

Texas Workforce Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Texas Workforce Commission Welcomes Programs from the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services

AUSTIN – The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) today welcomes four programs previously operated by the [Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services \(DARS\)](#) to the Texas Workforce Solutions system. These programs include Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services for individuals who are blind, including the Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center; VR services for individuals with other disabilities; the Business Enterprises of Texas program; and Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who are Blind.

“We are proud to welcome these programs and staff to the Texas Workforce Commission,” said TWC Chairman Andres Alcantar. “These programs will build on our efforts to connect Texas employers with skilled workers and to assist Texans in successfully pursuing their career goals.”

More than 1,860 employees will join the Texas Workforce Solutions partnership that includes TWC, 28 local workforce development boards and adult education partners throughout the state. TWC has worked closely with the staff transferring from DARS for the past year to prepare for the transition, which is occurring smoothly with no disruption of services to consumers.

“The programs transitioning from DARS to TWC will help provide career opportunities that lead to independence and prosperity for all Texans,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Employers Ruth R. Hughs. “This will continue our mission to promote and support a workforce system that creates value and offers employers, individuals and communities the opportunity to achieve economic prosperity.”

While vocational rehabilitation counselors and other program staff become TWC employees, most will continue to operate in their current locations until they can be fully integrated with Workforce Solutions offices over the next several years.

“As we add these programs, we will work with local Workforce Solutions offices for a successful transition,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Julian Alvarez. “We welcome these programs to TWC and we look forward to providing Texans with the skills needed to succeed in the Texas labor force.”

Consumers of DARS programs will continue to be served by those same individuals they were working with before the transition of services to TWC, as their caseworkers and services have also transferred. Consumer services will continue without interruption and DARS program participants will benefit from an expanded network of employment connections through Texas Workforce Solutions.

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DARS Program Transition

The co-location of VR staff and services with Workforce Solutions offices will be completed efficiently and effectively, to ensure the best possible outcomes for program participants. Due to varying lease expirations of current DARS field offices, this transition is likely to extend over the next several years. Throughout this time, the team approach to service delivery will continue as the focus.

TWC commissioners prepared a [video welcome message](#) for DARS staff and consumers. For the visually impaired, a [fully accessible version](#) of the video is also available. Online resources associated with the programs transitioning to TWC will be available on the [TWC website](#).

Most direct phone numbers for transferring staff will remain the same as before the transition. Individuals with questions about DARS programs moving to TWC should continue to use the existing inquiries phone number, 800-628-5115.

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The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the services it offers in coordination with its network of local workforce development boards, call 512-463-8942 or visit www.texasworkforce.org. To receive notifications about TWC programs and services subscribe to our [email updates](#).