

Texas Talent Connection Grant Program

Eligibility Criteria

Purpose. The Texas Talent Connection grant program, funded by Wagner-Peyser 7(b) funds, is established to support workforce training and job placement services, which lead to increased wages and job retention, through:

- Labor exchange services – activities such as job search, job referral, and job placement that may include counseling, assessment, and occupational and labor market information
- Special needs populations – activities targeted to assist groups of workers who are traditionally underrepresented in a given occupation
- Youth programs – activities supporting programs that satisfy one or more of the 14 youth elements allowable under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)¹
- Training – activities that are tied to work experience, internships, entrepreneurship, or job placement

Populations. Texas Talent Connection grant funds are intended to serve individuals who are eligible for services under the Wagner-Peyser Act as it supplements WIOA activities and the purpose(s) of the particular grant award. Individuals served must be:

- 14 years of age or older at the time of enrollment in the program;
- a United States (U.S.) citizen or a noncitizen authorized to work in the U.S.; and
- compliant with the United States Selective Service System registration requirements (if male).

Resources. Grant recipients must determine eligibility and maintain records for each individual served under the grant award prior to enrollment in the program. Eligibility requirements are specified by the Texas Workforce Commission and may be found in the following guidance:

- WIOA Eligibility Guidelines:
<https://www.twc.texas.gov/sites/default/files/wf/docs/wioa-guidelines-twc.pdf>
- WIOA Eligibility Guidelines Documentation Log Desk Reference:
<https://www.twc.texas.gov/sites/default/files/wf/docs/wioa-elig-doc-log-twc.pdf>

¹ The 14 youth elements described by the WIOA are:

1. Tutoring, study skills training and instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to high school/GED credential or a recognized postsecondary credential;
2. Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services;
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that include academic and occupational education summer employment and employment during the school year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on the job training;
4. Occupational skills training, which may include priority for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the relevant workforce area;
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors;
7. Support services;
8. Adult mentoring;
9. Follow-up for at least 12 months after exit;
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling (may include substance abuse counseling and referral);
11. Financial literacy education;
12. Entrepreneurial skills training;
13. Local market information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the workforce area; and
14. Activities to help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.