

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS TEXOMA POLICIES & PROCEDURES

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CHAPTER 8 - PROGRAM SERVICES

SECTION - 12 RE-INTEGRATION OF OFFENDERS (RIO)

Texas Workforce Commission Rule Chapter 847-
Project RIO Employment Activities and Support Services

Adopted 6/25/06

and

Workforce Solutions Texoma Policies 8.12.1 – 8.12.14

CHAPTER 847 PROJECT RIO EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORT SERVICES

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

§847.1 Purpose

§847.2 Definitions

§847.3 General Board Responsibilities

WST Policy 8.12.1 Adoption of TWC Rule Chapter 847

**WST Policy 8.12.2 WST Board Responsibilities & Service
Delivery Strategy**

8.12.2.1 RIO Outreach

WST Policy 8.12.3 RIO Program Monitoring

WST Policy 8.12.4 TDCJ and TYC Notice

WST Policy 8.12.5 RIO Adult Participants' Employer Notice

WST Policy 8.12.6 RIO Youth Confidentiality

SUBCHAPTER B. PROJECT RIO JOB SEEKER RESPONSIBILITIES

§847.11 Job Seeker Responsibilities

§847.12 Job Seeker Failure to Comply

WST Policy 8.12.7 RIO Failure to Participate

8.12.7.1 TDCJ Parole Division Contact

8.12.7.2 Documentation

SUBCHAPTER C. PROJECT RIO SERVICES

§847.21 Job Seeker Assessment

WST Policy 8.12.8 RIO Assessment

§847.22 Job Seeker Individual Employment Plan

WST Policy 8.12.9 RIO IEP

SUBCHAPTER D. PROJECT RIO EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

§847.31 Employment Activities for Project RIO Job Seekers

WST Policy 8.12.10 RIO Employment Activities

8.12.10.1 TWIST Reports

SUBCHAPTER E. PROJECT RIO SUPPORT SERVICES

§847.41 Provision of Project RIO Support Services

WST Policy 8.12.11 RIO Supportive Services

SUBCHAPTER F. EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS

§847.51 Use of Funds

WST Policy 8.12.12 RIO Funds Expenditures

WST Policy 8.12.13 RIO Reporting Requirements

8.12.13.1 Documentation and Tracking

8.12.13.2 Reporting

8.12.13.3 Program Materials

WST Policy 8.12.14 RIO Complaints, Hearings, and Appeals

CHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

§847.1 Purpose.

- (a) Purpose. The purpose of Project RIO is to provide a statewide employment referral program designed to reintegrate into the labor force persons sentenced to a Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) correctional institution and persons committed to the Texas Youth Commission (TYC).
- (b) Scope of Rules. The Project RIO standards and guidelines, set forth in this chapter, address the roles and responsibilities of Boards to ensure that Project RIO employment activities and support services are available statewide through the Texas Workforce Centers consistent with 40 TAC Chapter 801 relating to the One-Stop Service Delivery Network. Project RIO employment activities and support services are provided to adult and youth offenders before release by TDCJ and TYC. Post-release employment activities and support services are provided through the Texas Workforce Centers, and are designed to provide ex-offenders with employment activities and support services that promote employment, meet the needs of Texas employers, and help reduce recidivism. The provisions in this chapter are intended to be consistent with Texas Labor Code, Chapter 306; Texas Government Code §2308.312; and the Agency's memorandum of understanding with TDCJ and TYC.
- (c) Funding Integration. The Commission intends, to the greatest extent possible, to integrate all available funding sources in the delivery of Project RIO services, and support and expand Project RIO services by ensuring that ex-offenders and adjudicated youth have access to the full range of employment and training activities provided by the One-Stop Service Delivery Network.

§847.2 Definitions.

The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

- (1) Project RIO job seeker -- an individual involved with the Texas criminal or juvenile justice systems that may include the following:
 - (A) Adults who were sentenced to a TDCJ correctional institution, and are within one year after their release from incarceration, or are currently under or within one year of completion of their term of parole supervision by TDCJ; and
 - (B) Adjudicated youth ages 16 through 21, seeking employment activities and support services, who were formerly confined in a TYC correctional institution.
- (2) TDCJ -- the Texas Department of Criminal Justice is the state agency that manages the overall operations of the state's prison, parole, and state jail systems.

- (3) TYC -- the Texas Youth Commission is the state's juvenile corrections agency that manages the overall operations of the state's youth correctional institutions and parole operations.
- (4) Windham School District -- the school district that is responsible for providing academic as well as career and technology education to eligible offenders incarcerated in TDCJ correctional institutions.

§847.3. General Board Responsibilities.

- (a) **Role of Boards.** A Board shall ensure that Project RIO job seekers (i.e., individuals referred by TDCJ and TYC, as well as self-referred individuals) participate in employment activities and support services, as appropriate. Boards shall determine the level of staff assistance that Project RIO job seekers require to assist them in obtaining employment. Boards may provide graduated levels of workforce services, as defined in §801.28 of this title, based upon the job seekers' needs. Boards providing graduated services shall ensure Project RIO job seekers who are unable to secure employment through the provision of core services are provided with intensive or training services to assist them in obtaining suitable employment. The employment activities and support services, as defined in this chapter, should meet the needs of local employers, prepare Project RIO job seekers to compete in the labor market, and assist ex-offenders and adjudicated youth in obtaining employment.
- (b) **Board Planning.** A Board shall develop, amend, and modify its Integrated Plan to incorporate and coordinate the design and management of the delivery of Project RIO employment activities and support services with the delivery of other workforce employment, training, and educational services identified in Texas Government Code §2308.251 *et seq.*, Texas Government Code §2308.312 *et seq.*, as well as other employment and training services included in the One-Stop Service Delivery Network as set forth in Chapter 801 of this title.

The Commission's intent is to assist Project RIO job seekers with securing employment as quickly as possible; however, Project RIO - Youth may need basic skills training and education to secure employment. Specifically, Boards shall consider integration with WIA Youth services or other funding sources, as appropriate, for assisting Project RIO - Youth with obtaining the basic General Educational Development (GED) credential or basic skills training.

- (c) **Board Coordination.** The Boards shall coordinate with the following entities to ensure the transition to employment of Project RIO job seekers:
 - (1) **Parole Supervising Offices.** A Board shall coordinate the provision of Project RIO employment activities and support services with the referring TDCJ or TYC supervising office. This coordination shall ensure that the supervising office is made aware of the results of the initial referral for Project RIO services, as well as periodic updates on program participation status as determined appropriate for the individual.

- (2) Correctional Institutions. A Board shall ensure that Texas Workforce Center staff who are assisting Project RIO job seekers coordinate the provision of Project RIO employment activities and support services with TDCJ and TYC correctional institutions by utilizing the data and resources developed prior to the offender's or adjudicated youth's release. This coordination shall ensure that post-release Project RIO activities and services build upon and complement the services provided in the correctional institutions.

- (3) Windham School District. Boards shall coordinate on an ongoing and continuing basis with Windham School District by providing labor market information related to their local workforce development area (workforce area), including current and emerging jobs, in order that Windham School District may better meet the needs of Texas employers through education and training services. Additionally, Boards shall ensure that Texas Workforce Center staff who are assisting Project RIO job seekers fully incorporate in Project RIO job seekers' Individual Employment Plans (IEPs), as set forth in §847.22 of this chapter, the education and training received during incarceration in order to maximize employment referrals that are directly related to that education and training.

- (4) Memoranda of Understanding. Pursuant to coordination efforts, Boards shall develop memoranda of understanding with TDCJ, TYC, and the Windham School District establishing the systems, structures, and processes for the provision of Project RIO services. The memoranda of understanding must include, but are not limited to, procedures for the following activities:
 - (A) Referral coordination for parolees or adjudicated youth;
 - (B) Progress reporting related to job seeker status and services received; and
 - (C) The provision of labor market information to the Windham School District.

- (5) Other Partners. For the purposes of ensuring that Project RIO job seekers have the necessary support services available to them to enable successful entry into the labor force, a Board shall develop cooperative agreements and service arrangements meeting the requirements of Texas Labor Code §306.007(a).

- (d) Service Delivery Strategies. A Board shall develop a Project RIO Service Delivery Strategy, which may include the provision of graduated levels of workforce services, as set forth in §801.28 of this title, based upon the needs of Project RIO job seekers. Boards shall provide intensive or training services, as appropriate, to Project RIO job seekers who receive core services but were unable to secure employment. Boards shall fully incorporate and ensure the following additional elements:
 - (1) The efficient delivery and linkage of Project RIO employment activities and support services within the workforce area's One-Stop Service Delivery Network with other employment and training services funded through the Texas Workforce Centers;

- (2) A point of contact for TDCJ and TYC supervising offices to facilitate the exchange of information regarding the Project RIO job seeker's progress toward securing employment and related participation information;
- (3) The outreach of Project RIO job seekers at TDCJ and TYC supervising offices;
- (4) The participation of the One-Stop Service Delivery Network in job fairs/career days held in TDCJ and TYC correctional institutions;
- (5) The timely and accurate reporting of data reflecting Project RIO service provision as well as the status of referrals for service;
- (6) All performance standards are met, as developed by the Commission; and
- (7) The performance of any other duties, as required by the Commission, necessary to implement the intent of Texas Labor Code, Chapter 306.

WST POLICY 8.12.1 ADOPTION OF TWC RULE CHAPTER 847

The Workforce Solutions Texoma (hereinafter referred to as WST) agrees to adopt all of Texas Workforce Commission's Rule Chapter 847 and procedural information contained in WD Letters [31-0351-04](#) and 48-05 pertaining to the Project Re-Integration of Offenders (Project RIO) as policy. WST's additional policy references are intended to clarify local policy with regard to these Rules.

WST POLICY 8.12.2 WST BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES & SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

In accordance with §847.3, WST supports ensuring that individuals referred by the TDCJ and the TYC, and Project RIO job seekers are provided opportunities to participate in Project RIO employment activities and support services as well as additional workforce activities and support services, as appropriate. The WST staff and service providers will adhere to all state and federal statutes, regulations, and rules in development and implementation of the Project RIO program. It is the policy of the WST that all customers are treated in a fair, equitable manner and that a nondiscrimination and equal opportunity policy is followed. The WST is committed to ensuring that customers in the Texoma Board area have equal access to all services, programs, and facilities. It is WST's policy that no customer will be denied access or services on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, or belief. Refer to WST Equal Opportunity Policy, [Chapter 16, at 8.1](#) for additional equal opportunity policy and procedures.

WST's strategic planning process incorporates researching, developing, and publishing a list of demand occupations on an at least yearly basis. WST's Business Services Unit will coordinate with local employers through board-sponsored meetings, informal meetings, and individual meetings to develop opportunities to assist Project RIO

customers with opportunities for early attachment to the labor force. WST service providers will develop procedures to ensure that the work first philosophy in the integrated one-stop setting is pursued for all Project RIO participants. Pursuant to WD Commission rule §847.3(c) and WD 48-05, WST service providers must establish ongoing coordination, good working relationships, and opportunities for coordinated case management with TDCJ - Parole Supervising Office staff, TDCJ – Institutional Division staff, TDCJ – State Jail Division staff, and TYC Office Staff, and additional local partners that could assist Project RIO customers with their employment goals that will support effective joint referral strategies. A current MOU will be maintained between WST and the TDCJ, the TYC, and the Windham School District, WST to establish the parameters of Project RIO service coordination which includes: referral coordination for parolees and adjudicated youth; appropriate handling of employment documents obtained during incarceration; and progress reports on RIO participants' status. To support WST's work first design, ongoing coordination and working relationships will be established with local entities, such as the local housing authorities, Texas Health and Human Services Commission, substance abuse and mental health providers, and family services agencies to assist Project RIO customers in overcoming barriers to employment. In addition, Project RIO customers will be screened for access to additional one-stop partner activities/services, such as the WIA Adult and Youth Programs and the SNAP E&T Program, which can assist in their progress toward employment.

WST's workforce centers are staffed with the highest quality staff and resources available to assist customers to access employment. Resource room access and services, specialized screening and referral services, group and individual activities, and an Individualized Employment Plan (IEP), are combined to provide Project RIO customers with the tools and skills needed to access employment opportunities as an alternative to public assistance. WST's work first service delivery approach supports all Project RIO customers in accessing early attachment to employment through use of community collaborative opportunities and specialized WFC services including assessments, specialized job assistance services, support services, Individualized Family Employment Plan (IFEP), referrals to local work-oriented educational and training opportunities, and intensive case management. All program activities are designed to assist Project RIO customers in finding and retaining employment as soon as possible.

Pursuant to WD 47-09, Project RIO customers may attend stand-alone English as a Second Language (ESL) classes provided they are linked directly to job readiness or employment activities. WST has established local-area partnerships with Grayson County College (GCC) who offers ESL classes in all three counties in the WST area and the Fannin Literacy Council, which offers ESL classes in Fannin County. In compliance with WD 47-09, ESL classes should be directly linked to job readiness or employment. In addition, ESL instruction should be part of a continuum of services leading to employment and noted as such on the customers employment plan. In support of this requirement, the service provider must document participation in job training services and when ESL classes are provided in relation to other services. WST Service provider is referred to WD 47-09 to develop procedures to assist Project RIO customers with their ESL needs.

In accordance with §847.3(d), WST contractor staff will develop procedures to ensure that the eligibility of program participants and that programmatic documents are correctly completed and routed to appropriate individuals and data entry of required programmatic elements is accomplished in order to meet performance requirements. In addition, WST contractor staff will ensure that a point of contact is designated for the TDCJ Parole Division and on-going communication occurs to facilitate Project RIO customers' employment goals. Staff will also participate in any local TDCJ facility job fairs/career days.

Service provider is referred to WD 38-09 for details on appropriate data entry of ONET and CIP codes for training services on customers co-enrolled in WIA. In addition, pursuant to WD 33-07, WST service provider will ensure training codes and information is correctly entered into TWIST in the Service Detail window. Also, service provider will ensure that the correct service completion reason and date is entered to close the training component. Service provider shall adhere to all data entry deadlines noted in WD 41-09.

8.12.2.1 RIO Outreach

Potential RIO customers will be outreached via TWIST scheduler on at least a monthly basis. WST Service provider will develop procedures to ensure that Outreach is conducted in all counties to ensure Project RIO services are offered to the maximum amount of available parolees each month.

- (e) Access to Project RIO Employment Activities and Support Services. A Board shall ensure that the oversight and monitoring of program requirements and participant activities occur on an ongoing basis, as determined appropriate by the Board, and consist of the following:
- (1) tracking and reporting, as required by the Commission, of employment activities and support services, including appropriate data relating to referrals, placements, specialized on-the-job training, and completion of training, such as GED completion, college credit and noncredit course accomplishments, or other data, as applicable;
 - (2) determining and arranging for any referrals to support services needed to assist the Project RIO job seeker in complying with Project RIO employment activities to address barriers to employment; and
 - (3) ensuring progress toward achieving employment and the goals and objectives in the Project RIO job seeker's IEP, as set forth in §847.22 of this chapter.

WST POLICY 8.12.3 RIO PROGRAM MONITORING

In accordance with §847.3(e), WST Service Provider will provide internal monitoring of Project RIO customers and their activities as needed. In addition, WST Service Providers will develop internal monitoring procedures to cover all areas contained in

§847.3(e)(1-3). WST Service Providers should perform internal monitoring of a sample of RIO cases on an at least monthly basis and documentation of same should be made in each individual case file in the TWIST case notes. Said report will be made available to WST monitoring staff upon request. WST monitoring staff will monitor all aspects of the RIO program as specified in §847.3(e)(1-3), with a focus on holistic case management to include data entry of all aspects of the program and programmatic compliance of local, state, and federal policy.

WST monitoring of RIO cases will be performed in accordance with the WST Monitoring Policy, which is located in Chapter 6 of the WST Policies and Procedures.

- (f) TDCJ and TYC Notice. A Board shall ensure that notification to the supervising office is made in a timely manner if Texas Workforce Center staff becomes aware of a job seeker's failure to comply with the job seeker responsibilities, as set forth in §847.11 of this chapter.

WST POLICY 8.12.4 TDCJ AND TYC NOTICE

WST Service Provider will ensure the TDCJ Parole Division and/or TYC is contacted within 48 working hours if a Project RIO participant fails to comply with the job seeker responsibilities specified in §847.3e(3), §847.3f and WST Policy 8.12.7. Documentation of said contacts should be placed in TWIST case notes. In addition, ongoing communication with the TDCJ Parole Officer will be maintained throughout all aspects of service delivery, including, but not limited to, enrollment, employment, loss of employment, and attendance at required group or individual meetings with case management staff.

- (g) Employer Notice. A Board shall ensure that employers are informed at the time of the employment referral of the Project RIO job seeker's status as an ex-offender and the availability of Work Opportunity Tax Credits and fidelity bonding services.

WST POLICY 8.12.5 RIO ADULT PARTICIPANTS' EMPLOYER NOTICE

WST Service Providers will ensure that Project RIO adult participants are referred to suitable employment opportunities as identified by customer assessment, training, skills, and conditions of release. Upon employment referrals, Service Provider's case management staff will ensure that employers are notified of the participant's ex-offender status, the availability of Work Opportunity Tax Credits and the availability of Fidelity Bonding opportunities as outlined in §847.3g. TWIST case note documentation of all referrals and contacts is required.

- (h) Youth Confidentiality. All information regarding the adjudicated status of a youth shall be held in strict confidence and shall not be disclosed to any other entity or person. A Board shall ensure that employment referrals for adjudicated youth are made in accordance with the confidentiality requirements set forth in state statutes, state rules, and Commission policies.

WST POLICY 8.12.6 RIO YOUTH CONFIDENTIALITY

In accordance with §847.3h and WD Letter 48-05, WST Service Provider staff will maintain strict confidentiality concerning adjudicated youth information. In addition, pursuant to [the Attachment A-4.2-to-in](#) the current WST RIO Contract, all WST and Contractor staff who are in receipt of information related to TYC referrals must execute the “Confidentiality Agreement Relating to Release of Information Under 58.005, Texas Family Code” form to ensure confidentiality of youth records. This signed confidentiality form for both Board and Contractor staff will be maintained in each office’s respective HR department and will be available for monitoring purposes. Also, pursuant to the current TWC RIO Contract with WST, WST Service Provider will develop procedures that will assure full compliance with confidentiality requirements of Family Code §58.005 related to the provision of Project RIO services to youth that are referred by the TYC.

SUBCHAPTER B. PROJECT RIO JOB SEEKER RESPONSIBILITIES

§847.11. Job Seeker Responsibilities.

A Board shall ensure that Texas Workforce Center staff who are assisting Project RIO job seekers make Project RIO job seekers aware of the requirement to comply with the following provisions:

- (1) participate in employment activities as described in §847.31 of this chapter;
- (2) comply with the IEP, as set forth in §847.22 of this chapter;
- (3) attend scheduled Project RIO appointments;
- (4) notify the Texas Workforce Center, or the Board's designated service provider, upon securing employment;
- (5) participate in or receive support services as described in §847.22 and §847.41 of this chapter, necessary to enable the Project RIO job seekers to work or participate in employment activities, including counseling, treatment, and vocational or physical rehabilitation;
- (6) be free of outstanding warrants and not in pre-revocation status; and
- (7) be drug-free and comply with other terms or conditions of parole.

WST POLICY 8.12.7 RIO FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE

8.12.7.1 TDCJ Parole Division Contact

WST Service Provider will ensure the TDCJ Parole Division is contacted within 48 working hours if a Project RIO participant fails to comply with the job seeker responsibilities or the Individual Employment Plan, as specified in §847.3e(3),f, 847.12, and WST Policies 8.12.4 and 8.12.8.

8.12.7.2 Documentation

TWIST case note documentation of all referrals and contacts is required.

§847.12. Job Seeker Failure to Comply.

Project RIO job seekers who fail to meet the job seeker responsibilities, as set forth in §847.11 of this subchapter, may be deemed ineligible for Project RIO employment activities and support services, and such participation status shall be reported to the TDCJ or TYC supervising office when Texas Workforce Center staff becomes aware of a failure to comply. Failure to comply, as determined by the Texas Workforce Center, or the Board's designated service provider, includes but is not limited to:

- (1) failing to report for two scheduled interviews;
- (2) turning down a position of employment that is consistent with the skills possessed by the Project RIO job seeker;
- (3) quitting an employment activity without cause; or
- (4) being terminated from a job for misconduct.

SUBCHAPTER C. PROJECT RIO SERVICES

§847.21. Job Seeker Assessment.

- (a) Boards shall ensure that Texas Workforce Center staff who are providing intensive or training services to Project RIO job seekers perform initial and ongoing assessments to determine the employability and retention needs of Project RIO job seekers.
- (b) Project RIO job seekers who are unable to secure employment through core services shall receive an assessment of their knowledge, skills, and abilities as well as potential barriers to securing and retaining employment, such as:
 - (1) information identified in the assessments provided by agency partners, which includes background information relating to education and vocational skills training obtained while incarcerated, employment history, academic achievements, and past skills attainments;
 - (2) other skills and abilities, employment, and educational history in relation to employers' workforce needs in the local labor market;
 - (3) support services needs; and
 - (4) family circumstances that may affect participation, including the existence of domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental illness, or the need for parenting skills training, which, if identified, may require coordination through the parole or contracted parole office, as one of the factors considered in evaluating employability.
- (c) Assessments, as set forth in subsection 847.21(b) of this section, shall result in the development of an IEP, as described in §847.22 of this subchapter.

WST POLICY 8.12.8 RIO ASSESSMENT

Pursuant to §847.21 and WD Letter 48-05, WST Service Providers will ensure Project RIO customers are thoroughly assessed in areas noted in §847.21(b)(1-4). Assessment services will be offered to RIO customers in an individualized, as needed basis, with a focus on early attachment to the labor force. Assessment opportunities should be utilized to assist the RIO customer in obtaining or maintaining employment and self-sufficiency. It is important that opportunities for assessment continue throughout the customer's job search activities. Information obtained from assessments should be utilized to construct and update the customer's Individual Employment Plan. RIO customers will be screened for appropriateness of additional workforce center programs such as SNAP E&T and WIA. TWIST case note documentation of all customer contact on a weekly basis is required.

§847.22. Job Seeker Individual Employment Plan

Boards shall ensure that Texas Workforce Center staff develops IEPs for Project RIO job seekers who are unable to secure employment through core services, documents that Project RIO job seekers have been informed of their job seeker responsibilities, and that

IEPs:

- (1) incorporate information provided by the referring agency partner, including any IEPs provided while in a TDCJ or TYC correctional institution;
- (2) identify and coordinate the provision of services available through the Texas Workforce Centers;
- (3) are based on assessments, as described in §847.21 of this subchapter;
- (4) contain any prevocational goals established for Project RIO - Youth participants while in a TYC correctional institution;
- (5) contain employment goals to meet the needs of the local labor market;
- (6) allow Project RIO job seekers to find and secure employment that utilizes their skills;
- (7) meet the needs of employers by linking and matching the skills of Project RIO job seekers to the job-skills requirements of the employers;
- (8) include strategies for addressing barriers identified in the assessment; and
- (9) are signed by the Project RIO job seekers.

WST POLICY 8.12.9 RIO IEP

In accordance with Commission Rule §847.21 and 22 and WD Letter 48-05, WST Service Providers will create Individualized Employment Plans (IEP) for all Project RIO customers that support a work-first approach. IEPs will be created in conjunction with RIO customer input and will be signed by both the RIO customer and the case manager. IEPs must be based on assessment results and customer input, and will include strategies for addressing any barriers identified in said assessment. Information provided by TDCJ and TYC, including individual employment planning and prevocational goals established during participant's residency in TDCJ and TYC facilities, will be incorporated into said IEP. IEPs will also identify and coordinate the provision of services available through the workforce centers; contain employment goals that meet the needs of the local labor market; allow RIO participants the ability to find and secure employment that uses their skills; and links and matches RIO participants skills to potential employers' job skill requirements. IEPs will be updated as needed to reflect provision of additional intensive services for customers who have not located employment during the initial 30 days of employment, or sooner, if needed, and will reflect continued support of the employment planning process.

SUBCHAPTER D. PROJECT RIO EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

§847.31. Employment Activities for Project RIO Job Seekers.

- (a) Boards shall ensure that employment activities are provided for Project RIO job seekers, as determined by the Texas Workforce Center, or the Board's designated service provider, which may include the provision of graduated services, as set forth in §801.28 of this title.
- (b) Boards may provide self-directed or staff-assisted job search and job readiness services, which incorporate the following:
 - (1) information and referral to employment opportunities;
 - (2) job-skills assessment;
 - (3) counseling;
 - (4) occupational exploration, including information on local emerging and demand occupations;
 - (5) interviewing skills and practice interviews;
 - (6) assistance with applications and resumes; and
 - (7) guidance and motivation for development of positive work behaviors necessary for the labor market.
- (c) Boards shall ensure that staff-assisted referrals to employment opportunities are based on the Project RIO job seeker's assessment, training, skills, and conditions of release. The referrals to jobs may be restricted to certain available employment based on:
 - (1) recommendations from the agency partners, including the applicable parole office or contracted parole office;
 - (2) consideration of factors that may increase the likelihood of success of the individual in retaining employment; or
 - (3) consideration of factors that may help reduce the likelihood of recidivism.

- (d) In order to maximize the opportunities for Project RIO job seekers to secure employment, Boards shall ensure that other employment and training activities available through the One-Stop Service Delivery Network and paid for with funds other than Project RIO funds are considered and provided as deemed appropriate by the Texas Workforce Center, or the Board's designated service provider

WST POLICY 8.12.10 RIO EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

WST Service Providers will ensure that appropriate employment activities are made available for Project RIO participants as outlined in §847.31.

Project RIO job seekers who are not dually enrolled in the HHSC SNAP E&T program or are dually enrolled in the HHSC SNAP E&T program as “General Population” have no restrictions on the amount of time they can participate in job search activities.

However, WST Service Provider will ensure that Project RIO job seekers who are dually enrolled in the HHSC SNAP E&T program as an “Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD)” are limited to four weeks of SNAP E&T funded job search activities.

Project RIO participants who are dually enrolled in the SNAP E&T ABAWD program and who have completed 4 weeks of job search activities are required to participate in the “workfare” component of the SNAP E&T program until employed or no longer eligible for the SNAP E&T program. In addition, these customers may participate in additional job search activities through the Project RIO program.

8.12.10.1 TWIST Reports

WST Service Provider will utilize available TWIST reports to monitor, evaluate and, if indicated, modify Project RIO participant’s service delivery plan.

SUBCHAPTER E. PROJECT RIO SUPPORT SERVICES

§847.41. Provision of Project RIO Support Services.

- (a) Boards shall ensure that support services, which address barriers to employment, participation in employment services, and post-employment support services needs, are provided to a Project RIO job seeker as determined by the Boards' policies and **IEPs**, and the Texas Workforce Centers, or the Boards' designated service providers.
- (b) Boards shall ensure that referrals to support services as specified in the memorandum of understanding referenced in Texas Labor Code §306.004, §306.005, and §306.007 are made for Project RIO job seekers.

- (c) Boards shall ensure that referrals are made, as determined appropriate by the Texas Workforce Centers, or the Boards' designated service providers, to other available support services, including low-income housing, application for food stamp benefits, low-cost medical assistance, substance abuse treatment, counseling, vocational or physical rehabilitation, and other services.
- (d) Boards shall ensure that hiring incentives are made available for Project RIO job seekers, to include:
 - (1) Work Opportunity Tax Credits screening and conditional certification; and
 - (2) fidelity bonding services, which are available through the Agency.

WST POLICY 8.12.11 RIO SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

WST will provide support services in accordance with §847.41. Supportive services will only be provided to participants who are participating in allowable job search and job readiness activities as outlined in §847.31. Documentation must be maintained that provided support services are related to Project RIO programmatic participation. Allowable supportive services will be provided upon the request of the customer if no local alternative or local funding is available and will be determined on a case-by-case basis throughout the ongoing assessment process.

In accordance with §847.41(d) and WD Letter 48-05, case management staff must ensure that hiring incentives are made available for Project RIO customers. In addition, Project RIO participants must be informed of the benefits of the Work Opportunity Tax Credits (WOTC) and fidelity bonding service, and this must be verified in the case notes or elsewhere in the file. Documentation of availability and utilization of WOTC, Fidelity Bonding, and other hiring incentives must be maintained in case notes. WST service provider is referred to TA Bulletin 91 and 93 for information about automated WOTC conditional certifications. WST Service Provider will comply with the newly-outlined WOTC process as outlined in WD 28-08. Conditional Certifications will be completed electronically using the TWC's WOTC ES77 database, as per WD 28-08. WST Service Provider will ensure all aspects of issuance of the conditional certification process as identified in WD 28-08 is followed.

In accordance with WD 48-05, WST Service Provider will ensure that Business Services representatives support the offer of WOTC and fidelity bonding services to Texoma area employers and details of this information are noted in the employer's WorkInTexas Notes section.

Supportive services are reserved for use of participants in compliance with employment-related activities only. WST service providers will take action immediately to terminate supportive services for Project RIO participants who are not in programmatic compliance. Immediately is defined as the first time a customer misses an appointment or scheduled activity without good cause or notification to the career specialist, or the first time the career specialist is unable to reach the customer at any of the provided addresses or phone locations, such as through employment, family, or at home.

Documentation of supportive services disbursements must be maintained on disbursement forms as well as in TWIST case notes. Effective October 22, 2009, service provider is no longer required to enter supportive service information on the Support Services tab in TWIST. Project RIO participants who are co-enrolled in the SNAP E&T Program will be supported with transportation funds from that program. If no other transportation alternative funding exists, Project RIO customers are allowed to receive transportation funding in an amount equal to SNAP E&T customers. WST Service Provider is directed to review WST Supportive Services P&P Chapter 8, Section 15 for additional instructions on the dissemination of supportive services to RIO customers.

Additional guidance regarding allowable transportation services is available thru TA Bulletin 178, Change 2.

SUBCHAPTER F. EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS

§847.51. Use of Funds.

Boards shall ensure that monies made available for Project RIO employment activities and support services pursuant to this chapter are used solely for the purpose of providing employment activities and support services specified in this chapter.

WST POLICY 8.12.12 RIO FUNDS EXPENDITURES

WST Fiscal and Service Provider staff will ensure that all Project RIO funds are utilized for Project RIO employment activities and support services in accordance with §847.51.

WST POLICY 8.12.13 RIO REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

8.12.13.1 Documentation and Tracking

All participant eligibility, case management, supportive services, job seeking activities, and placements, as well as referrals and employer contacts must be documented in TWIST and/or Work-in-Texas, as appropriate.

8.12.13.2 Reporting

Reports will be provided on RIO participants to the TDCJ Parole Division or TYC Supervisor on at least a monthly basis detailing status and results of program participation. Reports will include results of service referrals and notifications of entered employment or discontinuance of program participation. Said reports can be submitted via e-mail or other means mutually agreed to on the Project Re-Integration of Offenders (Project RIO) Monthly Activity Report Format, or another reporting format mutually agreed to by the Service Provider and TDCJ or TYC staff.

8.12.13.3 Program Materials

Project RIO program and eligibility materials, including the Conditional Certification Form ETA – 9062 and copy of the IRS Form 8850, must be maintained for a period of four years.

WST Policy 8.12.14 RIO Complaints, Hearings, and Appeals

WST's Program Grievance/Complaint Policy is outlined in WST Policy 8.2, and supports TWC Rules §813.51, §813.52 & §813.53, and WD 08-08. WST's SNAP E&T Service Provider will develop procedures to ensure that all customers receive written notice of their right to appeal program decisions in accordance with WST Policy 8.2 and TWC Rules §813.51 and §813.52. Copy of customer's signature on written notice of program grievance/complaint policy will be maintained in customer file with original notice being given to the customer.

REFERENCES:

TWC's Rule Chapter 847, adopted 6/25/06
WST Equal Opportunity Policy Chapter 8, Section 1
WST Monitoring Policy, Chapter 6
WST Grievance and Complaint Policy Chapter 8, Section 1

~~[WD 31-03- Serving Project Reintegration of Offenders Job Seekers Who Are Food Stamp Employment and Training Mandatory Work Registrants, 7/23/03 \(Rescinded per WD 07-04\)](#)~~

~~[WD 07-04 Co-enrollment, and Cash Draws and Financial Reporting for Project Reintegration of Offenders Job Seekers Who Are Food Stamp Employment and Training Mandatory Work Registrants, 1/16/04 \(Rescinded per WD 51-04\)](#)~~

[WD 51-04-Program Year 2005 Project Reintegration of Offenders Funding Strategies and Reporting Requirements, 10/5/04](#)

WD 48-05-Serving Project Reintegration of Offenders Job Seekers, 9/15/05

WD 33-07-Training Services Information in The Workforce Information System of Texas, 6/6/07

~~[WD 66-07 Job Training Course Requirements for English as a Second Language Classes, 10/29/07 \(Rescinded per WD 47-09\)](#)~~

WD 69-07-Legislative Budget Board Benchmark for the Number of Project Reintegration of Offenders Customers Served, 12/5/07

WD 28-08 & Attachments 1-5-Work Opportunity Tax Credit Conditional Certification Process, 7/22/08

WD 08-08-Implementation of the New Integrated Complaints, Hearings, and Appeals Rules, 4/29/08

WD 38-09 – Changes to Reporting Training Activities in the Workforce Information System of Texas (9/16/09)

WD 41-09 – Workforce Automated Systems' Data Entry Deadlines for Board Contract Year 2010

WD 47-09 – Job Training Course Requirements for English as a Second Language Classes (11/30/09)

TA Bulletin #28 - Fidelity Bonding Services for At Risk Job Seekers, 8/30/02

TA Bulletin #42 - Project RIO and The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST), 9/19/03

TA Bulletin #63 - Texas Department of Criminal Justice Query Functions in The Workforce Insurance System of Texas, 4/12/04

TA Bulletin #91 - Automated Issuance of Work Opportunity Tax Credit Conditional Certifications for Project Reintegration of Offenders Ex-Offenders, 3/17/05

TA Bulletin #93 – WOTC/WtW-Conditional Certification Project-TWIST Report Procedures, 4/4/05

TA Bulletin #94 – New Database in The Workforce Information System of Texas for Project Reintegration of Offenders Identification and Outreach, 4/7/05

TA Bulletin #164 - Project Reintegration of Offenders TWIST Interface Update, 10/9/07

~~[TA Bulletin #178, Change 1 – Transportation Services \(5/13/09\) \(Rescinded per TA Bulletin 178, Change 2\)](#)~~

TA Bulletin #178, Change 2 – Transportation Services – *Update* (9/15/09)

