

**August 15, 2018**

**Subject: Policy Letter 08-18: Workforce Solutions of Central Texas Employee Professional Development.**

This letter outlines policy and procedures for employee professional development. Workforce Solutions of Central Texas (WSCT) is dedicated to fostering service excellence through the continuous improvement of its most valuable resource – the employees – and supports both career-related and job-related professional development activities. It is expected that employees and supervisors will discuss professional development issues and opportunities.

Effective October 1, 2018, WSCT expects all employees to participate in and complete a minimum of 15 hours of professional development annually. Completion of professional development will be evaluated in an associated category on the employee's annual appraisal. The employee must complete 15-19 hours to earn a 3 in this area, 20-24 to earn a 4, and 25 or more to earn a 5. Failure to complete any professional development hours would result in a 1 in this area and completion of 1-14 hours would result in a 2. As is the case when a rating of 1 or 2 is received in any performance area, the employee will be counseled and provided a corrective plan of action.

**PROCEDURE**

Responsibility for professional training and development extends to all levels of the organization.

WSCT is responsible for providing opportunities for professional development and training to enhance and build the capacity, skills, excellence, and professionalism of employees to enable them to contribute effectively and creatively to the WSCT mission. WSCT leadership is responsible for identifying and communicating priorities and goals as well as relevant developments and trends affecting WSCT and for identifying opportunities to integrate efforts and optimize resources.

Workforce Administrators are responsible for adopting flexible strategies which promote participation in professional development and training activities. In addition, they are responsible for working with their supervisors to identify needs and for creating strategies that will benefit the organization, department, and individual employees.

Supervisors are responsible for assessing and communicating professional development and training needs of individual employees. Supervisors plan for and allow appropriate professional development and training activities that occur as part of work time.

Employees are responsible for engaging in the development of plans in partnership with their supervisor and for participating in designated learning experiences. Employees are responsible for assessing their job related skills and knowledge, for maintaining a high level of performance throughout their employment, and for seeking appropriate professional development and training opportunities in conjunction with their supervisors.



**Activities that count toward Initial (1<sup>st</sup> year of employment) Professional Development:**

- TWC mandated trainings (Information Technology Security Awareness, Fraud Prevention and Detection, Family Violence, Sexual Harassment, Migrant Seasonal Farmworker, etc.)
- WSCT mandated training (KnowBe4 security training, etc.)
- WSCT System Orientation Training

**Activities that count toward Initial Professional Development and Continuing Professional Development:**

- WSCT Program Information Sessions (Choices, SNAP, WIOA, etc.)
- Cross Training
- Next Level Preparation
- Partner Training (VR, TVC, AEL)
- Attendance at local, state and national level professional conferences, seminars, workshops, classes, teleconferences, or webinars that support the staff's content/discipline expertise
- WSCT Quality Texas/Baldrige training
- WSCT, TWC, or other federal, state, or local agency non-mandatory trainings
- Business skills training, including case management, counseling, human resources, supervision, strategic planning and leadership, project, and performance management, systems integration
- Workforce policies, procedures, mission, or governance structure training
- Customer service and service delivery training
- Coaching and communication skills training
- Team building training, including Camp Workforce
- Knowledge and skills training related to acting as a member of an ethnically and culturally diverse community and workforce in an inclusive and respectful manner, including limited English proficiency training, disability sensitivity training
- Knowledge and skills training related to recognizing and responding effectively to discrimination and harassment
- Knowledge and skills training in the uses of technology to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of WSCT business and/or practices, to include WIT, TWIST or other workforce computer systems
- Professional licensures and continuing education credits
- College courses completed during the appraisal period that directly relate to workforce duties (3 credit hours = 3 professional development hours)
- Taskforce/committee/council participation in leadership roles
- Participation in professional associations, networks, and accreditation agencies associated with one's job responsibilities
- Training attended outside of work for which supervisor determines new skills acquired relevant to workforce duties
- Any other activities as agreed upon by the employee and supervisor that support the mission of WSCT and customer success

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTING

Professional development is an allowable work activity and expense that can be paid from WSCT funds as long as it meets the provisions of this policy.

When an employee is required to attend a professional development program or requests to attend an optional WSCT supported professional development program, the time spent in attendance shall be counted as time worked and the full fees and related costs shall be paid by WSCT.

When an employee requests to attend an elected non-WSCT supported training or professional development program, the time spent in attendance may be counted as time off (or non-compensable) and fees and related costs may not be subject to reimbursement, thus becoming the responsibility of the employee.

To qualify as an allowable activity which may be paid for with WSCT funds, professional development courses must meet the following criteria:

- Be approved by the employee's supervisor.
- Have a primary business purpose that clearly benefits and supports the fulfillment of WSCT's mission and objectives or include supporting documentation that describes how and why the training will benefit WSCT and the employee's department.
- Be comprised of coursework that is consistent with the duties of the employee's position description.

Continuing education and college level courses may qualify for reimbursement if they meet the criteria as outlined in the WSCT Human Resources Policy & Procedures Manual.

Continuing education courses for the maintenance of state licenses are not automatically considered professional development and do not necessarily qualify for fee reimbursement.



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Workforce Solutions of Central Texas