent with federal statutory authority, individuals must engage in work activities in order to receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families cash assistance and Medicaid assistance for the adult(s) unless exempt from the work activities. The Commission is responsible for the employment and training requirements through the local workforce development boards (Boards).

To implement House Bill 2292, enacted by the 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, an emergency rule is necessary by the September 1, 2003 effective date. Specifically, effective September 1, 2003, the Boards must notify the Texas Department of Humans Services of the demonstrated cooperation by sanctioned recipients and conditional applicants with Choices services requirements. The Boards are required to develop policies and procedures to ensure that each Texas Workforce Center:

- (1) Responds to the sanctioned families' and conditional applicants' critical need to demonstrate cooperation with Choices services requirements.
- (2) Notifies the Texas Department of Humans Services, in a timely manner, of the demonstrated cooperation to ensure that Temporary Assistance for Needy Families cash assistance and the Medicaid assistance for the adult(s) are issued.

If Boards fail to implement such policies and ensure that Workforce Centers have processes in place, those families cooperating would be in danger of losing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families cash assistance and the adults' Medicaid assistance.

Policy: For outreach and non-cooperation with service requirements, the Board definition of a “timely and reasonable attempt to contact” is a **minimum of 3 mailing days notice** for customers residing in Bell and Coryell counties. For those customers residing in Milam, Mills, San Saba, Hamilton and Lampasas counties, a **minimum of 4 mailing days** will be provided unless the notice is mailed within the intended county that would then require only a minimum of 3 mailing days. In person or phone contact with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or Food Stamp Employment and Training customers may be utilized to determine non-cooperation in lieu of mailing an appointment notice. The definition applies to the following situations.

- Outreach appointment notices for enrollment in Choices or Food Stamp Employment and Training;
- Good cause appointments to determine reason(s) for non-cooperation;
- Any scheduled appointment with an assigned Workforce Development Specialist;
- Any appointment notice for scheduled training or service at designated locations;
- Notices of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families adverse action or right to appeal program decisions;
- Notices of how to reinstate Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits once a full family sanction has been requested.

For failure to respond to outreach and failure to participate Temporary Assistance for Needy Families penalty requests, the following information must be included in the notice prior to initiating or requesting a penalty in The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST):

- The violation of not meeting Choices outreach or participation requirements;
- The right to appeal; and
- The procedure to reinstate Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits.

Action: The Central Texas Workforce Board approve or make recommendations for approval of the proposed Board Definition of Timely and Reasonable Attempt to Contact Customers of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Choices Program.