WS 20-06 Change 2
Issued: February 22, 2021
Effective: Immediately
Basic & Expanded Services
Expires: Continuing

To: All Contractors

From: Mike Temple
Brenda Williams

Subject: Rapid Reemployment: Back to Work

Purpose

This issuance updates WS 20-06 and provides revised standards, guidelines, and procedures for our Rapid Reemployment Back to Work service. New changes in the guidance are identified in blue text and previous changes are in red text.

Background

Customers who filed for unemployment insurance (UI) must register with Workforce Solutions as a condition of receiving their benefits. We work with these customers (as we do with any others) to get them to a job as quickly as possible. These customers usually have good skills and work history – they are likely good candidates for many of the current job openings we have available.

We contact a subset of UI customers – individuals likely to exhaust their benefits before returning to work – and require them to interact with us.

Once we have called in a UI customer, that individual must contact us or risk losing his or her unemployment insurance benefits.

The Basics

Our call-in notice to UI customers gives instructions for contacting us.

1. We direct UI customers who receive a call-in notice to access the Back to Work page on our website to view information about Workforce Solutions and the many ways we can help them return to work.

2. They must complete the rapid reemployment/back to work process in a ~~face-to-face~~ conversation with Workforce Solutions staff. Workforce Solutions staff may provide service:
    a. in a career office;
    b. in locations other than a career office;
    c. remotely, using technology that allows face-to-face communication such as TEAMS, Skype, Zoom, FaceTime, or another similar product (remote technology does not include phone conversations, mobile or landline; text messages; e-mails; or online messaging systems);
    d. using prerecorded webinars or self-paced presentations in coordination with an arranged face-to-face component; or
    e. by phone (temporarily during the COVID-19 pandemic)

3. We recommend tagging customers who complete the back to work process as WIOA Dislocated Workers, as appropriate based on the customer's needs.

Our Service

We serve a rapid reemployment customer just like we do any other customer: we listen to the customer and offer our service and professional advice to help that customer get what he or she wants and needs.

However, for customers outreached for rapid reemployment, there are **six required elements** for Back to Work service. Staff must address each element so the customer can continue to receive UI benefits. ~~Except for providing information about Workforce Solutions, the following elements must be completed with a face-to-face interaction with the customer and documented in case notes accordingly:~~

1. **Assess unemployment insurance eligibility**.

    Staff must conduct a comprehensive assessment, review eligibility requirements for unemployment insurance, have the customer sign the Back to Work Agreement and document the conversation in TWIST Counselor Notes.

    During the assessment, Workforce Solutions staff must:
    - provide guidance and suggestions on how the customer can enhance his or her job match parameters in WorkInTexas.com to ensure the best matches with job opportunities;
    - ask questions that help identify potential issues, such as:
        - Are you able, available, and actively seeking work?
        - What can you tell me about your job search efforts?
        - What could be preventing you from looking for or accepting job offers?
        - How far are you willing to travel for work?
        - Have you had any interviews?
        - Have you had any job offers?
        - Have you turned down any jobs?

- What are your salary expectations?

- advise the customer of the requirement to report work and earnings; and
- determine potential availability issues.

Customers outreached for Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) must meet the following ongoing unemployment benefits eligibility requirements:

- Actively search for full-time work and perform a minimum of three job contacts a week;
- Be **able** to engage in and be **available** for full-time work;

  Able to Work
  Being able to work means that the customer is physically and mentally able to perform the work they are seeking. They must have the health, endurance, and other physical and mental requirements necessary to perform suitable full-time work for which they are qualified or can readily learn to perform, and which exists in the job search area.

  Available for Work
  The customer must be available for full-time work to be eligible for unemployment benefits. Being available for work means that the customer is ready, willing and able to accept any suitable full-time work. The customer must:
  - Have adequate transportation
  - Have adequate child care arrangements to allow the customer to work, if applicable
  - Be available for job interviews
  - Be willing and able to work all the days and hours required for the type of work the customer is seeking and
  - Be willing to accept the usual rate of pay for a person of the customer's qualifications and experience
- Be available to Workforce Solutions staff for job search assistance, career counseling, follow up, etc.;
- Participate in required reemployment activities and complete all required RESEA services; and
- Apply for and accept suitable work (see Available for Work definition above)

If a potential unemployment benefits eligibility issue is discovered while conducting this assessment, refer to the process outlined on page 10 in the section **Reporting Potential UI Issues**.

If during the interview the customer asks an unemployment insurance question, help the customer connect with the Tele-Center for answers or help the customer begin the adjudication process if necessary.

Documentation of the assessment is required in counselor notes.

2. **<u>Complete an employment plan</u>.** During the interview with a customer, staff must develop an employment plan with the customer that includes:

   - ✓ a specific employment goal developed in collaboration with the customer and tailored to the customer's individual needs;
   - ✓ the customer's strengths and any factors that may negatively affect the customer's ability to return to work;
   - ✓ detailed step-by-step activities to which the customer agrees to adhere, including reporting to and taking part in the career service most likely to result in reemployment or referral to career-related training;
   - ✓ timelines to start and complete each activity;
   - ✓ specific dates for staff to follow up and evaluate each activity, provide more assistance, or adjust the dates, as necessary; and
   - ✓ the next date the customer will meet with or contact staff.

   The employment plan must be documented in TWIST.

3. **<u>Complete WorkInTexas.com registration including Wagner-Peyser (WP) eligibility</u>.** We make sure the customer has a complete registration in WorkInTexas.com to help with referrals to open jobs. Workforce Solutions staff must:

   - Work with the customer to complete all eleven (11) pages of the WorkInTexas application;
   - Verify the customer has at least one saved résumé. Online or offline résumés can be viewed on the Résumés page, which is accessed from the Employment Plan Profile under My Individual Plans. Review the customer's Wagner-Peyser (WP) application status to ensure it indicates a complete status:
     - In WorkInTexas.com, go to the Case Management Profile section under Staff Profiles and select the Programs link. The WP application status is displayed under the Title III—Wagner-Peyser (WP) heading on the Programs page.

4. **<u>Provide current and customized labor market information (CLMI)</u>.** We give our professional advice and current information about jobs and job opportunities specifically for each customer. We make sure the information we give is tailored for the customer we're talking to and not generic data. LMI may include, but is not limited to:
   - employment numbers by occupation and industry;
   - short- and long-term industry and occupational employment projections;
   - information on business employment dynamics, including the number and nature of business establishments;

- local employment dynamics, including business turnover rates, new hires, job separations, and net job losses;
- identification of high-growth and high-demand industries, occupations, and jobs;
- information on work hours, benefits, unionization, trade disputes, conditions of employment, and retirement; and
- information on occupation-specific requirements regarding education, training, skills, knowledge, and experience.

Additional CLMI may also include, as either source data or as an analysis of source data, the following:

- Population and workforce growth and decline, classified by age, sex, race, and other demographic characteristics
- Identification of emerging occupations and evolving skill demands
- Workforce characteristics, which can include skills, experience, education, credential attainment, and competencies
- Information on regional and local economic development activity, including job creation through business start-ups and expansions
- Shifts in consumer demands
- Labor market information gained from interaction with businesses, industry and trade associations, education agencies, government entities, and the public

During the development of the employment plan, Workforce Solutions staff must make sure the customer understands how this information may be used to conduct or enhance an appropriate job search. CLMI must be tailored to the customer's individual needs and include an analysis of the customer's work history. Generic LMI, such as a referral to a list of in-demand occupations, is not sufficient.

5. **Provide Information about Workforce Solutions.** ~~*Note: This is the only requirement which may be provided without face-to-face interaction.*~~ At any time, and especially when asked by a customer, we talk about the range of our service and how we can help the customer get back to work. The customer can complete this requirement by reviewing the Back to Work page on wrksolutions.com.

6. **Offer additional services.** At the customer's request and/or in our professional judgement, we offer or suggest at least one of the following:

   a. Job search help including referrals to open jobs, job development and placement; and access to Workforce Solutions job search seminars;
   b. Comprehensive assessment of the individual's skill levels and needs;
   c. Career readiness such as creating or updating resume, interview preparation, completing job applications; and/or
   d. Career counseling, planning and information about and help obtaining financial aid, including scholarships for basic education, upgrade training, or education to change careers.

Customer Satisfaction

To improve what we do, we ask our customers to tell us what they think about our service.

Staff will follow-up with each customer who completes an employment plan.

a. Workforce Solutions will send a follow-up email to RESEA customers who completed an employment plan within 30 days of the initial orientation. This email will remind customers of their interaction with Workforce Solutions and invite the customer to contact us for additional help.
b. Additionally, staff will send each customer a link to the survey and encourage the customer to give us feedback.
c. Workforce Solutions staff will also take the follow-up actions set out in the customer's employment plan. The customer and Workforce Solutions staff may change the plans for follow up by modifying the employment plan.

We encourage customers to return by providing high quality, professional service that has value for each customer.

Remember!

UI customers and profiled customers are just like any other individual we serve: listen carefully as a customer describes his or her wants and needs; ask good questions about skills, work history, employment goals, and needs for skill upgrading; and provide good professional advice to help a customer return to work.

Action

1. Make sure all staff at every level is aware of the information in this issuance.
2. Make sure office managers, supervisors, and staff know the reemployment process for serving RESEA customers.
3. Make sure office managers, supervisors, and staff know how to record service for RESEA customers in TWIST and WorkInTexas.com.

Questions

Staff should ask questions of their supervisors first. Direct questions for Board staff through the electronic Issuance Q&A.

Attachments

- Rapid Reemployment Process
- Guidance for the Rapid Reemployment Interview
- Unemployment Benefits Information

Attachment 1
Rapid Re-Employment Process

1. Service Delivery Timeline

It is very important that RESEA customers are provided services timely. The following table contains the timeline for RESEA services:

Requirement	Deadline
Customer is added to RESEA outreach pool	Every Friday night
RESEA auto-scheduler runs	Every Tuesday
RESEA orientation date	Up to 7 to 21 days from the date the auto-scheduler runs after the claimant has been added to the outreach pool
All RESEA services must be provided.	Within 7 calendar days from the scheduled RESEA orientation date
All RESEA services must be entered in WorkinTexas.com.	Within 7 calendar days from the scheduled RESEA orientation date

The process for outreaching RESEA customers is outlined below:

i. On Friday night, customers who received their first UI payment are profiled in WorkinTexas.com and assigned a profile score. WorkInTexas.com includes a feature that allows Workforce Solutions staff to schedule events with openings for RESEA customers to attend an orientation.

ii. On Tuesday, WorkinTexas.com begins automatically scheduling profiled customers for orientations in available slots for RESEA events.

iii. Since there is a lag between when the profiler runs on Friday night and the auto-scheduler begins to fill appointments on Tuesday, staff must review the outreach pool on Monday to ensure enough openings have been created to accommodate the number of customers whose profile scores make them mandatory for RESEA service.

iv. All mandatory customers must be scheduled for an RESEA orientation that is within seven (7) and twenty-one (21) calendar days from the date the scheduler ran (Tuesday) after the Friday the customer was added to the outreach pool. Workforce Solutions staff must make sure that enough events or openings are created so that all mandatory RESEA customers are scheduled for an appointment within the allowable time limit. If there are not enough openings, the customer will be pushed to the next available opening, potentially creating a backlog that may prevent timely delivery of service.

v. Staff must provide required services and update the customer's WorkInTexas.com record within seven (7) calendar days. In WorkInTexas.com staff must:

(a) Update the customer's registration status as follow:

i. **Registered** – default setting. Must be updated after the scheduled orientation date.

ii. **Attended** – Must be entered if a customer attends an RESEA orientation and receives all of the required services.

iii. **Canceled** – Select only when there is a problem with the automated process or a delay in mailing the RESEA orientation letters. Staff must provide an explanation for the canceled status in Case Notes in WorkInTexas.com.

iv. **Exempted** - Select if the customer is exempt from RESEA. Staff must provide an explanation for the exempted status in WorkInTexas.com Case Notes. The Completion Code for the RESEA Orientation service will be automatically updated to Voided.

v. **No Show** - Select if the customer did not attend the RESEA orientation as scheduled, and staff have made at least one unsuccessful attempt to contact the customer to reschedule. When the No Show Reason drop-down menu appears, staff must select an appropriate reason and provide justification for the selection in Case Notes in WorkInTexas.

- Workforce Solutions staff must limit the use of "No Show" Reasons to only those reasons that can be verified and documented with a detailed explanation in WorkInTexas.com Case Notes.
- A "No Show" status automatically sends a notification to the Unemployment Benefits System, which alerts UI staff of the claimant's noncompliance and may cause the claimant's benefits to be suspended or delayed.
- Once the Registration Status has been changed to "No Show", staff can only select "Attended" or "Exempted." Every change made by staff to a claimant's Registration Status will appear on the Programs page (Activities/Enrollment/Service).

(b) Enter all RESEA services (see list on page 13)

Note: If a RESEA customer contacts Workforce Solutions after seven calendar days from their scheduled RESEA orientation date, staff must **not refuse or deny** service to the customer. Workforce Solutions staff must provide and enter in to WorkInTexas.com the required services as soon as possible.

2. **Call-In Notices**

Career office tracking units generate the letters created by the scheduled events in WorkInTexas.com, to customers which call them in to Workforce Solutions. These letters give the customer instructions for contacting us to receive service. The customer must complete the following steps to satisfy their orientation requirements:

a. Review the reemployment services orientation video,
b. Read the Back to Work Agreement, and
c. Schedule an appointment to meet with a Workforce Solutions staff.

3. **Rescheduling**

Sometimes customers have situations or circumstances that inhibit their ability to report to us as required. A customer can reschedule if they contact Workforce Solutions before the originally scheduled date. Workforce Solutions staff may reschedule the claimant with or without good cause no more than two times in WorkInTexas.

~~Rescheduling an orientation without a good cause reason, may cause a potential eligibility issue. Therefore, each time a customer asks to be rescheduled for an RESEA orientation without a good cause reason, the potential unemployment benefits eligibility issue must be reported to UI staff using the Potential UI Eligibility Reporting Template (WF-42) form. (See step 5 below).~~

~~Examples of good cause reasons for rescheduling a customer's RESEA orientation are:~~

- ~~Job interview that conflicts with the scheduled orientation time;~~
- ~~Temporary transportation or temporary child care issues;~~
- ~~A part-time job that conflicts with the scheduled orientation time; or~~
- ~~A short-term personal illness or illness of a minor child.~~

Career office staff must have a process to ~~assess a customer's request for rescheduling and~~ respond quickly to a customer requesting to reschedule an appointment.

~~To reschedule an orientation, staff must take the following actions:~~

~~a. Log in to WorkInTexas.com under their assigned office;~~
~~b. Perform a ***Job Seeker Search*** and bring the customer into focus;~~
~~c. Go to program information under the ***Maintain Account*** tab, click ***View RESEA History;***~~
~~d. Click ***Reschedule*** under the ***Scheduled Orientations*** section;~~
~~e. Click ***Schedule*** under ***Orientation Information; and***~~
~~f. Document the rescheduled date and the reason for rescheduling in counselor notes.~~

If the customer's Registration Status is Registered or Canceled, select "Reschedule" in the Action column and select an upcoming RESEA orientation from the drop-down menu.

~~Additionally, staff must report potential issues about the customer's ability or availability to work if the reason provided by the customer prevents rescheduling within a short period of time.~~

If a customer fails to respond or attend a scheduled orientation three times, the following consequences occur:

- UI staff will suspend the customer's eligibility for unemployment benefits until the customer completes all required services and reports compliance to UI staff.
- The customer can no longer be rescheduled for an orientation in WorkInTexas.com.
- If the customer contacts Workforce Solutions for help in completing the rapid reemployment Back to Work service, including an orientation, staff must **manually** schedule that customer outside of WorkInTexas.com for an orientation and must also allow the customer to participate in all other required RESEA services.
- Workforce Solutions staff must help all claimants who are willing to engage in and complete Back to Work service. **Do not refuse to serve the customer!**

Note: Workforce Solutions staff must manually enter the RESEA Orientation service once the claimant successfully attends a manually scheduled orientation event because WorkInTexas.com does not automatically add the RESEA Orientation service when a claimant is manually scheduled to attend orientation.

4. Failure to Attend an RESEA Follow-up Appointment

There are two scenarios when Workforce Solutions Office staff will schedule a customer for a follow-up appointment:

- When a customer must return to the office after the orientation for a follow-up appointment to complete the required services. This follow-up appointment is a required part of completing the RESEA.
- When the customer has completed all required services but is asked to return to the office for a follow-up appointment related to the goals set in the employment plan. This follow-up appointment is not a required part of completing the RESEA, but failure to attend this appointment may indicate that the customer is not able or available to work.

In both cases, the customer's failure to attend the appointment must be reported according to the Reporting Potential UI Issues section below.

5. Reporting Potential UI Issues

While working with a customer, either to reschedule an orientation or conducting the UI eligibility assessment, a customer may report issues that indicate they may not be available and/or able to work. These issues must be reported to UI staff at Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

Potential issues include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to participate in all required RESEA services, including follow-up appointments (Workforce Solutions staff must include details about the required services in which the claimant failed to participate using the Comments section of the Potential UI Eligibility Reporting Template (WF-42) form;

- Unable to work full-time or unwilling to engage in and be available for full-time work;
- Unable, unavailable, or unwilling to search for work or accept suitable employment; and/or
- Travel or vacation that makes an individual unavailable for work.

Note: If the customer is not able to work or is not available for work for only one day during a week but is able and available during the rest of the benefit week, the customer cannot be determined ineligible for unemployment benefits. Potential unemployment benefits eligibility issues that affect the customer for only one day are not required to be reported using Potential UI Eligibility Reporting Template (WF-42) form.

To report a potential issue to TWC, staff must:

- Document details related to a potential unemployment benefits eligibility issue, which may include any of the following:
  - Unable to work full-time
  - Unwilling to engage in and be available for full-time work
  - Illness or injury for multiple days or weeks;
- Document a customer's failure to complete all required services and provide specific details about the required services the customer failed to participate in using the Comments section of the WF-42 form;
- Complete the Potential UI Eligibility Reporting Template (WF-42) using only the last four digits of the customer's SSN;
- Password-protect and save the form as a Word document;
- Email it as an attachment to LocalWFUIcoordinator@wrksolutions.com;
- Send a follow up email to LocalWFUIcoordinator@wrksolutions.com with the password to open the document;
- Scan the document into DocuWare using the Label "WF42 RESEA Transmittal"; and
- Document actions in counselor notes.

Note: The local workforce coordinator will send the password-protected WF42 to wfui.coordinator@twc.state.tx.us

Staff should NOT release this email address to claimants or the general public.

If a customer is unable to contact UI staff to report compliance, Workforce Solutions staff can help by referring to the information and instructions in Attachment 3 of this document.

6. Exemptions

There may be cases where a RESEA customer is exempt from participating in reemployment services. A customer may be exempt for the following reasons:

- The customer has secured employment or returned to work;
- The customer is attending TWC-approved training;
- The customer lives in or has moved to another state; or

- The distance from the customer's residence to the nearest Workforce Solutions Office creates a travel hardship.

Out-of-State Claimants
If a customer moves out of state after being profiled and assigned an RESEA score, the customer must call UI Tele-Center staff or Workforce Solutions staff to provide the appropriate information about their relocation.

Distance Exemption
Customers may also be exempted from RESEA participation if the distance to the closest Workforce Solutions is great enough to make travel an undue hardship and remote technologies are not readily available. Workforce Solutions staff can provide an exemption if:

- The customer's residence is 50 or more miles from the nearest Workforce Solutions Office and remote technologies, such as TEAMS, Skype, Zoom, FaceTime, and other similar products are not readily available.

Customers who meet any of the above exemptions may be exempted from participating in the RESEA program. To exempt an RESEA claimant from participating, Workforce Solutions Office staff must update the customer's registration status to "Exempt" on the event roster and add a case note with the reason for the exemption in WorkInTexas.com.

Attachment 1
Recording Service

Regardless of how a profiled customer contacts Workforce Solutions and staff completes service and the employment plan, we record our service in both WorkInTexas.com and TWIST.

Following are the steps for recording rapid re-employment service. These steps are ***in addition*** to the regular and usual information we include in a customer's record.

1. **Required Service**
   a. **WorkInTexas**

RESEA #	Adult/DW/ES Service Type	WIT Service Code	WorkInTexas.com Service Name
1	RESEA Orientation, Outreach Self-Service/Registered Individual Only	RSA RSO RSX	RESEA Icon Added (Automatically added for any customer who fall into the outreach pool) RESEA Orientation (Automatically added when a customer is scheduled for a RESEA Orientation) Note: Must be manually entered when a customer completes a manually scheduled orientation outside of WIT. RESEA Exemption
2	Individualized labor market information customized and tailored to meet each claimant's individual needs	CLM	Customized Labor Market Information
3	UI eligibility assessment and referral adjudication in an issue is identified	UEA	UI Eligibility Assessment
4	Development of individual employment plan	EDP	Employability Development Plan 205-Develop Service Strategies (IEP/ISS/EDP) (auto-posts)

Workforce Solutions

i. If a customer attends an RESEA orientation, staff must update the customer's registration status in WorkInTexas.com by selecting "**Attended**" on the event roster.

ii. For customers who report employment or attended a Back to Work orientation within a 12-month period, staff must:

To exempt an RESEA claimant from participating, Workforce Solutions Office staff must update the customer's registration status to "Exempt" on the event roster and add a case note with the reason for the exemption in WorkInTexas.com.

~~Service Category: ***Assessment & Planning*** ⇨ Service: ***RESEA Exemption***~~

b. TWIST

i. Record an employment plan in TWIST. Employment plans must be recorded under the assessment tab in TWIST.

ii. Counselor note subject line: **Rapid Reemployment Orientation**
Notes must include:

a) Summary of your interaction with the customer;

b) Summary of the customized labor market information provided;

c) Documentation of whether the customer is able and available for work; **and**

d) Actions taken to help the customer.

c. DocuWare

i. Use "***RESEA – Orientation***" to label the Back to Work Agreement, a signed Employment Plan, Orientation to Complaint form, and Dislocated Worker supporting documents including the Addendum or Financial Aid Application, if applicable.

ii. Use ***"WF42 RESEA Transmittal"*** to label the Potential UI Eligibility form.

2. Additional Service

a. Tag the profiled customer as a WIOA Dislocated Worker, as appropriate based upon an assessment of the customer's needs and goals. A full financial aid application is required for Dislocated Worker eligibility**.**

Note: RESEA customers who have been outreached within the last 10 weeks qualify for expedited eligibility for Dislocated Worker status. Use a copy of the RESEA outreach letter dated within the past 10 weeks.

b. Help the customer complete a Financial Aid Application for easy access to financial assistance, if applicable.

c. TWIST

i. Update Intake Common in TWIST

The following tabs must be completed/updated by the career office:

(1) Identity;

(2) Contacts;

(3) Characteristics;

(4) Education;

(5) Military;

(6) Employment Status; and

(7) Dislocated Worker

ii. Create a WIOA-Dislocated Worker program detail, if necessary.

iii. Open appropriate services as necessary:

(1) Objective assessment (08) and/or

(2) Employment Plan (68), etc.

Attachment 2
Guidance for the Rapid Re-Employment Interview

When conducting the rapid reemployment interview:

1. Make sure we have assessed a customer's wants and needs, negotiated an employment plan, asked about any unemployment insurance issues, and offered referrals to open jobs, job search seminars, career planning, and education and training opportunities.

2. Make sure the customer's WorkInTexas application, including Wagner Peyser, is complete before ending the interview.

3. Make sure the employment plan has clear next steps and follow-up/return dates.

4. Make sure you have delivered the required six (6) elements for customers.

5. Make sure you encourage the customer to give us feedback through our survey.

6. Give the customer your business card and encourage him or her to call you with any questions or concerns.

Career offices may adjust the sequence, timing and scheduling of an interview depending upon the customer's wants and needs and the staff's judgement.

Don't do the following:

1. Fail to respond to customer appointments, emails, and voice messages in a timely manner.

2. Make a customer complete a WorkInTexas application before arranging for the customer to interview with a staff member.

3. Make customers wait to form a group and then provide service to the group instead of each customer individually.

Attachment 3
Unemployment Benefit Information

Customers can get unemployment benefits information, file a claim, or find the status of an existing claim by using:

- **TWC website:** Log on to ui.texasworkforce.org to apply for benefits or get claim-specific status and payment information. For general eligibility and appeals information, go to www.texasworkforce.org/unemploymentbenefits.
- **Tele-Center:** Call 800-939-6631, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. weekdays, to speak with a **customer service representative**.
- **Tele-Serv:** Call 800-558-8321, the **automated phone system**, from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. to get claim-specific status and payment information.
- Staff with a TWC email address can use the following link to submit requests for assistance: **https://online.twc.state.tx.us/services/telecenter/contactrequest**
- ~~**E-mail:** Send details about your question to ui_info@twc.state.tx.us including your full name, address, phone number, and the last four digits of your SSN.~~

Workforce Staff Helpline

Occasionally, Workforce Solutions staff encounter situations in which they need to speak with a claims specialist or provide special ("meaningful") assistance to a claimant. Each Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) has a dedicated phone number specifically for use by WF staff. The phone number for Gulf Coast is **956-984-4764.** **Staff should NOT release this phone number to claimants or the general public**.

The LWDA number assigned to Gulf Coast is not an additional number for customers who need assistance and cannot get through on the Tele-Center line. The LWDA help line should be used by a staff member who has an unemployment question or when dealing with a challenging customer or unique situation where the staff member or claimant needs immediate assistance from a claims specialist. Workforce Solutions staff should call the LWDA help line from the main Workforce Solutions career office phone number and explain the situation to the claims specialist. If needed, the specialist may ask the staff member to give the phone to the claimant so he or she can speak directly to the claimant.

Verify Identity

TWC is responsible for taking all available steps to identify and stop fraudulent unemployment benefit claims. Unemployment Insurance (UI) staff uses enhanced screening processes to verify the identity of individuals contacting the Tele-Center. In cases where UI staff is unsure of a caller's identity, staff instructs the caller to go to a Workforce Solutions office and present a Social Security card and a current Texas driver license, Texas ID card, or some other photo identification. Workforce Solutions staff must review the photo ID to verify whether the customer is the person in the photo ID. Staff must then contact the UI Tele-Center using the Board's LWDA hotline number, see above, and inform UI staff whether the customer provided information to prove his or her identity. Identity can only be confirmed if a Tele-Center agent speaks to Workforce Solutions staff.