TO: Career Offices
            Employer Service
            Financial Aid Call Center

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SUBJECT: Requests for Wage or UI Benefits Data

Purpose

Change and update guidance on how to fulfill customer requests for wage or unemployment insurance benefits information.

This issuance revises WS 15-14 – Requests for Wage or UI Benefits Data.

Background

Workforce Solutions offices sometimes receive requests from customers and others for wage or unemployment insurance benefits data. Individuals or entities requesting information may include the customer, employers, the media, private sector entities such as banks and schools, law enforcement, and other government agencies.

Additionally, staff may receive requests from claimants to complete or sign various documents regarding student loan deferments, insurance for a period of unemployment, or inquiries from a creditor.

In certain cases, staff may receive requests from the Texas Workforce Commission to verify the identity of a customer who has recently applied for unemployment insurance.

Previously staff directed customers or others with requests for wage and unemployment insurance benefits data to submit an Open Records request with the Texas Workforce Commission.

This issuance changes that procedure.

New Procedures

Effective immediately, staff may provide wage data to a customer who requests that information for him or herself, subject to the following procedures and requirements:

A. <u>Wage Record Requests</u>

1. Verify the identity of the customer by:

   a) Reviewing a state or government-issued photo ID such as driver's license or passport, and
   b) Asking the customer to provide his or her Social Security number (SSN) via keypad/number pad, in writing or verbally (<u>individuals who choose to provide their SSN verbally should do so in a secure location</u>).

2. Sign on to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) mainframe and access the Wage Record Inquiry Report (WRIR) screen to:

   a) Verify that the SSN provided matches the SSN recorded, and
   b) Check that there are no wages listed for a name that is not the individual's name. Wages listed under an individual's maiden or married name are acceptable. Tell the customer there is another name on the wage record and ask the customer if there are other names by which he or she is known. If the customer responds with another name that staff recognize from the record and states the source of the other name (i.e., maiden name, married name), staff can provide the printout to the customer.

3. If there are no anomalies on the wage record, print the screen and provide the wage record to the requesting customer.

4. If there *are* wage record anomalies—that is, there are wages listed on the record for a person who is not the customer requesting the data—do not provide records that include wages belonging to another customer. Wage information reported under another name is considered Personally Identifiable Information and cannot be released, even if the wages are incorrectly reported under the wrong SSN. Explain to the customer that the other wages are most likely due to a reporting error by an employer and that you cannot provide the data at this time.

5. Staff can assist in correcting a wage record. To correct a record, staff must:

   a) Verify the customer's identity by:
      - Reviewing the customer's state-or government-issued ID
      - Reviewing the customer's Social Security card or other correspondence from the Social Security Administration reflecting the customer's name and full SSN (*a verbal identification is not acceptable*)

b) Send an encrypted email to TaxWageRecordCorrection@twc.state.tx.us with:
- The customer's SSN
- A statement detailing which wages the customer is requesting to have corrected or removed from association with the SSN
- A statement from staff indicating that staff confirmed the customer's name on the Social Security card and state or government-issued ID matches the photo on the ID and the customer requesting the information – **DO NOT send copies of the documents**

c) Instruct the customer to return after seven days for an updated record. Staff will follow the same procedures as listed in 1. and 2. above to create a wage record for the customer

d) If the customer's need is urgent (for example, to prevent eviction or to qualify for public assistance medical treatment), indicate the urgency in the wage record correction email and request to be notified when the correction has been made. When the corrected wage record is ready, staff can notify the customer via phone or email.

B. Unemployment Insurance Benefit Information

1. Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants can access information relating to their UI claim, such as benefit amounts, remaining balance, and payment information, by logging into the UI Benefits System.

   https://apps.twc.state.tx.us/UBS/changeLocale.do?language=en&country=US&page=/security/logon.do

2. Staff may assist customers with logging into the TWC UI Benefits System, being mindful to protect a customer's Personally Identifiable Information.

3. Staff can instruct customers to call the UI Tele-Center at 800-939-6631 or email ui_info@twc.state.tx.us to make a request if they cannot find the UI information they need using the online search options. Emails must include the customer's full name, address, phone number, and last 4-digits of their SSN.

C. Requests from the Texas Workforce Commission to verify a customer's identity for unemployment insurance claimants

1. TWC may ask a customer to visit a Workforce Solutions career office to verify his or her identity before processing an unemployment insurance claim.

2. TWC will ask the customer to show us a Social Security card and a valid state-or government-issued ID photo identification.

3. After speaking to the customer and viewing the documentation, staff will call the TWC UI Tele-Center Hotline Number, speak to an agent, and report what we have seen. Please contact office management for access to the hotline phone numbers.

   ***Do not release this number to our customers**. This number is strictly for Workforce Solutions staff to use when reporting that we have seen the documents.

4. The customer's identity can only be verified when a TWC Tele-Center agent speaks to a Workforce Solutions staff person.

D. <u>All Other Requests</u>
   Customers requesting information not covered above or employers, private organizations such as banks or schools, law enforcement, or other public entities requesting wage or unemployment insurance data for individuals should submit an Open Records Request.

   1. Requests for public information should be submitted in writing to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Open Records Coordinator by the requestor to:
      - In person or mail:
        Texas Workforce Commission
        Open Records Department
        101 East 15th Street
        Austin, Texas 78778-0001
      - FAX: (512) 463-2990
      - Email: open.records@twc.state.tx.us (Caution customers to encrypt confidential documents)

   2. A written request can be submitted in any format that can be read, including fax, email, letter, memo, or hand-written note. Requests must include the following:
      - Information requested
      - Name and contact information
      - Mailing address
      - Social Security number
      - Copy of a valid state-issued photo ID

   3. An open records request form and instructions are available online.

   4. Charges may apply to a request for records.

Action

1. Make sure <u>all</u> staff - including Greeters and Resource Specialists – is aware of the change to procedures for wage and unemployment insurance benefit data requests.

2. Ensure each office has written procedures which office management has discussed and distributed to staff that:

   o Include the procedures in this issuance
   o Establish the office's procedures for tracking wage record correction requests so that customers who request changes may return and receive information timely
   o Reinforce the need to protect individuals' personally identifiable information

Questions

Direct questions about this issuance to Kevin Rodney at kevin.rodney@wrksolutions.com.

Attachment

1. Sample email message to Texas Workforce Commission requesting corrections to a wage record

2. Wage Records Information Report Access Instructions

Workforce Solutions

Tax Wage Record Correction Request

By Encrypted Email

To: TaxWageRecordCorrection@twc.state.tx.us
From: Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast
Subject: **Wage Record Correction**
Date: INSERT DATE

"Insert customer name" "Insert SSN" has made a request for wage records. According to **"Insert Title LName"**, the wages reported for **"Insert Company Name"** does not belong to her and should be removed from her records. Workforce Solutions staff has confirmed the name and identity of **"Insert Title LName"** on her social security card and government-issued ID.
(Use the following only if the request customer request is urgent.)
"Insert Title LName" has an urgent need for the requested information **(Insert reason, examples – to prevent eviction, to qualify for medical treatment or public assistance)**.
Please send a notification to "**Insert Office Email Address"** when the record has been corrected.
Thank you.
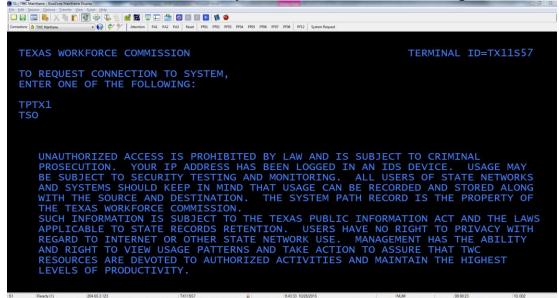
Insert Office Name
Insert Office Manager's Name, Manager
Insert Office Manager's Telephone Number

Wage Records Information Report Access Instructions

Step 1: The TWC Mainframe Security Notification screen leads to the Logon screen

Step 2: Enter User ID and Password in the TWC Mainframe Logon Screen to access the Application Selection Screen

Step 3: The APPLICATION SELECTION screen will be the first screen after your logon.

Step 4: Hold the Shift down and hit TAB. This backs up your cursor to the bottom left corner of the screen as shown in step 5.

Step 5: Type WRIR at the bottom left cursor point as seen.

Step 6.: Enter SSN, Display PII: Y, and Display SSN: N to generate the wage record.