

# Texas Workforce Commission

A Member of Texas Workforce Solutions

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To all Directors and Owners of Career Schools and Colleges:

As you are aware, there have been many changes in the operation and regulation of schools in recent months. The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), like you, has been busy responding to the changing environment. With this letter, we are notifying you of changes that TWC is making and new requirements and expectations for schools operating in Texas.

First, the 82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature considered quite a few pieces of legislation relating to career schools and colleges, as well as to all educational entities. Six bills relating directly to career schools and colleges passed during the legislative session and have either become effective or will do so on September 1, 2011. To access a brief summary of those pieces of legislation, please visit the TWC Career Schools and Colleges home page at <http://csc.twc.state.tx.us>.

One of the common themes seen in recent federal and state regulatory modifications is the need to make enhanced information available to prospective students and other consumers. TWC has taken an initial step in making more information about school and program performance available by posting each program's annual outcome information on the TWC website through the Directory of Licensed Career Schools and Colleges, also available as a link off the Career Schools and Colleges home page. Additionally, we have made content and structural modifications to other Career Schools and Colleges web pages to further strengthen consumer information available on our website. We will continue to improve upon the information available to students, schools, and the public.

Annual reporting of student enrollment and outcome information for both vocational schools (Annual Enrollment and Outcome Report, PS-072) and seminar schools (Annual Enrollment Report, PS-073) continues to be important. School performance is key to making informed decisions about schools and their operations. For schools with vocational programs, the ability of schools to meet performance expectations for employment after completion of training is a critical indicator of program quality and effectiveness. TWC expects improvement when a vocational program fails to meet the minimum rate of employment in the occupation for which graduates are trained by the program.

Schools that have a vocational program not meeting this minimum employment rate are having conditions placed on their Certificates of Approval designed to encourage strong efforts to improve the employment rate. Additionally, programs not meeting the minimum

employment rate will not be permitted to take new Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and/or Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) training customers. If a program's employment rate does not improve to meet the required employment rate for the next year, enrollment will be suspended in the program, and ultimately, program approval will be revoked.

During the past several months, TWC has worked to strengthen the protocols that are used to test the accuracy of the annual outcome data reported for each program. In the course of those efforts and through recent investigations of reported performance, issues with the accuracy of some of the reported data have been uncovered. Using knowledge gained from this experience, several changes will be made to this and future years' reporting requirements.

For the annual enrollment and outcome reports for the 2010-2011 reporting period (September 1, 2010 through August 31, 2011), due on December 1, 2011, all reports will need to be submitted in an electronic format. The requirements for file layout and electronic formats that will be used will be included in the reporting instructions that will be issued next month. We are developing a web-based reporting portal. As part of the instructions and ongoing communications, TWC will inform schools whether the web-based system will be ready for the 2010-2011 reporting period, or whether an alternate electronic reporting format will be used for this year's reporting.

Finally, all schools are advised that the 2010-2011 reporting due date of December 1, 2011 will not be extended for any school without penalty. Schools must take all steps necessary to ensure that the outcome data reported for 2010- 2011 is collected, verified, and formatted for submission on or before the deadline. Schools failing to meet the December 1<sup>st</sup> deadline will be assessed an administrative penalty. Further, please be aware that the data reported to TWC is subject to verification protocols and that there is the potential for administrative penalties or sanctions for inaccurate reporting, up to loss of program or school approval.

As noted previously, additional details regarding the 2010-2011 student enrollment and outcome reporting will be distributed next month. However, if you have questions in the meantime, please feel free to communicate with your school's assigned Program Specialist. Please be assured that we are committed to responding to inquiries as quickly as possible as we implement these new protocols.

Sincerely,



Catherine Bingle

Director, Career Schools and Colleges