

# REPORT ON CUSTOMER SERVICE 2009-2010 BIENNIUM



TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION

TEXAS  
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS  
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# Customer Service Report 2009-2010

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) serves the employers, workers, and communities of Texas by providing innovative workforce solutions. To provide the highest level of service to our customers, the agency conducts ongoing research and evaluations to identify successes, as well as opportunities to improve service delivery. By collecting comprehensive customer feedback through a variety of methods, TWC uses the data to revise standards and develop initiatives to improve service delivery for our customers. This report reflects TWC successes and provides the information necessary to set the bar higher for outstanding customer service.

Highlights of TWC customer service initiatives begun or expanded during 2009-2010 include:

## **A Streamlined Unemployment Insurance Tax System for Employers**

- Employers can file, manage, and pay Unemployment Insurance (UI) taxes online.
- More than 317,000 employers submitted UI quarterly tax reports electronically the fourth quarter of 2009.
- Of the employers filing tax reports online, more than 64,000 continue to make their quarterly tax payments online. Results of the online customer satisfaction survey showed a 93 percent satisfaction rate for employers using the online tax system.
- TWC began offering employers the option of paying their UI quarterly tax payments by credit card in October 2007. The number of employers has continued to increase from 910 credit card transactions in October 2007 to 1,987 credit card transactions in January 2010.

## **UI Claims Filing**

Economic conditions in 2008-2009 placed enormous stress on Unemployment Compensation staff and operations nationally and within Texas. All states experienced unprecedented

numbers of unemployment applications, overwhelmed phone lines, and demands on data processing personnel and systems.

Beginning in July, 2008, initial claims applications and calls to Tele-Centers began to increase, brought on by the recession and the resulting federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program. Hurricane Ike only compounded the explosion of calls and claims, as Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) kicked in for those who lost their jobs due to the hurricane. Toward the end of the 2009 session, the Legislature authorized TWC to take advantage of temporary 100% federal cost sharing for the state Extended Benefits (EB) program, so TWC was able to offer additional benefits to claimants as they exhausted their regular and EUC benefits.

The following table points out the dramatic increase in regular claims taken by TWC during 2007 through 2009. In addition to these regular claims, from July 2008 through December 2009, TWC took 457,871 EUC claims, 14,377 DUA claims and 88,014 EB claims.

<b>Calendar Year</b>	<b>Regular Claims taken</b>
2009	1,344,433
2008	954,388
2007	687,062

TWC PRD 1D Report

To combat hold times that exceeded the Agency's performance target, TWC embarked on a massive hiring effort that doubled Tele-Center staff in 2009. The following table compares the number of calls answered by the Tele-Center at the beginning of 2009 with the end of

2009. The difference is attributable to the addition of staff, phone lines, and measures to increase the efficiency of the telephone system.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Number of Calls</b>	<b>Time to Respond</b>
1/31/2009	281,797	17.92 minutes
12/31/2009	625,512	7.32 minutes

MIS 3501 Report

### **Direct Deposit of UI Benefits**

TWC has implemented a Direct Deposit option for unemployment insurance claimants who would like to have their benefits sent to their personal bank accounts rather than using the JPMorgan Chase Debit Card. Claimants will be able to choose between direct deposit and debit card when they complete their applications for benefits. There is no cost to the claimant for the use of direct deposit. They will also be able to switch between the two methods during the course of their benefit year.

The addition of direct deposit is primarily a customer service initiative. TWC projects no significant impact on operations or budget from the addition of this service.

### **Claimant Communications**

UI continues to refine the documents, informational material, Interactive Voice Response System (IVR) and Internet messages sent or spoken to claimants. The agency published a new version of the claimant handbook, and is reviewing all claim determinations (decisions) that go to claimants. The agency has placed a great deal of up-to-date information regarding EUC and EB on the agency website, allowing claimants access to the latest news without calling a Tele-Center. The messages on the IVR are kept current and

reviewed regularly by staff. Also, we are engaged in reviewing and rewriting all our claim determinations to ensure that claimants understand every decision that is made.

## **For Employers and Workers, WorkInTexas.com**

- WorkInTexas.com, TWC's online job-matching tool, continues to be constantly upgraded to ensure it remains market-relevant and easy to use. Numerous enhancements have been added to benefit all users. A couple of which are described below:
  - An online Message Center was created that allows employers, job seekers, and workforce professionals to effectively communicate with one another during the recruitment process.
  - The job posting entry process was redesigned to make it easier for employers to provide more information about their job opening, which in turn, increases and improves their job matching results.
- Employers use WorkInTexas.com to create unlimited, no-cost job postings, view applicant resumes, match their job postings to applicants online, and receive e-mail notifications of the results.
- Job seekers can manage their job hunts on-line through detailed job searches, get contact information for employers, apply for jobs online, and use helpful career tools and tutorials directly from their own computers.
- WorkinTexas.com features live assistance at every step of the way from our workforce professionals at all of Texas' 247 workforce centers.
- As of April 2010, more than 294,000 employers have registered with WorkinTexas.com. Employers have immediate access to more than 754,000 highly qualified job seekers.

## **TWC Outreach to Customers**

The Texas Workforce Commissioners and their staffs interact with customers every day. Calls, letters, conferences, newsletters, and one-on-one or group meetings all demonstrate the commitment to constituent needs and customer service. Commission offices respond to thousands of phone calls and written correspondence.

TWC hosts an annual conference with more than 1,500 workforce board members, Chief Elected Officials, workforce development and economic development professionals who discuss workforce issues and represent employers, job seekers, and communities.

Through the sponsorship of the Commissioner Representing Employers, every year well over 100,000 employers are educated and informed on the latest issues in employment law, workforce and economic development, and business. Annually, more than 80,000 employers subscribe to the Employer Commissioner's newsletter *Texas Business Today*, 30,000 employers request and receive the labor and employment law handbook *Especially for Texas Employers*, and more than 6,000 employers attend one of the many business conferences held around the state. With more than 60,000 employers attending since 1998, the Texas Business Conferences help employers address many of the workforce and employment law issues that business owners, managers, and human resource professionals face each day. In addition to the publications and conferences, employers can also reach the Employer Commissioner's office regarding their questions through a toll-free phone number and by e-mail.

For TWC customers receiving child care services, resource and referral are provided through a toll-free 2-1-1 phone network, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, year round to serve Texas' working parents.

### ***Ongoing Commitment***

TWC's commitment to customer service was formally outlined in the Compact with Texans developed in 2000. The agency continuously assesses interactions with customers. Clear procedures and established timelines are met 99 percent of the time. These measures require that all written and electronic complaints be acknowledged within five business days and all telephone calls returned within one business day.

During the course of this biennium, TWC has surveyed a variety of customer groups using Web-site user surveys and through customer evaluation surveys. A formal complaint answering and tracking system provides management data, to assist TWC in exploring new and better ways of providing excellent customer service.

## *Customers*

TWC's customers are Texas' employers, workers, and communities. Each of these customer groups is offered a wide variety of services in an integrated service delivery system.

**Employers:** There are more than 440,000 employers in Texas, and most run small businesses. More than 77 percent have fewer than 10 employees, and 97 percent employ fewer than 100 workers. The remaining 3 percent are considered large employers and supply 67 percent of all Texas jobs. TWC recognizes employers create jobs, and the Texas workforce system must meet their demand for skilled workers for Texas to continue down the path of economic success.

TWC, the 28 local workforce boards, and their contractors comprise the Texas workforce system and assist employers in recruiting, training and retaining a labor force that allows business to grow and remain profitable. Skills Development Fund grants are among the most effective tools to foster the growth of business. In FY 2009, TWC funded 45 grants involving 170 businesses. The average grant was \$524,714. These grants were instrumental in adding 3,567 new jobs and upgrading 15,949 current jobs to help Texas businesses compete in the global marketplace. In FY 2009, the average wage for participants completing a Skills program was \$24.44 per hour.

Whether administered directly by TWC staff or through Board contractors, Texas employers can access training funds, job matching services, labor market and career information, labor and employment law information, tax credits assistance, and support services for their employees through the state workforce system, as well as help employers manage their UI tax accounts online.

**Workers:** All 12 million people who make up the Texas workforce are potential customers of the Texas workforce system. Last year, 909,136 workers entered employment after obtaining services at Texas workforce centers. Employed, under employed, unemployed, and future workers have access to general services such as career development information, skills training, résumé-preparation classes, and interview preparation skills. Job training is provided to upgrade skills for workers through collaborations with employers and community colleges, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) training, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and

Training for eligible participants. Apprenticeship programs also provide a viable career path. Veterans, international trade-affected workers, ex-offenders re-entering employment, older workers, and youth all benefit from TWC services.

Specialized training services are available for adults receiving public assistance through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training programs. They may receive support services including child care and transportation while in training or working.

**Communities:** The local workforce boards serve employers and job seekers and are a vital link to community resources. Boards provide leadership and serve as catalysts for building public-private partnerships through the Texas workforce system. Boards work in partnership with their local chief elected officials, the business community, local labor organizations, schools, including post-secondary institutions, and faith-based organizations to ensure that local workforce needs are met and new opportunities are created. TWC provides the boards with technical assistance and training for both board staff and contractors in all areas of responsibility.

## ***Methodology and Analysis of Findings***

TWC used a variety of methods to determine the level of customer satisfaction, including customer service evaluations that provided valuable qualitative information but not all are developed to statistically validate the standards due to funding constraints. While it is not a statistically valid means of gathering information, it is a barometer of how customers perceive TWC services and is a valuable tool for management.

Overall, TWC is meeting customer satisfaction goals. Each of the surveys that were used provides insight into continuous improvement opportunities, many of which have already been implemented.

Specific TWC customer satisfaction initiatives over the past two years included:

**Online Surveys:** TWC conducted customer satisfaction survey through the University of Texas-Austin, Center for Social Work Research (UT/CSWR). The survey met the requirements of Section 2114.002(b), Government Code. An online survey was placed on

the employer and job seeker home pages of TWC's Web site. Additional links were placed in the confirmation box for those registering for work online and in the menu site for employers who were registered users of TWC's tax information online system. TWC provided UT/CSWR with e-mail addresses for new users of TWC online tax applications and WorkInTexas.com, on a quarterly basis, that were also used to solicit a response to the online customer satisfaction survey.

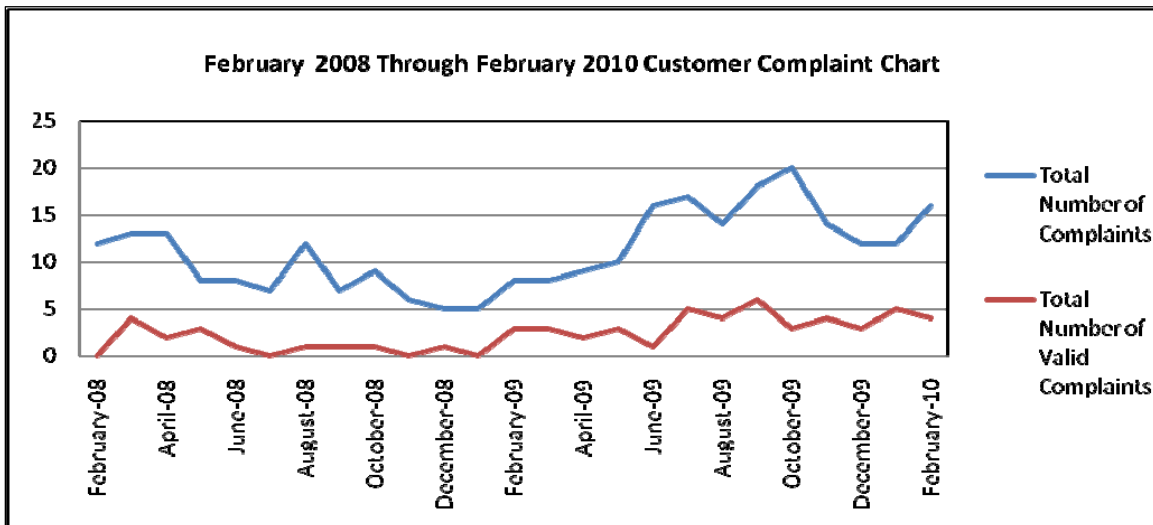
The online surveys were conducted June 2009 through March 2010 on a quarterly basis. A total of 8,589 job seekers and employers responded to the survey, and the overall satisfaction was more than 84.99 percent as compared to 83 percent reported for 2007 – 2008 biennium. Separate results were compiled for employers and job seekers in most of the same categories. The survey results for services to both employers and job seekers included satisfaction with service involving UI claims, wage claims, employment services, and Labor Market and Career Information (LMCI). Employers were surveyed about UI tax filings and WorkInTexas.com, and job seekers were surveyed if they used WorkInTexas.com and UI Online application services.

TWC is committed to continuously offering the opportunity for our customers to provide feedback through an open data collection process. The online survey allows for assessment of elements measured in the Customer Service Standards Act and provides an opportunity for a customer to comment directly to TWC's customer service representatives. This open data collection method provides a large amount of data electronically at a cost lower than traditional paper and mail-in surveys. However, this open data collection method inherently possesses data limitations due to the lack of control of the sample population and the anonymity of the survey.

**Customer Complaint Tracking:** TWC established an agencywide complaint tracking system pursuant to Section 301.023 of the Texas Labor Code, as amended. Reports are compiled monthly, and include information regarding whether the response met the timeliness guidelines established in TWC's Compact with Texans and whether the complaint was found to be valid or invalid. The performance measure for complaint resolution states that all written and electronic complaints and concerns will be acknowledged within five business days and telephone calls within one business day. The measure for written complaints and concerns applies unless program-specific requirements or time limits pertain to the action.

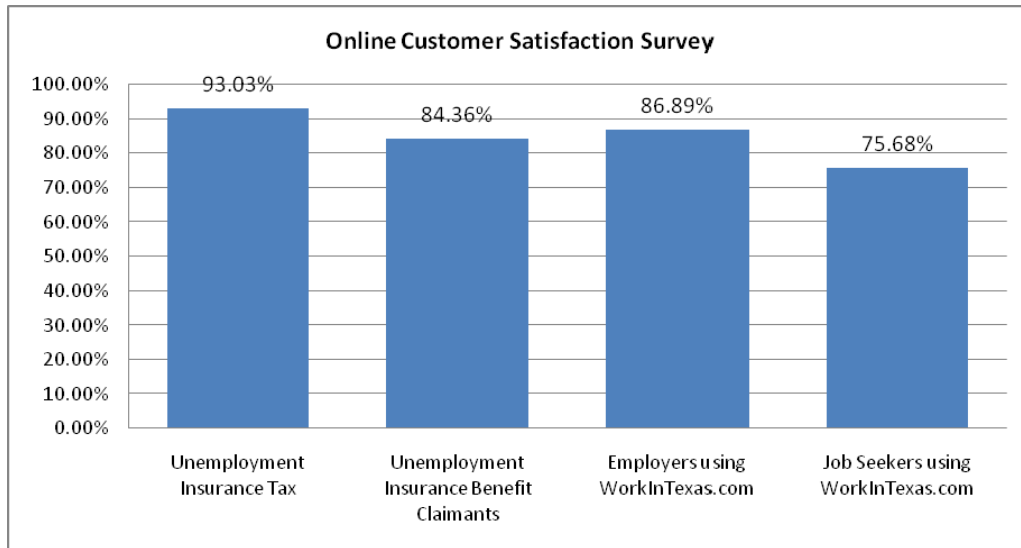
From April 2008 through February 2010, 280 complaints were reported and 61 were determined to be valid. TWC takes complaints seriously and strives to respond in a

timely manner. Ninety-nine percent of the complaints were addressed within five business days if mailed or e-mailed and within 24 hours if made by phone. The complaint tracking system provides information on current customer concerns and service delivery issues. While it is not a statistically valid means of gathering information, it is a barometer of how customers perceive TWC services and is a valuable tool for management.



## *Customer-Determined Service Quality*

The TWC Online Customer Satisfaction Survey results indicate overall satisfaction of 84.99 percent. When asked about specific services, satisfaction results ranged from 75.68 percent to 93.03 percent and are shown in the following chart.



## *Resulting Action Taken*

TWC listens to customers to improve services to meet customer needs.

As more TWC customers use online services, TWC recognizes that continuous monitoring and improving the effectiveness of these systems is essential.

TWC's Customer Relations Department is responsible for compiling reports on customer's activities and trends, responding to customer complaints and inquiries, compiling information for the agencywide complaint tracking system, and conducting customer satisfaction surveys. This department also serves as TWC's representative for the Compact with Texans and as TWC's Ombudsman. Customers can contact Customer Relations by e-mail from two links on the TWC Web site, as well as by telephone, fax, and mail.

In order to ensure that quality customer service is delivered throughout the agency and that customer complaints are accurately documented, TWC employees are required to

complete a computer-based training program every year. The training teaches staff how to accept, process, and track customer complaints. This requirement for every TWC employee to complete the training emphasizes that customer service is and will always be one of the agency's key priorities.

### *Next Steps*

TWC will continue quarterly customer service surveys, as well as look at opportunities to improve these surveys.

Customer satisfaction is a priority for the Texas Workforce Commission, the local workforce development boards, and other statewide partners.

In its efforts to make all processes more user friendly, TWC is continuously reviewing and revising all correspondence and updating our online Tax and UI systems as well as WorkInTexas.com.

<p align="center"><b>Standard Customer Service Performance Measures</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>FY 2009 - 2010</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Outcome Measures</b></p> <p>Satisfaction index scores of online-surveyed customers responding who express overall satisfaction with services received</p> <p>Percentage of surveyed customers responding who identify ways to improve service delivery</p> <p>Average hold time for customers filing Unemployment Insurance initial claims using Tele-Centers (April 1, 2008 through March 1, 2010)</p> <p>Percent of external written and electronic complaints and concerns acknowledged within five business days and telephone calls within one day</p>	<p align="center">Employers and Participants 84.99%</p> <p align="center">5%</p> <p align="center">9.39 minutes</p> <p align="center">99%</p>
<p align="center"><b>Output Measures</b></p> <p>Number of Customers Responding to Survey</p> <p>Number of Customers Served</p>	<p align="center">8,589</p> <p align="center">2 million</p>
<p align="center"><b>Efficiency Measures</b></p> <p>Cost per Customer Survey</p>	<p align="center">\$4.07</p>
<p align="center"><b>Explanatory Measures</b></p> <p>Number of Customers Identified</p> <p>Number of Customer Groups Inventoried</p>	<p align="center">Potentially all Texans</p> <p align="center">Three Customer Groups Employers, Workers, and Communities</p>

## *Customer-related Performance Measure Definitions*

### **Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents Expressing Overall Satisfaction with Services Received**

Short Definition: Number of respondents to the survey question expressing no dissatisfaction with Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) services.

Purpose/Importance: The purpose is to measure the level of customer satisfaction in order to gauge attainment of customer services goals. We are committed to providing effective and efficient service to all customers; therefore, we are continuously seeking ways to improve service delivery, customer satisfaction, and overall performance.

Source/Collection of Data: Employers and job seekers complete a survey instrument on our Web site. In addition to the previously cited surveys, other surveys may be identified as a result of state and federal mandates or other Commission initiatives.

Method of Calculation: The number of customers expressing satisfaction with our services is divided by the total number of respondents to the survey to obtain the percentage.

Data Limitations: TWC serves a universal population of approximately 2 million customers, but only a certain percentage of those customers will respond to surveys. At no time will it be possible to obtain a 100 percent response rate. The frequency may vary as a result of the number of responses reported quarterly. This would be contingent on the valid responses completed and received to date. The reported number may change because of late responses to questions.

Calculation Type: Noncumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than the target

## **Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents Identifying Ways to Improve Service Delivery**

Short Definition: The percentage of customers identifying ways to improve service delivery.

Purpose/Importance: The purpose is to seek ways to improve service delivery, customer satisfaction, and overall performance continuously.

Source/Collection of Data: Employers and job seekers complete a survey instrument on our Web site. In addition to the previously cited surveys, other surveys may be identified as a result of state and federal mandates or other Commission initiatives. Once the results from these surveys are collected and analyzed, they are entered into a database from which specific information is extracted.

Method of Calculation: The percent is the total number of customers identifying ways to improve service delivery divided by the total number of respondents to the survey.

Data Limitations: TWC serves a universal population of approximately 2 million customers, but only a certain percentage of those customers will respond to surveys. At no time will it be possible to obtain a 100 percent response rate. The frequency may vary as a result of the number of responses reported quarterly. This would be contingent on the valid responses completed and received to date. The reported number may change because of late responses to questions.

Calculation Type: Noncumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than the target.

## **Percent of External Written and Electronic Complaints and Concerns Acknowledged within Five Business Days and Telephone Calls within One Day**

Short Definition: The percent of acknowledgements to written and electronic complaints, and concerns that are made within five business days and telephone calls that are acknowledged within one day.

Purpose/Importance: The purpose of this measure is to gauge whether we are acknowledging complaints and concerns in a timely manner. We are committed to providing effective and efficient service to all customers; therefore, it is our goal to respond to customers as soon as possible.

Source/Collection of Data: Written, electronic, and telephone complaints are received from external customers and distributed to all TWC departments, including the Customer Relations Department. Once the department resolves the complaint or concern, all information, including the dates received and addressed, is sent to the Customer Relations Department for entry into the TWC complaint-tracking database.

Method of Calculation: Add the total number of complaints entered in the database; calculate the number that has been acknowledged within five business days for written and electronic correspondence and one day for telephone calls. For the percentage, divide the number satisfying the time limits by the total number of complaints and concerns entered into the database.

Data Limitations: None

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than the target

## ***Output Measures***

### **Number of Customers Surveyed**

Short Definition: This is a tally of the total number of individuals or entities responding to survey instruments or customer evaluations conducted by or for TWC.

Purpose/Importance: The purpose of this measure is to obtain a representative sample of different customers surveyed. It is important to ensure statistical reliability.

Source/Collection of Data: Employers and job seekers complete a survey instrument on our Web site. Customer service evaluations are conducted on behalf of TWC. In addition to the previously cited surveys, other surveys may be identified as a result of state and federal mandates or other Commission initiatives. Once the results from these surveys are collected and analyzed, they are entered into a database from which specific information is extracted.

Method of Calculation: The numbers reported are the sum of the total number of all valid responses received during the reporting period.

Data Limitations: TWC serves a universal population of approximately 2 million customers, but only a certain percentage of those customers will respond to surveys. At no time will it be possible to obtain a 100 percent response rate. The frequency may vary as a result of the number of responses reported quarterly. This would be contingent on the valid responses completed and received to date. The reported number may change because of late responses to questions.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Increase survey participation

### **Number of Customers Served**

Short Definition: This is the total number of customers who receive services and information from TWC.

Purpose/Importance: The purpose is to identify the universe from which the survey samples are drawn. We are committed to providing effective and efficient service to all customers; therefore, we are continuously seeking ways to improve service delivery, customer satisfaction, and overall performance.

Source/Collection of Data: The data for this measure is a combination of employers and general workforce customers. General workforce customers include not only those voluntary participants in activities, but also UI claimants who are required to register for

work. The data for the number of employers is collected from status reports processed by the TWC Tax Department.

The data for the number of general workforce customers is a count of the number of participants during the reporting period. Data for this measure was collected by field staff and entered into WorkInTexas.com on the TWC mainframe. In order to be included in the count, an individual must be an active applicant for services at some time during the reporting period.

Method of Calculation: The employers' data and the general workforce client's data are added together to derive the total number of customers served for the reporting period.

Data Limitations: Data are limited to the universe of liable employers that have been identified and registered by the Tax Department. Unidentified and/or unregistered liable employers are not included.

Calculation Type: Noncumulative

New Measures: No

Desired Performance: To serve more customers

## ***Explanatory Measures***

### **Number of Customers Identified**

Short Definition: This is the total number of customers who could receive TWC services.

Purpose/Importance: This measure provides background information about the scope and breadth of TWC's services and sets the context for other measures.

Source/Collection of Data: TWC provides universality through our programs and, as a result, all Texans could receive services of some kind.

Method of Calculation: The reported numbers are obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau's most recent reported figures.

Data Limitations: Not applicable

Calculation Type: Noncumulative

New Measures: No

Desired Performance: None; explanatory measures provide no contextual background and do not result from TWC actions.

### **Number of Customer Groups Inventoried**

Short Definition: As directed in enabling legislation, statutory requirements, performance measures, and the mission statement, TWC serves three groups of customers: employers, workers, and communities.

Purpose/Importance: The purpose of this measure is to provide general information in regard to the scope and breadth of TWC's customers. The importance of this measure is to set the context for other measures.

Source/Collection of Data: Legislation, TWC's mission

Method of Calculation: This is the total number of groups identified in TWC's mission.

Data Limitations: Not applicable

Calculation Type: Noncumulative

New Measures: No

Desired Performance: Not applicable





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