

One of the Council’s primary responsibilities is the development of an overarching strategic plan for the Texas workforce system. The Texas workforce system is a complex structure comprised of numerous programs, services, and initiatives administered by the Council’s system partners. The strategic plan is intended for state agencies that receive federal funding to deliver workforce education and training services. System partners include local workforce development boards, independent school districts, community and technical colleges, and local adult education providers.

Throughout the Council’s history, strategic plans have been a core component in its work to improve system integration and ensure the development and continuous improvement of the workforce system. *Accelerating Alignment: Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2024–2031* includes high-level system objectives that require collaboration among multiple partners and alignment of programs, initiatives, and outcomes. It also outlines long-range system strategies to achieve each system goal.



**System Goals and Objectives**

Developed by the Council and its system partners and stakeholders, the system plan contains system goals used to create actionable objectives. The four goal areas represent Texas employers, learners, partners, and those with policy and planning responsibilities. These goal areas emphasize the importance and interdependence of the constituents and partners of the Texas workforce system. In this inaugural year, partner agencies have initiated the implementation of agency-specific action plans to execute strategies aligned with the system’s goals and objectives.

**Strategic Opportunities**

Texas’ economic position, strong job creation, and high employment demand present unique challenges and opportunities that will require the ongoing focus of system partners and stakeholders throughout the plan period. The Council identified three strategic opportunities that leverage the achievements and work of system partners since the inception of the Texas workforce system. Each opportunity considers the current environment and recommends strategies to help system partners take advantage of each opportunity and sharpen their focus on effectively engaging employers, improving outcomes for all Texans, and generating greater returns on investments. The system plan serves as a comprehensive roadmap, outlining the context and desired outcomes for each strategic opportunity and system initiative the Council will undertake during the eight-year plan period.

**Workforce System Alignment**

The Council, in its role of oversight and accountability, will monitor system progress. The system plan is strategically crafted to direct the intended actions of workforce system partners and stakeholders toward critical outcomes that make significant progress in achieving the vision for the Texas workforce. The plan plays a pivotal role in local, state, and federal planning. State agency and local workforce development board plans are mandated to demonstrate clear alignment with the workforce system plan. Through these planning processes, the Council provides guidance and establishes the requirements between the workforce system goals, objectives, and strategies, as well as the agency- or local board-specific actions, initiatives, and programs. This alignment ensures that local service delivery supports the implementation of system’s goals. The linkage established between state and local workforce plans and the workforce system strategic plan enables the Council to monitor the progress of the system implementation through its evaluation of the plans.

As the system works towards more direct integration between economic and workforce development, the workforce system plan establishes the Council’s vision of a collaborative workforce system that drives economic prosperity for Texas and Texans.

Texas workforce system partners collaborate to better align, leverage, and integrate system services to develop a world-class workforce and ensure a higher quality of life for all Texans through educational, employment, and economic success. Eight state agencies, local workforce development boards, community and technical colleges, local adult education providers, and independent school districts actively contribute to statewide programs and those highlighted in this report.

The table below shows the partners and primary and supporting programs that constitute the Texas workforce system:

FY 2024 Texas Workforce System Partners and Programs	
<p><b>Texas Department of Criminal Justice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Postsecondary Academic and Technical Education</li> <li>Windham School District</li> </ul> <p><b>Texas Education Agency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secondary Schools</li> <li>Academic Education</li> <li>Career and Technical Education</li> </ul> <p><b>Texas Health and Human Services Commission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program</li> <li>Employment and Training</li> </ul> <p><b>Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community and Technical Colleges</li> <li>Academic Education</li> <li>Technical Education</li> </ul>	<p><b>Texas Juvenile Justice Department</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secondary Academic Education</li> <li>Secondary Technical Education</li> </ul> <p><b>Texas Veterans Commission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Veterans Employment and Training</li> </ul> <p><b>Texas Workforce Commission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adult Education and Literacy</li> <li>Apprenticeship Training, Chapter 133</li> <li>Choices Program for TANF Adults</li> <li>Employment Services</li> <li>Jobs and Education for Texans Fund</li> <li>Lone Star Workforce of the Future Fund</li> <li>Rehabilitation Services</li> <li>Self-Sufficiency Fund</li> <li>Senior Community Service Employment Program</li> <li>Skills Development Fund</li> <li>Trade Adjustment Assistance/NAFTA</li> <li>Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act</li> <li>Adult Dislocated Workers</li> <li>Youth</li> </ul> <p><b>Economic Development and Tourism, Office of the Governor</b></p>



**Texas Workforce System Program Directory (Revised June 2024)**

This report provides basic information about the many programs constituting the Texas workforce system in one publication. A companion document to the system strategic plan and the annual evaluation report, it details workforce development programs and related academic programs administered by the state’s workforce system partner agencies. A concise reference for policy makers and stakeholders, the directory is distributed to system partners and stakeholders and is posted on the Council’s website.

For more information on the Texas Workforce Investment Council and its authority, please visit <https://gov.texas.gov/twic>.



**Annual Report  
Fiscal Year 2024  
September 1, 2023–August 31, 2024**

**About the Council’s Role in the Texas Workforce System**

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) was created in 1993 by the Governor and the Texas Legislature to promote the development of a well-educated and highly skilled workforce in Texas. The Council assists the Governor and the legislature with strategic planning, research, and evaluation to support continuous improvement of the Texas workforce system. In addition to its responsibilities in state law, the Council functions as the State Workforce Investment Board under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Council does not operate programs but works to foster collaboration and a systems perspective among its partners and their programs. Its impact is demonstrated through initiatives that improve outcomes for workforce customers—employers and current and future workers of Texas—all of whom contribute to Texas’ economic success.

The Texas workforce system delivers programs, services, and initiatives administered by eight agencies, local workforce development boards, community and technical colleges, local adult education providers, and independent school districts. The Council’s eight partner agencies are: the Office of Economic Development and Tourism within the Office of the Governor, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, the Texas Veterans Commission, and the Texas Workforce Commission.

There are 19 members on the Council. The Governor appoints 14 members who represent business, organized labor, education, and community-based organizations. The remaining five members serve as ex officio representatives of the Council’s member state agencies.

The Council produces this annual report to highlight its work and accomplishments of system partners during the past fiscal year (FY). Featured in this report is the introduction of *Accelerating Alignment: Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2024–2031*, the new eight-year plan, and efforts to align the Council’s member agencies and system partners to achieve the Council’s vision for the workforce system.

The Texas workforce system strategic plan and other Council products referenced in this report are posted on the Council’s website at <https://gov.texas.gov/twic>.



## Planning System Progress

### **Accelerating Alignment: Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2024–2031**

In September 2023, the Council approved a comprehensive eight-year workforce system strategic plan, *Accelerating Alignment: Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2024–2031*, aimed at focusing system partners on strategic opportunities and addressing critical workforce system issues in Texas. Developed in collaboration with eight partner state agencies, the plan establishes clear goals, objectives, and performance measures for the state’s workforce development system and further elevates the system-level approach utilized in previous system plans. The system plan guides the system as a whole and directs each partner agency with specific strategies to achieve those goals. Governor Abbott approved the plan in October 2023.

### **Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Funding Formulas (February 2024)**

In FY 2024, the 88th Texas Legislature allocated \$1.8 million to support pre-apprenticeship programs. The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) adopted funding formulas for the distribution of funds based on the Council’s recommendation. The Council approved setting a rate not to exceed \$2,000 per participant in pre-apprenticeship training. Additionally, the contact hour rate for apprenticeship training programs for FY 2025 was set at a rate not to exceed \$4.25 per contact hour. Five percent of available funds will support new or established apprenticeship programs that did not receive Chapter 133 funds in FY 2024. The Council endorsed the funding formulas for apprenticeship training programs and directed the recommendations to TWC for implementation.

### **Texas Talent Connection (June 2024)**

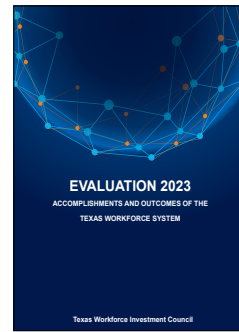
The Texas Talent Connection grant program supports innovative workforce services, particularly to improve employment outcomes for populations facing barriers to employment. The Wagner-Peyser 7(b) program allocates federal discretionary funds to the Office of the Governor to support innovation in the delivery of workforce training and job placement services that will improve employment outcomes including increased wages and job retention. In Texas, the funds are distributed through a competitive solicitation process to workforce system partners. The program is designed to encourage the development of innovative solutions to address local and regional needs and encourages the implementation of evidence-based practices to build evidence of effective workforce interventions. This year, approximately \$6 million was allotted for the Texas Talent Connection grant program, with individual awards ranging from \$200,000 to \$350,000. Successful industry programs include construction, cybersecurity, healthcare, information technology, and data analytics.

### **Texas Skill Standards Guidelines and Policy Updates (December 2023)**

The Council is charged with developing and maintaining a statewide system of industry-defined and industry-recognized skill standards for major skilled occupations that provide strong employment and earnings opportunities and require less than a baccalaureate degree. New information technology (IT) industry skill standards were recognized in FY 2024. Six skill standards were developed and endorsed by the IT Skill Standards 2020 and Beyond Business and Industry Leadership Team of the National Convergence Technology Center.

Recognition of skill standards based program recognition is one initiative to fulfill the Council’s skill standards system mandates and support implementation through community and technical college workforce education programs. In FY 2024, the Council approved the amended Guidelines for *Texas Skill Standards Based Program Recognition (Guidelines)*. The Council recognized 14 programs administered by seven colleges as successfully meeting recognition requirements and additionally received three years of program recognition.

## Evaluating System Progress



### **Evaluation 2023: Accomplishments and Outcomes of the Texas Workforce System (December 2023)**

Each year, Texas comprehensively evaluates its workforce system for performance across programs and system partner alignment with the strategic plan. The Council’s eighth and final annual evaluation report for the eight-year plan period, Evaluation 2023: Accomplishments and Outcomes of the Texas Workforce System (December 2023), presents a system perspective of progress and achievement under the workforce system strategic plan for FY 2016–FY 2024. According to Texas Government Code (TGC), Chapter 2308, the Council must report annually to the Governor and legislature on

the system’s progress in meeting the state and local workforce goals and objectives outlined in the system strategic plan. Additionally, there are two types of measures that TGC specifies to be included in the workforce system strategic plan: formal and less formal measures. A balanced scorecard illustrates performance across the two primary components of the system plan, including the four formal measures and agency action plans. Formal measures are essentially consistent across programs in the workforce system and are tied to system outcomes. Six partner agencies submitted program-level data on 23 programs for four formal measures: educational achievement, entered employment, employment retention, and customers served. The report also includes data associated with 23 action plans that are specific to the agencies’ implementation of the partner strategies and demonstrate success over time. Through the delivery of multiple workforce education and training programs, state and local system partners served more than 4.2 million individuals in the last reporting year. Of those participants, more than 675,000 individuals completed a degree, certificate, or other measure of educational achievement. Nearly 900,000 Texans who participated in a workforce program found a job, stayed in a job, and/or enrolled in further education or training.



### **Evaluation Planning for Accelerating Alignment: Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2024–2031**

*Accelerating Alignment: Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2024–2031* embarked on its first year of implementation in FY 2024. With this plan, the Council continued its emphasis on alignment across partner agencies. The system plan is structured around four goal areas that address cross-agency strategic issues related to employers, learners, partners, and policy and planning. Four formal measures, as previously stated, are tied to system outcomes and were approved by the Governor in 2003, 2009, 2015, and

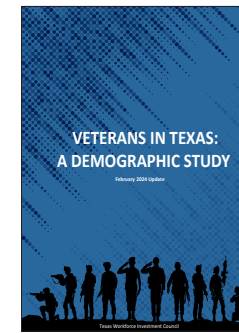
2024, and have been incorporated into this strategic plan to support performance measurement. The less formal measures are tied to measuring the progress of partner agency action plans that guide implementation of the goals and objectives of the system plan. The system strategic plan elevates specific strategies to the system level with less formal measures that require action across workforce programs and partner agencies. Consistent definitions and methodologies across agencies support the evaluation of system strategies for the less formal performance measures.

### **Combined State Plan for WIOA (February 2024)**

WIOA requires the Governor to submit a state plan to the U.S. Department of Labor that will outline a four-year plan for the state workforce system. The Council, as the state workforce board, assists the Governor in the development of the WIOA state plan. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, and training to achieve success in the workforce. The strategic element of the state plan describes the state’s vision, goals, and strategies for preparing an educated and skilled workforce. The operational element of the plan describes each program and the operating systems and policies that support the implementation of the strategies. Operational details are included for each of the WIOA core programs as well as a partner program. The plan also includes updated labor market information, economic and workforce analysis, and other factors affecting implementation. In FY 2024, the Council endorsed the plan for the Governor’s approval, which was subsequently approved on February 29, 2024.

## Conducting Research

The Council supports workforce system stakeholders to plan and implement programs and services through a suite of research products available on the Council’s website.



### **Veterans in Texas: A Demographic Study (February 2024)**

The veteran population is a valuable resource for Texas employers and the Texas economy. Many veterans have received training while in the military and possess skills and abilities for the workforce. This demographic overview describes the U.S. veteran population to provide context for the analysis of Texas veterans. The Texas veteran population is then detailed with a focus on the characteristics of veteran labor force participants. The analyses presented in this study illustrate the veteran population according to age, educational attainment, reported disabilities, and other factors including industries that employ veterans.



### **People with Disabilities: A Texas Profile (June 2024)**

Individuals with disabilities strengthen the Texas labor market as a valuable resource for Texas employers. Individuals with disabilities can enhance workforce diversity and offer employers the skills, knowledge, and experience that Texas businesses need. However, these individuals experience numerous challenges associated with participation in the labor force. The unemployment rate for individuals with disabilities is higher than for individuals without disabilities. Additionally, individuals with disabilities are more likely to work part time and, on average, earn less than individuals without disabilities at every level of educational attainment. This report details the demographic characteristics of the population of individuals with disabilities, including youth, for both the U.S. and Texas.

### **FY 2024 Presentations**

The Council invites partner agencies and system stakeholders to share information and data on current research, programs and services, and innovative practices. Additionally, the Council promotes collaboration and provides a systems perspective across workforce partners and programs. This FY, members gained insights into industry growth, hiring constraints, and opportunities for the semiconductor industry. Council members provided input into the development of the statewide economic development strategic plan for Texas. The Ray Marshall Center at the University of Texas at Austin shared its ongoing research on the trajectories taken by opportunity youth in the state. The agencies representing the Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative leadership updated members on how they plan to achieve their priorities. These priorities include improving pathways to credential attainment, ensuring resources for student learning and transitions, and creating a robust data infrastructure for collaboration and decision making.



### **Registered Apprenticeship Brochures (December 2023)**

Registered apprenticeship programs support vital industries in the Texas economy by providing paid on-the-job training and classroom instruction that prepares students for highly skilled jobs. Apprenticeship programs operate within traditional and new industries including cyber security, energy, and logistics. Upon completion, an apprentice receives an industry-recognized certification that is portable from state to state and improves employment opportunities. In recent years, the expansion of apprenticeship training opportunities in Texas has grown significantly. A series of brochures developed through the Council’s Apprenticeship and Training Advisory Committee helps raise awareness of the apprenticeship programs and highlights the benefits and outcomes of registered apprenticeship programs for students, employers, and local education and training providers in Texas.