Workforce Solutions

Gulf Coast Adult Education & Literacy

Standards and Guidelines

Contents

I. CONTACT INFORMATION

Houston-Galveston Area Council/Gulf Coast Workforce Board
3555 Timmons, Suite 120
Houston, Texas 77027-3555

Contact Person	AEL Function	Phone	Email
Danielle Shokes Knotts	Consortium Director - Senior Planner	713-993-2468	danielle.shokes-knotts@wrksolutions.net
Doris Moore	Contract Manager	713-993-4523	doris.moore@wrksolutions.com
AJ Dean	Finance Planner	713-993-2404	aj.dean@wrksolutions.com

Region 6 Education Service Center

3332 Montgomery Road

Huntsville, Texas 77340

Contact Person	AEL Function	Phone	Email
Kristi Hayman	Adult Education Director	936-435-8323	khayman@esc6.net
Lupe Schneider	Adult Education Program Coordinator	936-435-8328	lschneider@esc6.net
Carly Woods	Regional PD Coordinator / Education Opportunity Connector Lead	936-435-8432	cmwoods@esc6.net
Kelly Carnline	Career and Transition Specialist / Instructional Lead	936-435-8434	kcarnline@esc6.net
Taylor Creel	TEAMS Specialist / Performance Accountability Lead	936-435-8437	tcreel@esc6.net
Rosa Coss	Distance Learning Lead	936-435-8381	rcoss@esc6.net
Ethan Stroud	Quality Assurance Lead	936-435-8433	estroud@esc6.net
Marian Fletcher	Quality Assurance/ HSE Vouchers	936-435-8324	mfletcher@esc6.net
Angela Dalrymple	Data Analyst	936-435-8436	adalrymple@esc6.net
Julieanna McWhorter	Testing Cohort Lead	936-435-8367	jmcwhorter@esc6.net

II.   BACKGROUND

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board and its operating affiliate Workforce Solutions are the public workforce system in the 13-county Houston-Galveston region. Business-led and community focused, the Workforce Board sets the region's workforce agenda and the strategic direction for Workforce Solutions. The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) is the Board's staff, serving as the system's corporate home office and providing management of and direction to sub recipients that operate within the Workforce Solutions network.

- The Board's mission is to help employers meet their human resource needs and people build careers, so both can compete in the global economy.
- The Board's core values include innovation, productivity, accountability, and results.
- The Board has designed and planned its system – and is working to leverage its resources in the broader regional community – to achieve the following results:
  - Competitive employers;
  - An educated workforce;
  - More and better jobs;
  - Higher incomes; and
  - An increasing return on investment

Workforce Solutions

The Board's operating affiliate Workforce Solutions includes contractors, partners and vendors working together to carry out the Board's mission and achieve the Board's results.

There are five interconnected units, including:

1. Employer Services
2. Career Offices
3. Financial Aid Support Center
4. Financial Aid Payment Office

There are three associated and connected projects that include:

- Community & Youth Project contractors
- Early Education Quality contractor
- Adult Education Consortium providers

Workforce Solutions units and associated projects all work collaboratively together, integrating their activities and aligning staff to deliver high quality service for the region's employers and people.

The Gulf Coast Adult Education and Literacy Consortium (The Consortium)

Residents of our 13-county Gulf Coast region receive Adult Education service through a consortium of organizations.

Organization	Counties Service	Role	Responsibilities
Houston-Galveston Area Council/Gulf Coast Workforce Board	All 13 Counties	Administrator	Administer grant funds, establish policies and procedures, monitor for service compliance
Region 6 Education Service Center	All 13 Counties	Lead Agency	Technical assistance and professional development support for consortium
Adult Education Center, Pearland	Brazoria	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy service
Alliance for Multicultural Community Services	Harris	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy service
The Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans	Harris	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy service
BakerRipley	Harris	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy service
Brazosport College	Brazoria	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy service
Boys and Girls Club of Walker County	Walker	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy service
Chinese Community Center	Harris	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy service
College of the Mainland	Chambers and Galveston	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy service
Community Family Centers	Harris	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy service
Harris County Department of Education	Harris and Liberty	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy service
Houston Community College	Fort Bend and Harris	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy service
Lone Star College	Harris, Montgomery, and Walker	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy service
San Jacinto College	Harris	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy service

Wharton County Junior College	Austin, Colorado, Fort Bend, Waller, Wharton, and Matagorda	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy service

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

• Houston-Galveston Area Council
- o **Consortium Director** -- primary contact between the Texas Workforce Commission and the entire consortium; works closely with the director of the lead organization to achieve goals and objectives; and monitors all fiscal responsibilities to ensure the consortium is utilizing adult education funds appropriately.
- o **H-GAC Staff** – other staff members designated by the Consortium Director to help with oversight regarding data, contract management, and communication standards that are set forth by H-GAC.

• Lead Organization
- o **Director** – responsible for oversight of consortium goals and objectives; implementation of monitoring criteria with regards to service delivery and content; management of staff who are responsible for compiling required documentation from each Adult Education and Literacy service provider; and presentation of all required materials and information to identified H-GAC staff.
- o **Professional Development Coordinator** – maintains communication regarding professional development with each Adult Education and Literacy service provider, designated staff and the program assistants assigned to Adult Education service providers; facilitates the requests of local providers with consultants for Tier 1 trainings; works with provider's professional development contact and the specialists at the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning to obtain needed Tier 2 trainings; compiles all requested professional development documentation and provides technical assistance to include, but is not limited to:

  - Collecting professional development detailed plans provided by all service providers;
  - Maintaining a listing of all professional development that each service provider intends to offer;
  - Ensuring these trainings are placed on the H-GAC calendar of events in the Adult Education section of their website as well as communicated with Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning to be placed in the statewide list of trainings;
  - Assisting service providers in maximizing professional development funds for the utilization of appropriate Tier 1 trainings;
  - Managing contract obligations relating to professional development service provided to Adult Education Providers; and
  - Collecting copies of sign-in sheets, evaluations, agendas and/or presentations.

- o **Program Assistants Specialists**– work directly with all service providers to answer questions related to their area of expertise. They serve as an extension of the lead organization to help identify areas in need of improvement. Monitoring will be conducted annually and consistent with the monitoring

process outlined by H-GAC. Program Specialists work closely with the Lead Organization Director, Professional Development Coordinator and Quality Assurance Lead to assist in meeting deadlines and service delivery requirements.

o **Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS) Specialist** – works with data management personnel at H-GAC to identify gaps in data; works closely with the Lead Organization Director to ensure data validity and prepare quarterly sign-offs of classes for the entire consortium. Serves as the contact with regards to data questions/concerns that need to be clarified by H-GAC data management personnel.

o **Staff Management for Service Providers** – each service provider will maintain specific positions necessary and appropriate to ensure quality service delivery. Providers may combine or divide positions and/or functions as necessary to ensure optimum operational efficiency. These essential positions and their functions include, but are not limited to:

- The director is responsible for the management of the day to-day operations of the local provider's Adult Education service. They will serve as the primary point of contact for Program Specialists at the lead organization and H-GAC. They will work with their staff to provide good service, gather information, and meet performance objectives and timelines for deliverables.

- Supervisors will facilitate the direction and implementation of Adult Education service. Such positions include, but are not limited to:
  1. TEAMS Supervisor
  2. Professional Development contact
  3. Instructional Coordinator
- Instructional staff must be well-versed in-service delivery and instructional practices and meet the minimum qualifications as indicated in individual service provider organization requirements.
- Data-Entry Staff members are responsible for the timely entry of participant data into TEAMS to meet data sign-off.

III. SERVICE DELIVERY

The Adult Education and Literacy Consortium will make every effort to provide first-rate Adult Education service to all customers. To help maintain quality and consistency across the consortium, the service delivery categories described below provide guidance for recruitment, intake, assessment, orientation, and data management

Recruitment
o Service providers must identify and reach the eligible population to be served, including those identified as most in need of literacy service, including individuals who are low income or have minimal literacy skills.

- o Service providers must utilize multilingual recruitment efforts based on a survey of major language groups in the communities served. Recruitment materials must be approved by H-GAC before distribution.
- o Service providers should utilize multiple organizations to aid recruitment efforts, such as, Workforce Solutions offices, schools, businesses, faith and community-based organizations, community colleges, and health service agencies. The appropriate Adult Education Provider will contact the customers referred to them to arrange intake and placement.
- o At a minimum, service providers must recruit and serve the contracted numbers of students as assigned by county and type of service. Providers should explore all opportunities and document all efforts at meeting contracted enrollment numbers.
- o Service providers must develop written procedures for wait list management that includes information regarding alternate educational or workforce service for customers waiting to attend class as well as follow-up/contact procedures when space becomes available, to include phone call, email, postal mail, and/or other communication methods. Procedures must be outlined in the service provider's SOPs.
- o All service providers must ensure recruitment procedures are in line with the most current Texas AEL Guide.

Intake and Screening

- o Providers must ensure that each customer completes and signs a release of information form in order to share information with any other entities, which includes entry into the TEAMS database.
- o The signed release must address Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requirements and include what specific types of records may be released, by whom and to whom they may be released and for which purposes.
- o The intake and screening process must:
  - Be secured and based on the needs of the eligible population;
  - Document Student eligibility;
  - Provide referrals to those who are found not eligible or who may better benefit from other services, and identify areas that require further assessment and review including, but not limited to:
    1. Suspected disabilities
    2. High-level limited English proficiency
  - Eligibility for college remedial or developmental education service
  - Ensure that every student has properly completed and signed a Student Enrollment Form
- o Providers must implement a process for obtaining a copy of an approved form of identification during the assessment process; this process must be documented in the provider's standard operating procedures (SOPs) for comprehensive assessment and must be in line with ***AEL Letter 05-18, titled "Approved Forms of Identity"*** [1]*.* Service providers must include a copy of one of the following forms of identification in an individual's file to document the individual's identity:
  - Birth Certificate

- Official record showing date of birth
- Baptismal record
- DD-214, Certificate of Release of Discharge from Active Duty
- Driver's License
- Federal, state, or local government identification card
- Hospital record of birth
- Passport
- Public assistance/social service record
- School records
- School identification card
- Work permit
- Native American tribal document
- Other official documents issued by a federal, state, or local government agency, such as discharge documents from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, with date of birth included, or a voter registration card or certificate.
- Other official documents issued by a foreign government agency, such as a consular identification card

To document identity, AEL service providers may:

- Accept approved forms of identification from another state or country;
- Accept approved forms of identification that are expired; and
- Required additional forms of identification for enrollment into the local AEL program

[1] AEL Letter 05-18, titled *"Approved Forms of Identity"* provides information and guidance on the collection of identification from participants, specifically the acceptable forms of identification and when to collect.

Note: When available, providers should also verify the customer's authorization to work in the United States against acceptable I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification documents. If work authorization documents cannot be verified, a local ID number may be created and used to track student progress.
- o All service providers must ensure intake and screening procedures are in line with the most current Texas AEL Guide including updated guidance issued via AEL Letters.
- o Guidance related to special circumstances because of temporary disruption of services can be found in Appendix A.

Comprehensive Assessment

Assessment procedures must include, at a minimum, a sequence of service comprised of:

- o A process for collecting qualitative information to determine student needs and service eligibility, including, but not limited to:
  - Documented student eligibility;
  - Information required on the Unified Enrollment Form which must be properly completed, signed and dated;

- Release of information form; each student file must have a release of information form so that relevant information can be shared as necessary with other entities, including entry into the TEAMS database. The signed release must address Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requirements and include the specific types of records may be released, the names of entities authorized to release and receive information, and the purpose of information released;
- Education and training interests;
- Education and work history both in the U.S. and in the student's home country, if applicable;
- Support needs, including needs of students with disabilities; and Information on the abilities of the students in his or her first languages.

o A process for referring those who are found ineligible or who may better benefit from other services, and identify areas that require further assessment and review;

o A strategy for determining appropriate testing instruments and proper placements for all students including higher-skilled limited English proficiency students, including those who are professionals with degrees and/or credentials in their native country;

Exceptions to these assessments can be found in the AEL Testing Guide and must conform to the assessment publisher's administrative guidelines.

o Scheduled pre-and post-tests that are administered in environments conducive to testing and coincide with service enrollment dates to avoid lengthy gaps between assessments and service; and

o Adult Education class placement or referral to the most appropriate service(s) to address immediate student needs and goals including referral to collaborating organization services, if necessary. This includes, but is not limited to, referrals to testing organizations for the Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency (TxCHSE), Workforce Solutions offices, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, high school drop-out recovery programs, local community college services, literacy tutoring, native language reading instruction, native language Certificate of High School Equivalency preparation, other literacy services, as well as organizations and agencies in the community that provide social services in the areas of counseling, disability supports, or homelessness and emergency assistance

o Guidance related to special circumstances because of temporary disruption of services can be found in Appendix A.

Testing in One Content Area Flexibility

Effective July 1, 2019, providers can test individuals in one content area to determine eligibility, enroll an individual in a class if the individual is found eligible, then stagger delivery of the remaining content area tests after the start of services.

Providers retain the option to administer all tests to an individual at one time, or more than one test in a series, before placing the participant in a class.

The provider must complete testing in the remaining content areas within five class days of direct instruction, but no later than the first 12 contact hours, unless the individual has requested an exemption from testing in all content areas.

According to TWC, if a program chooses to only test a student in one area due to remote testing complications, it needs to be documented as an exception in the student's folder and the participant's notes in TEAMS.

H-GAC has developed a unified Assessment Documentation Form which should be utilized by all programs and for all students effective September 1, 2020

Exemptions from Testing in All Content Areas

According to TWC, providers must retain documentation of the reason for not administering all content areas of the pre-test with the following exceptions:

1. Participant is a referral from a college with documented TSIA Score(s)
2. Participant is enrolling in a class that only provides instruction in one content area, for example, a Math TSIA Boot Camp
3. Participant has passed a section(s) of the Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency (TxCHSE)
4. Participant is enrolling in an IET program and may be administered the content area most relevant to measuring the participant's success in the IET
5. Another documented reason for only administering one content area, such as a specific participant goal or objective.

*NOTE: NON-APPROVED NRS TEST ARE NOT ALLOWED – ONLY APPROVED NRS TEST ALLOWED FOR GULF COAST CONSORTIUM.

Orientation

Like Comprehensive Assessment, Orientation is part of the entry phase of service delivery. Service Providers must implement an orientation that:

- o Is available for students every two weeks;
  - Provides information about Adult Education and collaborating organization services, attendance policy, class participation, student support service, emergency evacuation procedures, grievance procedures, rights and responsibilities of students, and code of conduct;
- o Includes distribution and review of a participant syllabus and program handbook;
- o Ensures that all students including limited English proficiency students and those with disabilities understand and have access to service information;
- o Includes initial development of an Individual Training, Education and Career Plan with short and long-term goal setting, and may be completed after orientation. Providers may use the Unified ITEC Form or any other ITEC plan that has been approved by H-GAC;
- o Includes instruction in student success skills; and

- o   Ranges in length from a minimum of three (3) hours to a maximum of twelve (12) hours and cannot be documented as direct contact hours.
- o   Guidance related to special circumstances because of temporary disruption of services can be found in Appendix A.

IV. DATA MANAGEMENT

All AEL participant data is entered and tracked into TEAMS (Texas Educating Adults Management System), the data management system for federally-funded AEL programs in Texas. TEAMS provides users a wide range of information sources to analyze student-level data in areas such as demographic, assessment, program, class, site, provider information, and outcomes in performance and credential achievement.

TEAMS Access

TEAMS Access & Usage within the Gulf Coast Consortium: Program Directors are responsible for assigning access levels to their staff. Access should be limited to what is necessary and reasonable for an individual to perform his or her job. Program Directors may assign "read only" access to teachers and non-data entry staff in TEAMS. All teachers must either have access to TEAMS or regular access to TEAMS data.

To gain access to TEAMS, both new, inactive users, and existing/returning staff members must follow the requirements listed below.

Existing Users

For the staff who currently have TEAMS access and are up to date, they will need to submit the required documentation (DocuSign P41c and TWC CyberSecurity training) annually to maintain TEAMS access. If an account is locked for more than 90 days, access will be revoked, and the staff will need to submit all requirements (P41c/FERPA/CyberSecurity) to regain access to TEAMS.

Requirements:
- o   Complete AEL Information Resources Usage Agreement – DocuSign P41c
- o   Complete TWC CyberSecurity Awareness Training
- o   Submit both documents to Region 6, documents sent straight to TWC will result in delays in processing.
- o   ***The deadline for this is 7/31/2022.***

Inactive Users

In order to regain access to TEAMS, staff on this list will need to submit all requirements of P41c/FERPA/CyberSecurity.

2. Requirements:
   o Complete AEL Information Resources Usage Agreement – DocuSign P41c
   o Complete TWC CyberSecurity Awareness Training
   o Complete TWC FERPA Training
   o Submit P-41c, CyberSecurity, and FERPA documents to Region 6, documents sent straight to TWC will result in delays in processing.

New Users

Please see Appendix: Instructions for Accessing TEAMS document for more extensive instructions for obtaining access to TEAMS.

- Requirements:
  o Complete AEL Information Resources Usage Agreement – DocuSign P41c (Staff and TEAMSTA automatically receive a copy once complete- no need to send P41c to TEAMSTA)
  o Complete TWC CyberSecurity Awareness Training
  o Complete TWC FERPA Training
  o New User – Set up a User ID
  o Submit P-41c, CyberSecurity, and FERPA documents to Region 6, documents sent straight to TWC will result in delays in processing.

Each Staff documentation should be submitted in a separate file, do not combine multiple staff information in one file.

DO NOT SUBMIT DIRECTLY TO teamstechnicalassistance@twc.state.tx.us. Only the TEAMS Specialist and Consortium Director are authorized to submit TEAMS access requests to TWC.

NOTE: On October 17, 2022, Houston-Galveston Area Council implemented a one-time requirement for all staff with TEAMS access to recomplete security trainings for P-41c, Cybersecurity and FERPA for the 2022-2023 program year. Deadline date for recompleted P-41c, Cybersecurity, and FERPA security trainings is *November 14, 2022.* Deadline date for submittal of recompleted P-41c, Cybersecurity, and FERPA security trainings certificates to Region 6 is *November 14, 2022.*

TEAMS Usage

AEL Information Resources Usage Agreement Form P-41c must be completed annually and submitted to the Lead Agency to maintain TEAMS access.

- All staff should complete training required by TWC and H-GAC, including the Texas Workforce Commission's Information Security and Fraud trainings at hire and annually.
- All Service Providers must email H-GAC and the Lead Agency within 24 hours of an employee separation or suspension so that access to TEAMS can be removed. Exceptions to the 24-hour rule are allowed for special circumstances (i.e. weekends, holidays, end of workday, emergencies, etc.)
- To adhere to TWC's data security requirements, Service Providers must regularly review staff member access to TEAMS. H-GAC and the Lead Agency will ask for updated access lists on a quarterly basis, or as requested by TWC.
- Providers should be aware that, per *AEL Letter 02-18, Change 1, titled "Procedures and Required Documentation for Access To the Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS)"[2]*, individuals who do not access TEAMS for 90 days may have their access revoked and must complete the prerequisite requirements to regain access to the system. Additionally, Service Providers must review and approve staff members who have access to TEAMS and are assigned access to their ID in TEAMS, and the providers must provide feedback to the **Lead Agency TEAMS Specialist** about individuals whose access should be removed or modified.
- Providers should develop and implement local training processes to ensure accurate documentation and data management, including timely data entry into TEAMS.
- Providers must ensure Instructors have access to TEAMS data and implement data analysis processes for instructional and post-testing purposes.
- Any and all issues with TEAMS should be reported to the Lead Agency TEAMS Specialist within 24 hours of discovery.

TEAMS Roles

[2] AEL Letter 02-18, Chg 1, titled *"Procedures and Required Documentation for Access to the Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS)"* provides updated information and guidance on the new form P-41c, Information Resources Usage Agreement, and on additional requirements for the yearly renewal and notification procedures for removal of access

ROLE	ACCESS ABILITY
READER	View all provider, staff development, classes, student profiles, and student hours' information excluding staff full SSN for the group to which they are assigned. These groups include the following: 1. Reader – view data for the entire Grant Recipient 2. <u>Site Reader</u> – view data for a specific site 3. Staff Reader– view data for a specific class 4. Run reports for information on students included within their assigned group. NOTE: The name of the particular site or particular class that a Reader can access must be included in the Director's approval email to TWC for TEAMS access.
STAFF (DATA ENTRY Positions)	For the entire Grant Recipient, the Staff Role CAN: 1. Create and edit student contact and profile information 1. Enter and edit student assessment and career training services • Register students for and drop students from classes 2. Enter student hours 3. View all provider, staff development, classes, student profiles, and student hours, information excluding staff full SSN 4. Run all reports Perform all other tasks listed under **READER**.
SUPERVISOR	For the entire Grant Recipient, the Supervisor Role CAN: 1. Perform supervisor validation of student hours 1. Create and edit sites and classes, including assigning staff or dropping staff from classes 2. Enter/edit staff information and staff development hours • View all provider, staff development, classes, student profiles, and student hours' information, including SSN for students and staff Perform all other tasks listed under STAFF.

Data Collection

Each provider must maintain enrollment, assessment, attendance, applicable documentation determining underage eligibility, and achievement/outcome materials for each student as outlined in the Texas AEL Guide and the Testing Guide. All documentation must be available for monitoring.

Data Entry

Each provider must enter data on a regular and timely basis in preparation for monthly validations and quarterly data sign-off. All data-entry must be supervisor validated at least one week prior to monthly validation and data sign-off for the Consortium. The timeline and information for all data validation and sign-off will be communicated directly by the Lead Agency TEAMS Specialist. Each individual Service Provider will be held accountable for late and/or missing TEAMS data based on the standard above. To ensure effective and efficient data validation processes, each Provider will be responsible for providing a process map and short narrative detailing the following:

- o   The method for checking data quality;
- o   The process for resolution of missing or inaccurate data;
- o   The critical roles for responsible parties throughout the investigation and resolution process;
- o   A timeline for resolution including identifiable benchmarks that can be reviewed for quality improvement (for example, all identified data issues will be resolved within 10 working days);
- o   A list of staff names who will be performing TEAMS data entry and data validations.

Process maps and narratives must be submitted to the Lead Agency annually to be reviewed and edited as needed. The Lead Agency will use this document to evaluate the effectiveness of each Provider.

Managing Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

PII is information that can distinguish an individual's identity, either alone or when combined with other personal or identifying information. Providers must take all precautions to secure and protect customer's personal information in both print and electronic forms. This includes but is not limited to storing documents in locked file rooms or cabinets, locking computers when away and password protecting emails which contain sensitive customer information to ensure data security.

All Service Providers must comply with the security of PII and other sensitive information in accordance with **WD Letter 02-18, titled "Handling and Protection of Personally Identifiable Information and Other Sensitive Information"[3]**. Service Providers must ensure the security of PII and other sensitive information by:

- Limit access to sensitive printed materials;
- Use proper storage for materials that include personal identity data;
- When possible, shred documents that include personal identity data after use;
- Secure laptop computers when not in use;

- Do not leave documents that include personal identity data in plain view;
- Do not share passwords, personal identification numbers, security tokens (e.g. smartcards), or any data or equipment used for authentication and identification purposes;
- Log off of computers when leaving them unattended, no matter for how short a time;
- Do not send any personal identity data in the subject or body of an e-mail; instead, save the data to a secure document using the password protection option and send the document as an attachment in a separate email; and
- Use password protection when saving personal identity data in a document that will be transported on a laptop computer or portable storage device.

3 WD Letter 02-18, titled *"Handling and Protection of Personally Identifiable Information and Other Sensitive Information"* provides information and guidance on handling personally identifiable information (PII) and other sensitive information, specifically requirements for the handling and protection of PII and recommended best practices.

For additional information, please refer to the current Texas AEL Guide and the Workforce Solutions Information Security Standards and Guidelines.

Data Quality

Each Provider must have a system for identifying missing and inaccurate data to help ensure data accuracy and integrity. The system should be described using a process map and short narrative detailing:

- The method for checking data quality,
- The process for resolution of missing or inaccurate data,
- The critical roles for responsible parties throughout the investigation and resolution including identifiable benchmarks that can be reviewed for quality improvement (for example, all identified data issues should be resolved within 10 working days).

Process maps and narratives should be reviewed, edited as needed, and submitted to the Lead Agency annually.

Reporting

Each Provider should review regular reports in TEAMS to monitor student data and outcomes and analyze overall provider performance.

Detailed Procedure

Naming Conventions in TEAMS

Provider Name	Provider Acronym
Adult Education Center – Pearland	AECP
Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans	AAMA
Alliance for Multicultural Community Service	AMCS
BakerRipley	BR
Boys and Girls Club of Walker County	BGC
Brazosport College	BC
Chinese Community Center	CCC
College of the Mainland	COM
Community Family Centers	CFC
Harris County Department of Education	HCDE
Houston Community College System	HCC
Lone Star College System	LSC
San Jacinto College	SJC
Wharton County Junior College	WCJC

Site Naming Conventions: Site names must begin with the provider's acronym followed by a space dash space (BC – Example Site).

For Remote/Virtual Sites: Create one site per county.

Example: WCJC – Online Campus (Austin County)

New sites must be director validated. Contact Lead Agency TEAMS when new sites are created. Sites need to be director validated before the contact hours can be validated. TWC may need to modify TEAMS Access to staff when a new site is added, if an issue arises, contact the Lead Agency TEAMS Specialist.

Class Naming Conventions: The program acronym is not required for the class name and may contain other information. However, all class names should clearly reflect the **activity** being performed and therefore the corresponding **funding codes**. For example, BC201 – EL Civics.

RL – Remote Learning: synchronous instruction conducted online

HL – Hybrid Learning: defined as a combination of F2F (Face-to-Face) & Online

DL – Distance Learning: defined as only proxy hours, not a supplement to RL or HL

IET Classes: Each class name should clearly indicate whether it is the training or direct component.

It is recommended that the Employer name or Training name is in the class name and class description. This helps to easily identify what type of training is being provided, and/or, what employer the class is for. IETs must be linked to Training Services for PY 22-23 and there must be a training class (training hours) and basic education class (direct hours) attached to the Training Service unless implementing an I-Best or Co-Teaching Model (training and direct hours are tracked in the same class).

T – Training Hours: for the training component of an IET

D – Direct Instruction: for the contextualized component of an IET

> **Example:** IET ELC – Pipefitting – T
>
> **Example:** IET ELC – Pipefitting – D

Staff Development Activity Names: All local training should begin with the designated program acronym. For example, ABC – TABE 11/12 Training.

To avoid duplicating PD activities in TEAMS, Service Providers must be aware of when it is TRAIN PD or Region 6's responsibility to enter staff development activities and when it is the Provider's responsibility.

1. TRAIN PD will build all State Conference, National Conference, Tier 2 Trainings and PD Portal Activities into TEAMS. Providers are to associate staff members to those sessions in TEAMS. **NOTE: PLEASE DO NOT BUILD THESE ACTIVITIES IN TEAMS**
2. Region 6 will build activities that are sponsored/provided by lead agency staff. Lead Agency PD Coordinator will communicate with AEL Service Providers when these sessions are built in TEAMS (these sessions will follow the abbreviation ESC6 - Name of Training). Providers are to associate staff members to those sessions in TEAMS.
3. AEL Service Providers will build all other provider specific sessions in TEAMS (follow the correct provider abbreviations as indicated in the Data Entry section under Naming Conventions in TEAMS). Providers will also associate any staff members in attendance under session.

IETs and Training Services: After a training has been approved by H-GAC, the provider will add a new training service in TEAMS. Unless an IET is utilizing the I-BEST model, there will be two separate classes in TEAMS attached to each training service. The direct contact hours from the contextualized component will be entered in one class and the training hours will be entered into a separate class.

Training services should reflect the actual dates in which they occur, including separate cohorts throughout the program year.

As stated in ***AEL Letter 03-17, titled "Implementing and Reporting Workforce Training under the Integrated Education and Training Approach to Service Delivery"[5]***, AEL Service Providers must enter all Workforce Training hours associated with IET in TEAMS, including Workforce Training that is supported

by leveraged funds from other appropriate resources. Workforce Training hours do not count as direct contact hours for use in circumstances such as pre- and post-testing for Measurable Skills Gains.

> 4 An Integrated Basic Education Skills Training (I-BEST) approach creates classroom teams of ESL/ABE and technical instructors who co-teach an integrated course of basic skills and vocational training at the same time.

> 5 AEL Letter 03-17, titled *"Implementing and Reporting Workforce Training under the Integrated Education and Training Approach to Service Delivery"* provides information and guidance on implementing Workforce Training as part of the Integrated Education and Training (IET) approach to service delivery.

Service Providers must document daily student attendance in Workforce Training to ensure that students obtain the intensity of services needed to support advancement and completion of common learning objectives. Providers must also add the following training details in TEAMS, in accordance with WIOA requirements:

- Name of the training provider;
- Dates that the participant entered/exited training;
- Type of training/program of study;
- Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code; and
- Date that the participant completed or withdrew from the training

Additionally, Service Providers must submit plans that describe how Workforce Training uses the IET approach to service delivery (including Integrated EL Civics).

Participant Data and Attendance

Duplicate TEAMS Student Records: Per *AEL Letter 02-19, titled "Collection of Certain Participant Information for Performance Reporting"[6]*, AEL Service Provider staff must ask **ALL** students at Orientation if they have previously attended adult education classes with any provider, and if they have a Social Security Number (SSN) available. Although an SSN is not required for admittance into an AEL program, it serves several purposes for students and providers, especially for those students seeking High School Equivalency (HSE). In order to track HSE completion for the Measurable Skills Gain required WIOA performance target, the SSN is required. If the provider is going to record a driver's license or identification number presented by the participant, it MUST be a permanent, Texas issued DL or ID.

Orientation Hours: Orientation hours do not count towards direct contact hours but are still required. The orientation hours are entered for each individual student as a Career and Training

Service. In the comments section, all verifying data should be added:

- Times Signed In/Out
- Location Orientation Occurred
- Data Entry Initials and Date Entered

Attendance: Class sign-in sheets must document class number, class name, date, class location, teacher name, teacher signature, participant names, participant signatures, and time in and out. When documenting class time, students must reflect actual clock time not scheduled class time. Student's total

time is rounded to the nearest quarter hour, for seven minutes or less, round down, for eight minutes or more, round up.

6 [AEL Letter 02-19](#), titled *"Collection of Certain Participant Information for Performance Reporting"* provides information and guidance on the importance of collecting Social Security numbers (SSNs), Texas driver's license numbers, and Texas identification (ID) numbers to determine eligibility for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and to obtain confirmed data on an individual's measurable skill gains and the exit based performance measures of employment, earnings, and credentials that are used for performance reporting.

Age-Related Eligibility: In accordance with ***AEL Letter 05-17, titled "Self-Attestation for Age-Related Eligibility"[7]***, Service Providers must maintain documentation that a participant between the ages of 16-18 who has not attained a high school diploma, or its equivalent meets an exemption defined in Texas Education Code (TEC) §25.086. For 17 and 18-year-old individuals, the [Self-Attestation form](#) is acceptable if there is no other documentation available.

Data Entry Process Flow, Management and Reporting

AEL Service Providers must be aware that the receipt of state and federal funds mandates the reporting of participants who have received an NRS approved pre-test and one (1) or more direct contact hours in TEAMS. All participants must be pre-tested prior to enrolling in direct contact hours, and students with a pre-test must be enrolled in TEAMS.

Participants who have attended twelve (12) or more contact hours within a Period of Participation (PoP) are considered enrolled by NRS and reported to the U.S. Department of Education and the Texas Legislative Budget Board.

AEL Service Providers must collect and enter data into TEAMS at least bi-weekly, with no more than two (2) weeks between an activity being reported in TEAMS (i.e. Teacher/Instructor, Data Entry Clerk, Career Pathways Navigator). Data type examples entered bi-weekly are participation hours, assessments (pre and post-tests), workforce training attendance hours, and counselor notes.

Guidance related to special circumstances because of temporary disruption of services can be found in Appendix A.

Data Validation Process

The data validation process is to provide a standardized method in reviewing and approving the information that is entered into TEAMS on a regular basis. The purpose of data validation is to provide data that is clean, accurate, and helpful for analysis and reporting. Inaccurate data can negatively impact performance, impede strategic planning for ongoing or future projects, and mislead classroom instruction.

Please note that, except for quarterly data sign-offs, each monthly validation is for the previous month's data only. Monthly validations only lock the contact hours and funding codes for that given period.

H-GAC 2022-2023	
Supervisor Validation Deadlines	**Director Validation Deadlines**
Monday, August 8th	Monday, August 15th
Thursday, September 8th	Thursday, September 15th
Friday, October 7th	Friday, October 14th - **Quarter 1 DSO**
Tuesday, November 8th	Tuesday, November 15th
Thursday, December 8th	Thursday, December 15th
Friday, January 6th	Friday, January 13th - **Quarter 2 DSO**
Wednesday, February 8th	Wednesday, February 15th
Wednesday, March 8th	Wednesday, March 15th
Friday, April 7th	Friday, April 14th - **Quarter 3 DSO**
Monday, May 8th	Monday, May 15th
Thursday, June 8th	Thursday, June 15th
Friday, July 7th	Friday, July 14th - **Quarter 4 & Final DSO**

Invalidation of classes will be requested as a consortium on a quarterly basis in preparation for quarterly data sign-offs. To request an invalidation of a class, the Provider will need to submit the invalidation form to explain what needs to be corrected. The invalidation form will be provided by and submitted to the Lead Agency TEAMS Specialist.

Once the final data validation step has been completed, information in TEAMS cannot be changed without special requests through H-GAC to TWC. This is not expected to be a common practice due to the following Data Validation schedule in place

7 AEL Letter 05-17, titled *"Self-Attestation for Age-Related Eligibility"* provides information and guidance on how to accurately document age-related eligibility for AEL services.

H-GAC Invalidation Deadlines	
Dates are Subject to Change	
Quarter 1 DSO	Wednesday, September 28th
Quarter 2 DSO	Friday, December 16th
Quarter 3 DSO	Friday, March 31st
Quarter 4 & Final DSO	Monday, June 26th

V. SERVICE CONTENT

Service Providers are expected to:

- Meet contractual obligations to include expenditure, service delivery, and administrative outcomes.
- Strive to meet their contracted performance measures. Students must meet the minimum eligibility requirements set by state and federal guidelines.
- Schedule year-round service delivery that include flexible schedules that allow students to begin Orientation or Workforce Preparation Activities at no-less than two-week intervals and instructional services no-less than four times a year.
- Keep student documentation in a secure location and ensure all data entered in TEAMS is consistent with this documentation.

AEL Instruction

Providers in the Gulf Coast AEL Consortium will implement Instruction for adults in basic skills to include reading, writing, math, English language proficiency, and problem solving to be productive workers, family members and citizens. AEL Instruction includes Basic Literacy, Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education and English as a Second Language in accordance with the Texas AEL Guide.

- **Basic Literacy** – Instruction in basic reading. Support in the deconstruction, interpretation and use of text. Includes identifiable stages in word recognition, meaning, comprehension and reading rate.
- **Adult Basic Education** – activities and instruction for adults who function in the elementary levels through eighth grade. Instruction provided in reading, math, communication skills, social and physical sciences, health, digital literacy, and career and college readiness. Adult Basic Education includes NRS functioning levels 1-4 for participants as outlined in individual assessments and performance.
- **Adult Secondary Education** – activities and instruction provided in reading, math and writing for participants functioning in the NRS levels 5 & 6 as outlined in individual assessment and performance. This instruction is comparable to instruction obtained in secondary high school and college development education.
- **Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency (TxCHSE)** Preparation and Instruction – includes, but is not limited to, instruction, pre-testing, referral and guidance through the high school equivalency testing process or referral to High School Drop-Out Recovery Programs. Participants earn the TxCHSE by taking and successfully passing one of the state-approved high school equivalency assessments.
- **English as a Second Language** – activities and instruction in reading, writing, speaking and comprehension of the English language that supports English Language Learners. These individuals are organized in six functioning levels as indicated by NRS ESL Levels 1- 6.

English Literacy/Civics (EL Civics)

Instruction emphasizes contextualized instruction of the English Language and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, naturalization procedures, civic participation, and U.S. history and government to help students acquire the skills and knowledge to become active and informed workers and community members.

EL Civics instruction must be offered either as an Integrated Activity within ESL classes, in EL Civics only classes and/or an IET EL Civics Career Pathways as outlined in *AEL Letter 04-16, Change 2, titled "Implementing Integrated Education and Training English Literacy and Civics Education"[8].* If offered in an integrated setting, documentation must separate funding sources for both instructor and student time in class.

8 [AEL Letter 04-16, Chg. 2](#), titled *"Implementing Integrated Education and Training English Literacy and Civics Education – Update"* provides information and guidance on implementing Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) §243, Integrated Education and Training English Literacy and Civics Education

Bilingual Instruction

Gaining competency in English is an important goal for ESL participants, but High School Equivalency is often an equally important goal.

According to *AEL Letter 02-17, titled "Assessing English Language Learners in the Adult Education and Literacy Program,"[9]* bilingual Instruction may be used to instruct ESL participants whenever it is appropriate for these participants. Service Providers supporting students towards Spanish Language High School Equivalency must determine the most appropriate assessment test to administer based on the individual's English language proficiency and goals.

If Service Providers use comprehensive assessments to determine adequate proficiency in English, Service Providers must document in the student's file how English proficiency was determined. Examples of the facts in which a determination of proficiency is based include:

- the student tested out of range on a state-approved ESL test;
- the student completed an alternate ESL assessment, including locally developed assessments, that verified sufficient English proficiency for the student to meet his or her goals; and
- the student is entering an AEL program from a community college with information from the Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) that identifies the student as an ELL who is deficient in one or more content areas on the TSIA.

For additional information, please refer to the current [Texas AEL Guide](#).

Required Syllabus for AEL Instruction

Providers in the Gulf Coast AEL Consortium are required to provide all participants with a syllabus for each course in a program of study. As stated in **AEL Letter 07-17, Change 1, titled "Required Syllabus Design for Adult Education and Literacy Instruction – Update,"[10]** all syllabi must have the following elements:

- General Information, including any fees or costs related to the course;
- Information about the instructor, including the instructor's name and contact information;
- Course location;
- Course calendar, including class hours, start and end dates, and holidays;

(Integrated EL Civics). Additionally, this letter adds a requirement that all English as a Second Language (ESL) services and curricula include a civics component beginning July 1, 2021.

9 [AEL Letter 02-17](#), titled *"Assessing English Language Learners in the Adult Education and Literacy Program"* provides information on assessing English Language Learners(ELLs).

10 [AEL Letter 07-17, Chg. 1](#), titled *"Required Syllabus Design for Adult Education and Literacy Instruction – Update"* provides information and guidance on developing syllabi for AEL instructional programs, including specific guidance on English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, high school equivalency (HSE) programs, and Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs.

- Course objectives and how they align with the content standards;
- Attendance policy, including methods for making up missed classes or completing missed work;
- Expectations for course participation, homework, and outside instructional support such as distance learning;
- Methodology for evaluation and/or grading;
- A list of the necessary learning tools and resources (such as textbooks, digital resources and applications, laptops, and calculators) and information on which of these resources are provided by the program and which must be acquired by the student; and
- A list of additional forms of support for students, such as contacts for career navigators and counselors; contacts for TWC resources, such as Vocational Rehabilitation and Workforce Solutions Offices; and contacts for services offered by collaborating organizations.

Providers must include information in the syllabus for each course in an ESL program showing how the course addresses the AEFLA requirements to:

- align with the content standards, including a civics component that aligns with AEL content standards' civics standards;
- fit into a sequence of courses leading to attainment of a certificate of HSE and/or enrollment in postsecondary education, training, or employment; or
- be part of a career pathway.

Providers must include information in the syllabus for each course in an HSE program showing how course objectives address WIOA performance criteria.

Syllabi for classes needs to be sent to the Instructional Lead at Region 6.

Career Pathways

Career Pathways is a comprehensive approach to career development. Career Pathways models include IET programs, including Integrated EL Civics. Intensive Services models include workplace AEL activities, services for internationally-trained English Language Learner professionals, and transition to re-entry and post-release services. Career Pathways support students in obtaining the skills and postsecondary and training credentials that are valued by our regional employers.

Integrated Education and Training (IET)

Integrated Education and Training consists of a series of connected education and training strategies and supportive services to help individuals find a job, keep a job or get a better job. IETs enable individuals to secure industry relevant certification, obtain or retain employment within an occupational area, and/or advance to higher levels of future education and employment in that area.

IET offerings must adhere to the Core Components for Integrated Education and Training:

- AEL Activities contextualized for Workforce Trainings;
- Workforce Preparations Activities;
- Workforce Training for specific in-demand or targeted occupation or occupational cluster, as determined by the Board; and
- Services must ensure that IET components:
  - o Are of sufficient intensity and quality and based on the most rigorous research available to support the achievement of education and career development;
  - o Are provided simultaneously, at points, within the overall scope of the program;
  - o Use occupationally relevant instructional materials;
  - o Have a single set of learning objectives that identify specific competencies across the IET components which may include established learning objectives and/or trade-related benchmarks or competencies for a particular in-demand or targeted occupation or occupational cluster required for attaining a Recognized Postsecondary Credential; and
  - o Are organized to function cooperatively.

Transitions to Postsecondary Education or Training (Transitions) means preparatory course models designed with the objective of increasing the transition success of participants at National Reporting System Levels 4–6 who are enrolling in initial postsecondary education and training courses according to AEL Letter 02-16, change 1. Best practice is to screen participants who meet this criterion for greater educational outcomes.

For definitions, examples and activities, please refer to the current Texas AEL Guide.

Postsecondary Educational Enrollment (also called Educational Enrollment) means enrolling or co-enrolling in a Postsecondary Education or Training program leading to a Postsecondary Credential rather than enrollment in an IET program. Educational Enrollment is recorded in TEAMS to:

- document completion of one of the required post-Exit options to qualify an HSE Credential for the Postsecondary Credential Attainment measure;
- document achievement of a Postsecondary Enrollment MSG that requires a participant to be enrolled in Postsecondary Education or Training at some point after exiting but during the program year; and
- document enrollment in an Actively Coordinated Postsecondary Education or Training program that leads to a Postsecondary Credential for the Credential Attainment measure.

[Measurable Skills Gains Overview Chart](#)

Any participant who wishes to enroll into an IET must be eligible to work in the U.S. The collection of SSNs for IET participants is used for data matches related to post-exit employment, post-exit earning levels, and achievement of a credential as well as the most efficient way to verify enrollment opportunities in education, workforce and social service programs. Refer to [AEL Letter 02-19](#).

Prior to implementation, providers must submit a new [IET Implementation Plan](#) for all proposed IET offerings. Requests will be sent to and reviewed by the Career Pathways Specialist prior to submission to the Consortium Director for consideration. Providers should allow 10 days to expect a response for the solicited offering.

IETs that are conditionally approved are due to the circumstances with delivering services. IETs that have been conditionally approved will need to be shared mid-year of the 2022-2023 program year. Emailing the Career Pathways Specialist the current list of IET offerings on a quarterly basis (add dates) is a sufficient means of communication. For the 2023-2024 year board staff will need to run all of the conditionally approved IETs through the EMSI system to determine eligibility of providing those IETs in the requested regions.

[Planning Grid IET](#)

[Directions on setting up a Training Service in TEAMS](#)

Disallowed Credentials

AEL grantees must be aware that the following certificates and certifications are not considered credentials, because they do not document the measurable technical or industry/occupational skills necessary to find employment or advance within an occupation:

- Certificates awarded by Boards
- Work-readiness certificates
- Certificates of completion that are awarded for attendance or for meeting criteria; for example, a certificate of completion awarded by a noncredit community college for a Microsoft Office preparation course is not a Postsecondary Credential unless the course curriculum meets the criteria of a CE Credential, as defined in AEL Letter 01-18, Change 1.

Documenting Postsecondary Credentials

AEL grantees must be aware that Postsecondary Credentials are documented by adding a new record to the *Educational Outcomes* screen in TEAMS.

AEL providers using MSG Type 4 for services with employers must have a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or letter of agreement with the employer that outlines the types of services and progress milestones AEL participants are expected to meet while enrolled in the program. Services likely fall into the following three categories:

- Workplace literacy activities
- Workplace literacy with employer-provided training that does not lead to a recognized postsecondary credential
- IET with an employer that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential, including Apprenticeship. 11 AEL Performance Guide page 26.

Pathway curricula must address a related and justifiable milestone in preparation toward a targeted occupation for the Gulf Coast area. Proposed curricula with integrated industry-recognized credentials should include a narrative to support the industry need within the region, citing specific employment partners committed to hiring credentialed graduates.

Each Career Pathway service shall be described in written procedures which address:

- Recruitment, screening, assessment, orientation, advising, instruction, supportive services and follow-up activities for various populations;
- Level of schooling required and if high school or high school equivalency test completion is required; and
- Screening criteria must propose academic and non-academic eligibility criteria required to qualify for service.

Integrated EL Civics

Integrated EL Civics is a program for adult ESL Learners with degrees or credentials in their native countries. Integrated EL Civics services must include instruction in Literacy, ESL and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. Additionally, in accordance with *AEL Letter 04-16, Change 2, titled "Implementing Integrated Education and Training English Literacy and Civics Education"*, the Integrated EL Civics program must:

- Include instruction in Literacy and ESL;
- Include instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation;
- Be designed to prepare adult ESL students for, and place them in, unsubsidized employment in existing and emerging in–demand industry sectors or targeted occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency;
- Integrate with Board and Workforce Solutions Office functions to carry out program activities; and

- Be delivered in combination with an IET, including AEL Activities, Workforce Preparation Activities, and Workforce Training outlined in ***AEL Letter 02-16, Change 1, titled "Implementing the Integrated Education and Training Service Approach – Update"[11]***, and any subsequent issuances.

AEL grantees must be aware that before implementing Integrated EL Civics in combination with IET, they must submit the proposed IET program of study to TWC through the [Career Pathways Surveys web page](#).

For definitions, examples and activities, please refer to the current [Texas AEL Guide](#).

Intensive Services

Intensive Services are also part of the Career Pathways service models. Providers with enrollment targets for Intensive Services shall offer at least one of the following three Intensive Services:

- **Workplace Adult Education and Literacy** activities are offered by AEL Service Providers in collaboration with an employer to employee organization at a workplace or an off-site location and are designed to improve the productivity of the workforce. This is often referred to as Workplace AEL or Work Based AEL. Service Providers should understand and respond to the demands that drive business needs, employer's safety, productivity, and advancement when developing workplace AEL programs.
- **Services for Internationally Trained English Language Learner Professionals** include, but are not limited to:
  - o Skills preparation for credentialing exams;
  - o Specialized career advising; and
  - o ESL services that are contextualized for targeted occupations and are rigorous enough to allow rapid progress with the use of proper ESL assessment to determine whether a participant's academic or professional English makes it possible for the participant to pursue academic coursework, credentialing exams, or professional opportunities.
- **Transition to Re-entry and Post-Release Services** are provided to a formerly incarcerated individual upon or shortly after release from a correctional facility and are designed to promote successful adjustment to the community and prevent recidivism.

AEL providers will work closely with WFS College/Career Navigators for the Education Opportunity Connector Project in their initiative to collect employment and education outcomes. College/Career Navigators are responsible for collecting employment and education outcomes for all students who have exited the AEL program for up to a year. The new exit interview initiative will be implemented in the 2022-2023 Program Year.

11 [AEL Letter 02-16, Chg. 1](#), titled ***"Implementing the Integrated Education and Training Service Approach – Update"*** provides updated information and guidance on implementing an Integrated Education and Training (IET) service approach.

Educational Technology and Distance Learning

Programs shall integrate **Education Technology** to support instruction, Workforce Preparation Activities and PD to enable users to find, evaluate, organize, create, and communicate information; and, instruction in Digital Literacy.

Providers will offer Distance Learning for the purpose of providing AEL instruction. Distance Learning may be provided alongside face-to-face or remote classes in a hybrid model or in full Distance Learning classes. **Distance Learning** is a formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for most of the instructional period.

- Distance learning documentation includes logs, journals, and sign-in sheets to document direct contact and must be stored appropriately. Distance Learning hours can be obtained through Direct or Proxy Hours. ***Participants in distance learning must have at least twelve direct contact hours with the program before the participant can be counted for federal reporting purposes.***
    - For definitions and requirements of Direct Contact Hours and Proxy Hours please reference the Texas AEL Guide (pg. 46)
- To determine a participant's proxy hours, a program must use an approved distance learning curriculum (Approved List of Distance Curriculum for Texas Adult Education) that employs one of the following models:
    - Clock Time Model – assigns proxy hours based on the time that a participant is connected to or engaged in an online or stand-alone software program that tracks time.
    - Teacher Certification Model – assigns a predetermined number of proxy hours for each activity completed at an acceptable level of quality, as verified by the instructor.
    - Learner Mastery Model – assigns a predetermined number of proxy hours based on learner mastery of each lesson or unity in the Distance Learning curriculum. ***Proxy hours for this model are awarded based on a passing score on an assessment of content, assignment, lesson, or unit. The passing rate is set at a minimum of 70 percent unless otherwise recommended during the curriculum approval process.***
- Each curriculum employed for distance learning delivery must be approved by TWC before using and before proxy hours can be reported.
    - Provider curricula for which proxy contact hours are to be calculated must first meet criteria established by TWC. Curriculum providers must certify that their products meet these criteria by submitting a Distance Learning Curriculum Survey at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DLcurriculumsurvey
    - Once the survey is received and accepted by TWC, it is forwarded to the Distance Learning Curriculum Approval Committee for further approval. This may include contacting the vendor to set up a demonstration or other activity as determined by the Committee. Once the Committee has approved, the distance learning curriculum is added to the List of

Approved Distance Learning Curricula and available for entry of proxy hours into TEAMS. Curricula that employ the clock time model must stop counting time after a specified number of idle minutes. TWC will approve the number of minutes that is allowed before the program stops counting time. Approval for distance learning curricula that employ teacher certification and learner mastery models may require a pilot to determine recommendations for the number of proxy contact hours that can be awarded to distance learning participants.

o Service Providers utilizing a curriculum that is on the Approved List, but is not listed in TEAMS must create classes in TEAMS using a curriculum with a similar model (Clock Time, Teacher Certification, Learner Mastery) and be prepared to change the class information to the correct curriculum once TWC has added it to the system. This will allow programs to move forward with data entry of direct and proxy hours for the class.

o Service Providers must develop and maintain a Distance Learning plan in accordance with the most current AEL guidance.

o Examples of Distance Learning Strategies to include:
  ▪ Distance Learning readiness activities to prepare the learner for independent, online learning;
  ▪ Careful screening of students, especially if Distance Learning resources are limited;
  ▪ Clear expectations and frequent communications from the instructor;
  ▪ Creation of an inviting online learning community;
  ▪ Prompt Instructor feedback, frequent student monitoring, early intervention, and continuous motivation;
  ▪ Weekly opportunities for real-time virtual interaction or instruction with the instructor and other students;
  ▪ The use of video and/or voice recordings from the instructor, especially in all Distance Learning situations;
  ▪ Access to on-demand online tutoring, advising, and technical support during evenings and weekends as feasible; and
  ▪ Opportunities for students to access and participate in instruction using mobile devices such as internet-enabled mobile phones and tablets.

o The Distance Learning plan must be submitted to the Lead Agency Distance Learning Lead for review and approval. The Distance Learning Lead will consolidate the DL Plans submitted by the Service Providers into a Consortium DL Plan and will submit the Consortium DL Plan to H-GAC. H-GAC as the Grantee will submit the Consortium DL Plan to be on file at TWC Adult Education and Literacy. Each Service Provider's plan should be available for review at the request of TWC. The plan is written during participation in required Distance Learning training for programs new to DL. Program administration will revise the plan to accommodate changes in the delivery of distance education, including the addition of a new DL curriculum. All Service Providers are to have and maintain a DL Plan for their program. DL Plans must be submitted to the Lead Agency DL Lead along with any amendments made during the Program Year.

o Training on DL is required for key administrative staff, teachers, and support staff (including data entry staff).

- Module 1 of the Distance Learning Academy is required for key administrative staff, teachers, and support staff members who are engaged in distance learning, including any instructor assigned to a class that reports proxy hours in TEAMS. Module 1 is an introductory course that explains the state guidance for distance learning in Texas and how distance learning is tracked, documented, and entered into TEAMS. Module 1 must be completed before engaging in distance education.
- Module 2 of the Distance Learning Academy is not required but is highly recommended before selecting an approved distance learning curriculum.
- Module 3, D-Learning in Texas, covers best practices for developing and implementing a distance learning program that is specific to the needs of AEL customers. By the end of Module 3, participants will have completed either a detailed analysis of their current distance learning plan or draft of a new plan. Module 3 is required for all Distance Learning Leads or others who develop, modify or are otherwise responsible for the PD Plan.
- Module 4 of the Distance Learning Academy, Distance Learning and TEAMS, is recommended for all staff who collect, enter, or use DL reports and remit proxy hours into TEAMS.

All Distance Learning Academy Module trainings can be accessed via the PD Portal.

Please reference the State Policy Document for Distance Education for training requirements and guidance.

- For any exceptions to the DL training requirements please see Appendix A: Temporary Disruption of Services.
  - o For additional resources such as the Distance Learning Plan Template and the Distance Learning Curriculum Addendum visit the Distance Learning and Technology Integration web page located on the TCALL website for Texas approved curriculum and Texas DL Policy.

Distance Learning Call Center

The **Distance Learning Call Center** (DL Call Center) is to provide assistance in mathematics to adults who meet eligibility requirements for AEL services. Instructors are to provide one-on- one instruction using a combination of phone, chat, and interactive whiteboard technology.

o In accordance with ***AEL Letter 09-20, titled "Math Assistance Call Center"[12]***, direct contact hours obtained through the DL Call Center must be recorded as direct contact hours, not proxy hours, in TEAMS.

o Additionally, interaction between an AEL participant and DL Call Center staff in real time is considered to be direct contact hours. Direct hours include contact by telephone, video, teleconference, or online communication, in which the provider can verify the identity of the participant and the amount of time spent on the activity. Live online discussions, telephone conference calls, and live video broadcasts to remote locations are examples of direct contact hours.

Texas Adult Education Professional Development & Distance Education Call Center

The Texas Adult Education Professional Development and Distance Education Call Center provides the following services:

- The call center is open 7 days a week to provide technical assistance to Texas adult education students and educators. Their representatives can answer questions about distance learning curriculum, learning management systems, remote learning applications, the GED.com website, etc.
- Call center staff can provide suggestions for online study materials for students, remote teaching tools for instructors, and other resource recommendations.
- The Distance Education Professional Development Center exists to serve the PD needs of TX AEL practitioners. They work with AEL programs to design training to increase capacity of instructors in the following areas:
  - Distance Learning
  - Tech Integration
  - Remote Instruction
  - Digital Literacy Instruction

Programs seeking services can contact the call center by going to the Texas Adult Education Professional Development & Distance Education Call Center website, by calling 1-833-498-2255, or by emailing support@txdistanceedhelp.com.

Remote Learning

Remote Learning occurs when the student and instructor are separated by distance and therefore cannot meet in a physical classroom setting. The instruction and communication between the teacher and student is synchronous. Learning content or teaching is typically transmitted via technology (email, chat, discussion boards, video conference, audio bridge) so that no physical presence in the classroom is required. Contact hours for remote learning are counted in TEAMS as direct hours if they are greater than 15 minutes. Remote Learning does not use approved DL Curriculum, otherwise it is distance learning and the hours are counted as proxy hours. Unlike distance learning, remote learning must occur synchronously in real time.

Synchronous instruction involves learning where a group of students are engaging with an Instructor in learning activities at the same time whether in-person or virtually. The instructor and students communicate in real time using web conferencing tools, phone, instant messaging, live chat, webinars, video conferencing, etc. Remote or distance learning that does not occur at the same time is called anonymous instruction.

Programs must ensure that they update their local standard operating procedures to include acceptable documentation for direct contact hours obtained via Remote Learning in which the identity of the participant and the amount of time expended on the activity can be verified. This could include but is not limited to:

- Roll call document signed by instructors;
- Printouts of who logged into webinars and/or video conferencing; and
- Use of personal log on numbers provided to students (access codes) that can be tracked by facilitators/moderators indicating that the student is participating in the instructional activities Additionally, the documentation of participant names should also include class name/number, date, time in/out and instructor name.

12 AEL Letter 09-20, titled *"Math Assistance Call Center"* provides information and guidance on how to properly enter participant direct contact hours for the Math Assistance Call Center (MACC) into the Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS).

Programs will not implement processes that jeopardize and/or contradict guidance in ***WD Letter 02- 18, titled "Handling and Protection of Personally Identifiable Information and Other Sensitive Information"***. AEL Service providers must ensure the security of PII and other sensitive information by obtaining PII in conformity with applicable federal and state laws governing confidentiality of information and also ensuring that PII and other sensitive information that is transmitted either by email or by mail stored on CDs, DVDs, USB flash drives, or other types of devices is encrypted.

Other Services

Corrections and Re-entry Education

Programs for corrections education and other institutionalized individuals include AEL Activities, IET, and transition to re-entry and post-release services with the goal of reducing recidivism. The addition of transition to re-entry and post-release services help ensure that incarcerated individuals become productive members of society.

Family Literacy - Literacy activities that are of sufficient intensity and quality to make substantive improvements in a family, which includes:

- Parent or family AEL activities that prepare for postsecondary education or training, career advancement, and economic self-sufficiency;
- Training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children;
- Interactive literacy activities between parents or family members and their children;
- Age-appropriate education that prepares children for success in school and life.

Financial Literacy - Instruction on how to make informed decisions and take effective actions regarding money management. Providers may coordinate financial literacy service with other organizations.

On-Ramp to Postsecondary Education or Training/Transitions - Instruction offers career and college planning, academic preparation, and transition services to help participants enroll in postsecondary education or training.

An example of a Transition Class is a preparatory course designed to increase the transitional success of participants at NRS Levels 4-6 who are enrolling in initial postsecondary education and training courses.

VI. Contract Management

All contractors will use the *Houston-Galveston Area Council/ Gulf Coast Workforce Board Contract Management Policies and Procedures* in executing the requirements of their contracts, including but not limited to:

- Maintaining financial systems and reports;
- Procuring and managing property;
- Procuring, writing, and managing subcontracts;
- Securing insurance;
- Establishing and maintaining information systems and access;
- Monitoring required aspects of contract performance;
- Handling and processing customer complaints;
- Acquiring and using facilities; and
- Using and implementing required federal and state certifications.

Contractors must adhere to the reporting time-frames established throughout the contract management policies and procedures, including expenditure reporting time- frames.

Additional information specific to Adult Education cost category descriptions can be found on Attachment 3 of the *Contract Management Policies and Procedures*.

Questions about contracts should be directed towards your contract manager.

VII. Communications/Advertising

Adult Education staff must adhere to the creative and editorial guidelines and graphic and design specifications outlined in the *Workforce Solutions Marketing Standards & Guidelines.* The following standards of communication also apply:

- Marketing Collateral and Media
    - All co-branded physical and electronic marketing materials for the purpose of student recruiting, service advertising, or media announcement shall be reviewed and approved by H-GAC prior to distribution. Submit marketing materials to the contract manager for approval. Co- branded materials are those which use consortium funding for the purpose of achieving the Adult Education service goals of the Consortium and integrate Workforce Solutions' resources to achieve desired outcomes. This can refer to flyers for classes occurring in Workforce Solutions career offices, special events for Adult Education participants where both the Service Provider and Workforce Solutions are contributing to the effort, or other similar collaborations. Collaterals that do not use Consortium funding and/or are used for non-integrated service do not need to be submitted for review and approval.
    - Notice of news releases, TV appearances, and radio spots that might include mention of Workforce Solutions, the Consortium, or related Adult Education service should be sent to the Communications Office for review at least 24 hours prior to the anticipated media event.

- o As stated in **AEL Letter 08-15, titled "Allowable Advertising and Public Relations Expenditures"[13]** and **WS Issuance 18-10, titled "New Outreach Templates and Office**

13 [AEL Letter 08-15](), titled ***"Allowable Advertising and Public Relations Expenditures"*** provides information and guidance on allowable advertising and public relations expenditures.

- o ***Materials"*** [14], AEL Service Providers must be aware that the only allowable advertising costs are those that are solely for:
- The recruitment of personnel required for the performance by the institution of obligations arising under a sponsored agreement;
- The procurement of goods and services for the performance of a sponsored agreement;
- The disposal of scrap or surplus materials acquired in the performance of a sponsored agreement except when nonfederal and/or state entities are reimbursed for disposal costs at a predetermined amount; or
- Other specific purposes necessary to meet the requirements of the sponsored agreement.

- o Additionally, AEL Service Providers must be aware that the only allowable public relations cost are:

    - specifically required by the sponsored agreement;
    - used to communicate with the public and press pertaining to specific activities or accomplishments that result from performance of sponsored agreements (these costs are considered necessary as part of the outreach efforts for the sponsored agreement); or used to conduct general liaison with news media and government public relations officers, to the extent that such activities are limited to communication and liaison necessary to keep the public informed on matters of public concern, such as notices of federal and/or state contract/grants awards, financial matters, etc. Therefore, AEL Service Providers must be aware that:
    - If the above advertising and public relations costs are incurred specifically for participant outreach for the grant program, the costs are allowable; and
    - Outreach and promotional materials that solely promote an organization are unallowable costs if the materials do not provide information that promotes program activities or goals. There must be no ambiguity on which service is being promoted.

- o Correspondence
    - o Email and telephone correspondence received from H-GAC or Lead Agency staff should receive acknowledgement within 24 hours of receipt. If the recipient is and will be out of office for more than 24 hours and unable to respond, a contingent contact should be available and mentioned in a phone message and/or email out-of-office notice.
    - o Request for information or response sent via email, phone, or in-person received from H-GAC or Lead Agency staff should be completed prior to and no later than the stated deadline. If an extenuating circumstance will prevent compliance, the recipient should inform the sender of the issue and potential delay prior to missing the deadline. Not all circumstances will yield exceptions to or extensions of the stated deadline.

14 [WS Issuance 18-10](#), titled *"New Outreach Templates and Office Materials"* provides guidance on maintaining consistency and continuity of Workforce Solutions' identity in marketing, public relations, public information, social media and outreach activities.

- o Meetings
    - o The Consortium will meet on a quarterly basis to discuss regional objectives, address collective concerns, and work toward a more efficient model for service delivery and innovation. The meetings will be facilitated by the Adult Education Consortium Director and Director of the Lead Agency.
    - o The Consortium is a non-voting body for policy and contracted items. However, the Consortium might vote on items of procedure or service delivery that would not affect existing contract terms or performance outcomes. Meeting dates will be arranged in advance and may include hosting at different contractor sites. Attendance at these meetings is mandatory.
    - o Members of the Consortium, including all Service Provider Organizations and the Lead Agency, may have periodic contract meetings to review performance, expectations, and service delivery opportunities and challenges.

- o Communication with Government Agencies
    - o H-GAC will manage all formal communication with state and federal government agencies and disseminate appropriate information to the Consortium.
        - All communication from state agencies will be disseminated to the designated AEL Director. Disbursement of information/correspondence is the sole responsibility of the provider.

- o Representing the Gulf Coast Adult Education & Literacy Consortium
    - o All Service Providers and the Lead Agency are members of the Gulf Coast Consortium that serves the Region under the auspices of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board and Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast. Inasmuch, members are representing both their "home" organizations, the Board, and Workforce Solutions. Internal and external communication should reflect this charge and will be evaluated and monitored versus the expected standard of ALL Workforce Solutions contractors found in the [Workforce Solutions Standard and Guidelines](#).

VII. Professional Development

The Lead Organization will employ a Professional Development Coordinator whose duties are outlined in the organizational structure section.

Service Providers will create a professional development detailed plan that reflects requirements as indicated by TWC. This plan will reflect professional development activities offered by the Service Provider to include state and local program requirements. The assigned Consortium professional development coordinator will facilitate the communication regarding professional development and aid the Provider in adjusting the plan no less than quarterly to reflect their actual offerings.

Service Providers along with the Professional Development Coordinator shall provide Tier 1 training to their staff using qualified staff or Subject Matter Experts (SME) identified through the state Professional Development Center (TRAIN PD) as contract trainers. Information and contact information for contract

trainers will be made available through the Community of Practice for PD Coordinators. Service Providers may use trainers not included on the Contract Trainer Database that meet the requirements and have received the appropriate training to conduct specified PD with prior documented approval from the Professional Development Coordinator.

Tier 1 Training activities include:

- Training for the administration of pre and post- tests in compliance with the test publisher's administration guidelines;
- Basic training on TEAMS;
- Student intake, enrollment, and orientation;
- Goal setting;
- Career awareness;
- Other training in topics where local staff have subject matter expertise; and
- Other training that the GCWB Board determines is needed.

Service Providers must coordinate with the Professional Development Coordinator to access Tier 2 training, which are provided by the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning TRAIN PD Center, at no-cost to Service Providers.

Tier 2 training activities include:

- Contextualized teacher and learning;
- Counseling to careers;
- Distance learning;
- Multi-level classroom management;
- TEAMS data management;
- Information about workforce service and collaboration;
- Federal initiatives;
- State initiatives; and
- Special needs learning

Procedures need to be in place to guarantee all staff members obtain the minimum required professional development hours. Any staff member who fails to obtain minimum professional development hours must submit an exemption form to the Professional Development Coordinator.

Requests for exemptions for staff qualification requirements in individual cases may be submitted to the Professional Development Coordinator for approval with a justification outlining extenuating circumstances and should be submitted and approved prior to an individual being placed in the position in question. Documentation justifying these circumstances shall be available for monitoring and as requested by H-GAC staff.

Requests for exemptions for professional development requirements in individual cases may be submitted to the Professional Development Coordinator for approval with a justification outlining extenuating circumstances. PD Exemptions are case by case and are not guaranteed approval. PD

Exemptions should not be submitted for the same AEL staff member(s) for multiple program years. If a PD Exemption is approved, the next program year required PD due date will be determined by TWC. Documentation justifying these circumstances shall be available for monitoring and as requested by H-GAC staff.

Providers will monitor staff requirements in accordance with the state qualifications and training requirements governed by TWC's rule 40 TAC §805.21. This includes providing six (6) hours of in- service training to staff new to Adult Education in Texas before they provide student instruction or assessment. In-service training for instructional staff may include but is not limited to the following:

- Training in the Service Provider's objectives, purpose, expectations, instructional approach, instructional materials and resources;
- Policies and procedures for student intake, documentation, orientation and assessment; and
- Coordination and referral options for available community resources.

All staff hired after July 1 of the current program year, excluding clerical and janitorial staff, and including volunteers who have student contact time must meet the staff development requirements as outlined in 40 TAC §805.21 *AEL Staff Qualifications and Professional Development Requirements*. Providers are responsible for maintaining staff development records including:

- Verification of educational credentials for each staff member;
- Professional development requirements and activity for each staff member;
- Quarterly entry of professional development hours for each staff member into TEAMS; and
- Documentation of professional development activities, to include descriptions/agendas, dates, trainers, times, sign-in and sign-out sheets, phone/webinar attendance records, and/or computer-generated certificates of completion.

Staff members employed in the first quarter of a program year and not completing mandatory professional development are not eligible to perform Adult Education Activities in the next program year without H-GAC approval.

Provider Directors must participate in mandatory administration and technical assistance meetings as coordinated by H-GAC.

All other professional development requirements can be found in the Texas Adult Education and Literacy Guide in Section 9 Professional Development starting on page 57.

IX. Outcomes, Measures, Performance, and Funding

Each Service Provider will adhere to the H-GAC Adult Education and Literacy Consortium Outcomes, Measures, Performance and Funding strategies set forth in the contractual agreement between H- GAC and the Service Provider.

Providers are expected to meet contractual obligations to include expenditure, service delivery, and administrative outcomes

Performance Measure	Measure Level	Target	How to Measure
Enrollment Measures			
Students enrolled with one (1) or more contact hours	For the consortium and each individual provider	Contracted enrollment target	TEAMS PoP report, all funding codes except Site-Based (State Leadership) and TWC Accelerate Texas (State Leadership), with 1+ hrs.
Students enrolled with twelve (12) or more contact hours	For the consortium and each individual provider	Contracted enrollment target	TEAMS PoP report, all funding codes except Site-Based (State Leadership) and TWC Accelerate Texas (State Leadership), with 12+ hrs.
Participants enrolled in IETs	For the consortium and each individual provider	Contracted enrollment target	TEAMS PoP report, funding codes: IET (AEFLA), IET (Corrections) with 12+ hrs.

Participants enrolled in Intensives	For the consortium and each individual provider	Contracted enrollment target	TEAMS PoP report, funding codes: Work Based (AEFLA), ESL for Professionals (AEFLA), ReEntry (Corrections), with 12+ hrs.
Educational Gains			
Percentage of participants to achieve pre-/posttest gains	For the consortium and each individual provider	Blended target based on case mix	TEAMS MSG Report
Educational MSG summary	For the consortium	See MSG target table below	Summary of all MSGs including pre-/posttest gains, post-secondary enrollment HSE achievement, and WFG's.
Follow-up Outcomes			
Employed/ Enrolled in postsecondary education	Consortium	34%	Includes individuals employed through data match or enrolled in postsecondary through TEAMS data entry in the 2nd quarter after they exit.
Employed/Enrolled in postsecondary - Quarters 3-4 after exit	Consortium	83%	This is a retention measure. It only includes participants in the denominator

			if they were employed or enrolled in the 2nd quarter.
Credential Attainment	Consortium	35%	TWC provides performance data; includes HSE and postsecondary education and training credentials entered in TEAMS and data matched. This measure follows the same timeline as the employment measure.

"Exit-Based" Outcome Measures

AEL	PY22 from
Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post-Exit	40.00%
Employed/Enrolled Q2-Q4 Post-Exit	81.00%
Credential Rate	39.00%

Measurable Skill Gains Targets and Sub Targets

Education Functioning Level	Sub target
ABE 1	39.0%
ABE 2	38.0%
ABE 3	38.0%
ABE 4	40.0%
ABE 5	43.0%
ABE 6	34.0%
ESL 1	45.0%
ESL 2	49.0%
ESL 3	53.0%
ESL 4	54.0%
ESL 5	42.0%
ESL 6	43.0%

Funding
Each Service Provider must be aware that as of Program Year 2022-2023, there are a total of three funding sources. The three funding sources are as follows:
- Basic (AEFLA)
- IET
- Intensive

IET participants shall be funded with Basic (AEFLA) funds until achieving one hour of training recorded in TEAMS. Additionally, training services should include a contextualized component, a training component and workforce prep. Unless utilizing the I-BEST model, training hours and direct hours should be reflected in two separate classes. Each class name should clearly indicate whether it is the training or direct component.

Distance Learning Classes
Distance Learning classes listed in TEAMS –**AZTEC, Burlington English, English Discoveries** – should be funded with Basic (AEFLA) Funds.

X. Monitoring

Oversight and monitoring help us determine whether providers are operating in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, grant requirements, contract agreements and administrative directives.

H-GAC Monitoring and Oversight
HGAC will perform routine monitoring, to include financial monitoring, of each provider at least once per contract year. The monitoring results will be used to evaluate provider performance against contractual goals and ultimately determine current and future funding.

Compliance reviews include the following items:

- Participants eligibility and intake process

o   Participant Samples for monitoring must include Underage students, unless the provider does not have any such students enrolled. Students between the ages of 16-18 must have proper documentation in accordance with the Texas AEL Guide.

- Comprehensive participant assessment
- Staff
     o Staff Qualifications
     o Professional Development
     o Staffing
- Class observations
- TEAMS monitoring and documentation
     o   TEAMS monitoring will include data associated with the following areas:
- Staff Qualifications and Training
- Registration/Orientation

- Eligibility Documentation,
- Assessments,
- Distance Learning; and
- Data Validation Checks
- Data and IT Security
- Facilities
- Property
- Equal Opportunity review including updated posters
- Communication, collaboration, and coordination
- Customer service, customer satisfaction, and complaints
  - o H-GAC will also seek feedback from student participants and community stakeholders regarding the quality of service
- Monitoring and oversight of sub-contracts
- Performance

Review the Monitoring and Oversight Policy for detailed information and guidance related to:

- Monitoring Procedures
- Monitoring Reports
- Corrective Action
- Accessibility Monitoring
- Sanctions

The following items may also be subject to review:

- Current class schedule including location, type of class, and days/hours scheduled
- Attendance records including sign-in sheets
- Assessment process and documentation
- Distance Learning process, content and documentation
- Professional Development process and documentation

Lead Agency Monitoring

The Consortium Lead Agency will also perform routine monitoring, at least once per year. Programmatic monitoring conducted by the Lead Agency will include a review of 20% of students, class, staff, professional development documentation, and information security documentation. Any adjustments to this sample size will be at the discretion and approval of H-GAC. Additionally, the Lead Agency will review local program Standard Operating Procedures to ensure that all local processes are following AEL regulations and guidelines.

The Lead Agency will provide a summary report and monitoring tool with findings to the provider 10 business days after the conclusion of the monitoring. The Provider must submit the summary report and monitoring tool with responses and steps to be taken to correct discrepancies to the Lead Agency and H-GAC, 10 business days after receiving them from the Lead Agency.

Self-Monitoring

Providers should have a written policy for internal quality assurance including periodic monitoring including financial monitoring. Providers must conduct monitoring on all subcontractors in compliance with their contractual agreements. Providers must maintain documentation of self-monitoring and share documentation with the Lead Agency Quality Assurance Lead and H-GAC Contract Manager. Providers may utilize the Self-Monitoring Tool, provided by the Lead Agency each program year, to conduct internal programmatic monitoring.

VII. Standard Operating Procedures

The Texas Workforce Commission requires each provider to maintain standard operating procedures (SOP) in the following areas: recruitment and advertising, intake, assessment, testing, placement, and customer profile data collection. TWC AEL Guide

According to the Testing Guide pg. 18-19, there should also be a process for establishing Measurable Skills Gain's which identify the program staff (staff positions) who make the planned designation; explain how participants, instructors, and other relevant staff members are informed about a participant's MSG status; explain the process for selecting an MSG type, based on a participant's performance, goals, objectives, or participation; and explain how plans for determining the best MSG type are modified when a participant's performance, goals, objectives, and/or participation change. Additionally, the SOP must explain how, when, and by whom the appropriate documentation is collected to support the MSG entered into TEAMS.

HGAC requires provider SOP's to include processes and procedures that cover the additional topics of Personally Identifiable Information, orientation, data management, referrals, and co-enrollment across core programs. Providers are responsible for developing and training all staff on internal SOP's and ensuring they align not only with state guidance but with the HGAC standards and guidelines.

All SOP's are due to Region 6 for review by Sep 16, 2022.

XI. Workforce Integration

The Education Opportunity Connector brings our career offices and adult education providers together through shared Workforce Solutions services. Connector partnerships are designed to foster and cultivate strong relationships that will help career offices and adult education providers better serve customers by understanding what services are available.

With this effort, Workforce Solutions strives to help customers soar to greater heights. Transforming their educational desires, as well as their career opportunities to help keep our region a great place to do business, work, and live.

From initial inquiry to follow-up, Region 6 Education Service Center (ESC), the Adult Education Lead Agency, has helped develop processes to cultivate the relationships between career offices, adult education providers, Career Navigators, and customers within the Gulf Coast Region.

The Career Navigator team is composed of 1 College and 4 Career Navigators under the direction of the Regional Team Manager. The Navigator role is to partner with AEL Providers and Career Offices to present virtual job search seminars, Workforce Solutions 101, and conduct quarterly webinars for AEL Instructors throughout the entire Gulf Coast Region. In addition to these services, the Navigators also focus on follow-up services to AEL students who have exited their program due to completion or who have become an exiter due to a stop in receiving services because of a life challenge that caused them to not continue with progression though the program. Career Navigators also provide case management by conducting initial interviews and making sure students are reconnected to Workforce Career Offices and/or AEL Providers based on their needs.

Follow up activities will support customers and/or students in completing education and training objectives while collecting information on educational outcomes, employment, earnings, enrollment and progress in postsecondary education or training, and credential attainment.

The following partnerships have been established:

- Cohort 1 (October 2019)
    - Acres Homes Career Office and Lone Star College (LSC);
    - Cypress Station Career Office and
    - Harris County Department of Education (HCDE); and
    - Rosenberg Career Office and
    - Wharton County Junior College (WCJC).
- Cohort 2 (October 2020)
    - Bay City Office and Brazosport College (BC);
    - Huntsville Career Office and
    - Boys and Girls Club of Walker County (BGC);
    - Missouri City Career Office and
    - Chinese Community Center (CCC); and
    - Pearland Career Office and Adult Education Center (AEC).
- Cohort 3 (January 2021)
    - Baytown Career Office and San Jacinto College (SJC);
    - East End Career Office and Community Family Centers (CFC); and
    - Northline Career Office and Baker Ripley (BR).
- Cohort 4 (April 2021)
    - Katy Career Office and Houston Community College (HCC);
    - Southeast Career Office and Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans (AAMA);
    - Southwest Career Office and Alliance for Multicultural Community Services (Alliance);
    - Texas City Career Office and College of the Mainland (COM).
    - Phase 2

A. Phase 2A (July 2021)
- o Clear Lake Career Office and Adult Education Center of Pearland (AEC);
- o Conroe Career Office and Boys and Girls Club of Walker County (BGC);
- o Lake Jackson Career Office and Brazosport College (BC);
- o Liberty Career Office and Harris County Department of Education (HCDE);
- o Westheimer Career Office and Chinese Community Center (CCC);
- o Wharton Career Office and Wharton County Junior College (WCJC); and Willowbrook Career Office and Lone Star College (LSC).

For additional information about the Connector, please contact the Region 6 Education Connector Lead.

Appendix A: Temporary Disruption of Services

The Temporary Disruption of Services in this section will outline TWC Guidance for serving students at a distance and remote instruction practices when traditional Face-to-Face instruction or brick and mortar facilities are not accessible. In an effort to ensure that all providers have consistent and the most recent information, TWC has partnered with TCALL to produce a landing page where all of the information is located and will be updated regularly. Please visit the COVID page for AEL/TWC Coronavirus Updates.

- Serving New Students at a Distance – guidance related to serving new students at a distance with focus on non-traditional intake and enrollment, pre-testing and eligibility determination.
- AEL FAQ During COVID-19 Pandemic – is a TWC document generated to quickly find answers related to COVID-19 pandemic and response.

Appendix B: HSE Subsidy Voucher Program

Workforce Solutions provides High School Equivalency (HSE) vouchers for customers seeking to obtain a High School Equivalency certificate.

Currently, there is only one vendor of the HSE exam that is approved by the State Board of Education to operate in Texas: GED Testing Service, which administers the GED exam. Test takers who pass this exam are issued a State of Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency (TxCHSE).

The HSE exam, or the complete battery of the exam, comprises individual tests. The GED exam contains four tests – mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts

Eligibility Requirements

All customers must meet eligibility criteria in order to receive an HSE voucher. AEL providers must verify all eligibility requirements before authorizing the distribution for vouchers. Distribution of an HSE voucher to an ineligible customer may result in disallowed costs.

To be eligible for a HSE voucher, a customer must:

- Be a Texas Resident;
- Be 21 years of age **or older at the time that a voucher for the subsidy is issued;**
- Lack a high school diploma or its equivalent;
- Have a government (national or foreign) issued photo ID, such as one of the following:
    o State driver's license;
    o Department of Public Safety identification card,
    o Military ID,
    o Passport
    o U.S. Passport card, or
    o Matricula Consular

(School ID's are not accepted)

NOTE: Expired IDs are not accepted.

- Provide proof of residency in Texas, which could be a:
    o Texas Driver's License,
    o Utility Bill (showing TX address), or
    o Bank statement showing a Texas address
- Be determined to be HSE test-ready
    o AEL providers must use an assessment tool to ensure customers are HSE test-ready before distributing a voucher. The customer's instructor or assigned staff member will:
    o Determine that the customer is test-ready, based on an assessment tool score; and
    o For retake tests, confirm that the customer is eligible to take the HSE test according to the HSE vendor's retest policies.
    o If a customer is test-ready, the instructor or staff member will recommend to Region 6 that the individual receive a HSE voucher.
    o Providers may use an assessment tool suitable for determining a customer's readiness to take an HSE test, such as, but not limited to, the GED Ready practice test or other assessments. Such assessments are not required to be approved by the National Reporting System, as outlined in the Texas AEL Testing Guide.
- Providers should consider any test-readiness scores required by the GED Testing Service, LLC, for online-proctored tests for the GED exam.
- A customer who is eligible to receive a voucher may be:
    o A current AEL participant;
    o A former AEL participant within 365 days of exit; or
    o A non-AEL participant

- Providers must have a process to distribute the HSE voucher to eligible non-AEL participants, which should include collection of the minimum information needed to create a student record in TEAMS.
- Providers may refer non-AEL participants seeking HSE vouchers to the AEL program.

HSE Voucher Acknowledgment Form

Providers must develop a form for each customer to sign to acknowledge what the customer must do in order to participate in the HSE Voucher Program. At a minimum, the form must state that the customer agrees to:

- Use the voucher only for his or herself;
- Notify the program if he or she is receiving vouchers from other programs;
- Enter the TEAMS ID into his or her GED account; and
- Give the program permission to view testing information.

HSE Acknowledgement Form Template

High School Equivalency Subsidy Recipient Acknowledgement Form

I, _____, hereby acknowledge and agree to the following requirements to participate in the High School Equivalency Voucher Program. I understand:

1. I must use the voucher for myself only.
2. I must notify the AEL program if I am receiving vouchers from other programs;
3. I must enter my TEAMS ID _____ into my GED account; and
4. I must give the AEL program permission to view all testing information.

_____   _____

Subsidy Recipient Signature   Date

HSE Voucher Process

Providers must be aware of the following processes for receiving and tracking HSE voucher codes.

- Providers will request voucher codes from Region 6 via the HSE Voucher Tracker. Region 6 will provide voucher codes on an individual or group request.
    o Voucher code(s) will be designated for a regular test or a retake test for the GED exam.
- Providers must determine a customer's eligibility according to the following:
    o Texas residence
    o Over 21 years of age
    o Test Readiness – TABE Scores, GED Ready, etc.
- Providers must designate a staff member in the AEL program to authorize the release of a voucher to all customers participating in the HSE Voucher Program.
- Customers must sign the HSE Voucher Acknowledgment form prior to receiving a voucher code.
- The designated AEL staff member must enter all HSE customers, including non-AEL participants, in TEAMS to create a unique TEAMS ID. Current and former AEL participants will already have an assigned TEAMS ID, which must be used for HSE voucher tracking purposes in the HSE voucher tracker and when registering the student for the HSE test.
- Providers must completely fill out all elements of HSE Voucher Tracker prior to sending a request to Region 6.
- After reviewing the eligibility requirements on the tracker, Region 6 will send voucher codes back to the Provider via the HSE Voucher Tracker.
- Once a customer is approved to receive a voucher, the designated AEL staff member must:
    o Ensure the customer has a GED account (If not, designated AEL staff member must assist the customer with creating an account);
    o Assist the customer with registering for the GED test online to ensure:
    o The test is scheduled **within 30 days** based on the availability of test dates; and
    o The unique TEAMS ID is entered into the appropriate field when registering for the test.
- After a customer redeems a voucher and takes the HSE exam, the AEL Provider must:
    o Enter all redeemed voucher codes in TEAMS on the Supportive Services page by the 15th of each month, as outline in the AEL Testing Guide.
    o Track scheduled tests, scores and status of test taken through GED Manager.
    o At least biweekly, reconcile redeemed vouchers and compare the vouchers assigned for GED test with the redeemed vouchers, indicating that the scheduled test was taken.
    o Ensure that data entered into the TEAMS Support Services page is accurate and verify whether customers have redeemed a voucher by taking the GED test or whether the released voucher was never used.
    o AEL grant recipients must be aware that a Program Year 2022-2023 TEAMS release requires grant recipients to enter the following voucher information in a participant's record on the Support Services Details page:
        1. HSE Voucher code
        2. Test Type
        3. Test Subject

4. Test Format
5. Voucher amount

- Providers must be aware that once the customer takes the scheduled test, the voucher that was used to register for the test is considered redeemed and is counted toward the customer's use of the HSE subsidy. **If a customer is a no show for a scheduled test, then the voucher code is also considered redeemed** and will count toward the subsidy amount. However, if the scheduled test is canceled according to GED's cancellation policy and is not charged, then the voucher is not redeemed.
- AEL grant recipients must be aware that GED vouchers must be redeemed by June 30, 2023. This means that all GED tests that were purchased with a voucher must be taken by June 30, 2023.
- AEL grant recipients must be aware of previous vouchers redeemed by a subsidy recipient to ensure that the amount of subsidy given to that recipients does not exceed the cost of an exam.
- Region 6 will reconcile vouchers redeemed via TEAMS and GED Manager for tracking purposes.

Appendix C: Instructions for Accessing TEAMS

Instructions for Accessing Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS): New & Existing Users

Before Requesting Access

Accessing TEAMS requires an email address. If you do not have an email address, you will be prompted with options for registering for a free email account when you try to sign up. There are certain items you will need before officially requesting access. Below are the detailed steps to complete prior to approval, please read them thoroughly before starting the process.

- ✓ Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) Training
- ✓ TWC Information Security Training – CyberSecurity Awareness Training
- ✓ AEL DocuSign Information Resources Usage Agreement (P-41c)
- ✓ TEAMS account application and Request User ID/Login

FERPA Training

a. Complete the online Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) training. You will need printer access to print your completion certificate.
b. When you log in to the training, you will be asked to list your agency and your full name.
c. Once you have completed the course and earned the required score of 70% or above, you will be able to print a certificate of completion and email a score receipt.
d. After you print a copy of your certificate for your records, submit scores by selecting "Finish". You must select "Finish" to complete FERPA training and to get your score. Follow the **Sending Documentation to R6** section to complete.

TWC Information Security Training – CyberSecurity Awareness

As part of the TWC requirements before signing the P41c Information Resources Usage Agreement you must complete the online TWC Information Security Training – CyberSecurity Awareness annually (due each program year)

DocuSign P-41c Information Resources Usage Agreement

Complete the online DocuSign AEL Information Resources Usage Agreement – P41c annually (due each program year), All required fields must be completed to process the application. Incomplete forms will not be considered for processing. When forms are submitted, it will automatically route to the Supervisor indicated on the form. Download a copy of the document to submit to R6 and keep it in the personnel file.

Set Up TEAMS Account

The final step in getting access to TEAMS is setting up a user account in the system. Once all the other steps are completed:

a.   Go to the TEAMS login page at
b.   Select "Sign Up for User ID"
c.   Complete the required fields, including required security questions.
   a.   *If your security question answers do not match, the system will deliver an error **and will require that you re-enter your password.***
d.   Accept the user security agreement.
e.   Complete the required contact information.
f.   Select your desired user role
   a.   Supervisor – This role is for supervisory staff or consortia member Directors
   b.   Data Entry Staff – This role is for any staff member doing data entry
   c.   Reader – This role is for readers who will need access to view all Grant recipient information
   d.   Site Reader – This role is for readers who will view data for a site or group of sites *v.* Teacher/Staff Reader – This role is for instructors who will view data for their assigned classes only (*To be able to add this role, you must be added as a staff member in TEAMS*
g.   Select your desired school year – You will most likely select the current year unless you are requesting access to view historical data.
h.   Select the Grant Recipient and Sites
i.   Select Grant Recipient you are requesting access to.
j.   *Select "Load Sites"*
   a.   For all roles other than Staff Reader and Reader, you must select the specific sites for which you will have access. To select multiple sites, hold the control key and select the sites you need access to and then select "Next". **If your organization adds sites after you are granted access, you will need to request that your user account be reconfigured to add these new sites.**
k.   Confirm the information on the screen and select "Submit".
   a.   You will receive a **Membership Status confirmation** upon completion of the TEAMS account set up. If you do not receive a membership status your registration is pending more information, go back and **complete** registration.

Sending Documentation to R6 for Approval

Once R6 staff confirm receipt of all the following steps and documentation, access requests will be submitted. You will receive a confirmation of access approval via email.

- FERPA score or certificate
- TWC Information Security Training-CyberSecurity Awareness certificate
- AEL DocuSign Information Resources Usage Agreement (P-41c)
- TEAMS User ID
- Director's access approval

Appendix D: Lead Agency Testing Cohort

The Lead Agency Testing Cohort offers testing services to the Gulf Coast Consortium Providers in assisting with conducting remote/virtual testing for participants.

Virtual BEST Plus & TABE Test
- The testing cohort will be open ~~six~~ five days a week (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, by special appointment only.) from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and Monday and Thursday evenings from 5:00-8:30 p.m. Requests will be honored if the Testing Cohort's calendar is available to accept testing lists.
- Providers must identify the staff members who will be working with the testing staff.
- Appointed staff members are responsible for communicating with the testing cohort staff and ensuring that these procedures are followed.
- Testing lists must be received via email one business day in advance.
- Testing lists must contain the students' name, email(s), TEAMS ID number, and phone number(s).
- Providers must verify that a test is needed using TEAMS as a resource;
- When the Testing Cohort schedules testing, students will be administered the BEST Plus Oral exam, in fifteen to thirty-minute increments. If a student fails to appear for their testing time, the tester may call or text to see if assistance is required;
- Once tests are scheduled, the link to the virtual platform will be sent to each student via email or text;
- Two computers will be used to test, one for the virtual video and the other for the BEST Plus 2.0 Test;
- In accordance with remote testing guidelines, students must provide a picture ID on testing days;
- Scores may be recorded to a log and are saved to the hard drive, in addition number of tests administered is logged on the Technical Assistance Report;
- Once all students have been tested, the BEST Plus 2.0 Score Reports will be sent to the AEL Provider;
- If an AEL provider chooses to have the Testing Cohort assist with their BEST Plus 2.0 testing, the cohort requests the registration number that the provider uses so that it can be entered into the BEST Plus 2.0 program;

- If an AEL Provider chooses to utilize the Testing Cohort, but the provider wishes to apply their testing procedures, the Testing Cohort may comply.

Virtual TABE Test ONLY
- Testing Tickets must be provided to the students. Once tickets are provided, the Testing Cohort Leads and assistants will proctor the tests;
- Testing Cohort Leads and/or testing assistants will proctor the TABE Test virtually using publisher guidelines;
- Testing guidelines will be provided via email to AEL providers requesting TABE Virtual Proctoring before testing.
- For time effectiveness, **maximum** of eight students should be scheduled per testing proctor.

Appendix E: Remote AEL Testing Guidance

Best Plus 2.0, TABE 11/12, TABE CLAS-E and CASAS eTests are now approved for remote administration. Test administrators MUST complete the Best Plus 2.0 Remote Testing Administration, the TABE 11/12 Remote Testing Administration training, and/or CASAS Proctor Remote Testing Training and Webinars facilitated by Train PD, either virtually or online in the PD Portal. You must have a certificate of completion for monitoring purposes. No other test is approved by TWC at this time.

Best Practices for Remote Testing

- Providers must have written standard operating procedures for remote testing which addresses test security, integrity, and protection of personally identifying information.
- Testing proctors must be certified/trained to administer the specific assessment test.
- Providers must:
    - provides a pre-screening to verify identity of student;
    - orient students to remote online testing expectations;
    - ensure students have the technology tools needed to test at home per publisher guidance;
    - allow time for students to take practice tests on the publisher's website prior to testing room session, if available; and
    - plan for how to respond to video or technical glitches and communicate plans clearly to students.
- The proctor must allow students into the remote testing room one at a time to ensure the identity of the student and check the environment if testing more than one student at a time.
- Students should wear headsets and/or earbuds for test security and optimal success, if applicable for the test

Tests Approved Under the Texas AEL Assessment Guide1

Publisher/Test	Requirement 1 *The student who is testing can be* *properly identified*	Requirement 2 *Any approved test (i.e., any test determined suitable for use in the NRS) that is used is properly secured*	Requirement 3 *The virtual proctor can properly administer the test*	Mandatory Professional Development for Remote Testing for approved tests administrators
CAL BEST Plus 2.0	Remote administration of BEST Plus 2.0 should be conducted using a video conferencing program which allows the test administrator to identify the student using local procedures.	To maintain test security, require both the test administrator and student to complete the test in a private location away from others. Ensure that links to video conferencing sessions are sent privately to students and not posted or shared with others. Do not video or audio record the test session.	Only trained BEST Plus 2.0 test administrators should administer the test remotely. Before administering the test to students, program staff should try out technology and procedures to ensure testing works as expected.	**BEST Plus 2.0** **Remote Testing Administration** Presented by TRAIN PD@TCALL **Course is available in the PD Portal.**

1 Recommendations remote testing requirements based on from U.S. Department of Education Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) Program Memo 20-3, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and COVID-19 – Frequently Asked Questions published on March 27, 2020 and found at: https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/octae-program-memo-20-3.pdf

CAL BEST Literacy	Test not valid for remote administration	Test not valid for remote administration	Test not valid for remote administration	Test not valid for remote administration
DRC TABE 11/12 and TABE CLAS-E Tests	Remote test proctoring will occur via Zoom and/or WebEx. Test administrator must identify the student using local procedures.	Release for the TABE 11/12 testing will take place remotely using the Google Chrome browser by April 24 TABE 11/12 and TABE CLAS-E Remote Proctoring Guidance	Only trained TABE Test Administrators will proctor test sessions live via Zoom, WebEx or other web conferencing platforms.	**TABE 11/12 and TABE CLAS-E Remote Testing Administration for Texas**, Presented by Mike Johnson with DRC **Course is available in**
CASAS	Remote administration of CASAS eTests is permitted using a web conferencing platform approved by CASAS and which allows the	Remote administration of CASAS eTests (including appraisals) is permitted using a web conferencing program which allows the test administrator to watch the student during the testing process. CASAS Remote Testing Guidelines and Remote Testing Agreements can be found here: https://www.casas.org	Only trained CASAS Test Administrators will proctor test sessions. Agencies and proctors must sign CASAS Remote Proctoring agreements.	**CASAS Remote Testing Training for Texas is now available. (All 3 components must be completed)** **1. Proctor Remote Testing Training course is now available in the PD Portal. 2. Pass the Testing Training course quiz with 100% accuracy. (Note that steps 1 and 2 must be completed before CASAS Remote Testing Webinars can be accessed)** **2. CASAS Remote Testing Webinars** **(Complete one or both depending on testing format used by program)** 1. **(1:1) One to one remote testing format** **(1: multiple)** **One to multiple test takers format** **Courses are now available in the PD Portal.** **2. Pass the Testing Training course quiz with 100% accuracy. (Note that steps 1 and 2 must be completed before CASAS Remote Testing Webinars can be accessed)**

		/Product overviews/remote testing		3. CASAS Remote Testing Webinars (Complete one or both depending on testing format used by program) 1. (1:1) One to one remote testing format (1: multiple) One to multiple test takers format Courses are now available in the PD Portal.

Test for High School Equivalency Approved by the Texas Education Agency

Publisher/Test	Status for Remote Testing	Approximate Timeframe	Website for more information
GED Testing Service GED™	GED Testing Service is contracting with OnVUE to deliver the Online Proctored GED exams. Students will have to meet certain screening criteria prior to test.	Available now	https://ged.com/educators_admins/test_admin/

Texas Education Agency TXCHSE Resources: www.txchse.com and https://tea.texas.gov/student assessment/certificate-of-high-school-equivalency/testinformation-at-aglance

Appendix F: Allowability of Funding Transportation Support Services with Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Funds

Workforce Solutions offers transportation assistance for the Gulf Coast AEL Consortium. The following below clarifies that certain transportation services may be funded with AEFLA funds to support AEL participants' success in the program. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) §231(e) outlines the 13 considerations that state agencies must weigh when awarding an AEL statewide grant, one of which requires AEL providers to coordinate with other agencies to provide support services that enable AEL customers to complete the program. This consideration aligns with WIOA's objective of

expanding access to such services for individuals with barriers to employment so that they can succeed in a modern local economy.

AEL Providers must identify the support service needs of an individual enrolling in AEL services during the comprehensive assessment process, as required under §5.8 of the AEL grant awards.

Providers must be aware that the following transportation expenses are allowable costs payable with AEFLA funds for AEL participants:

- Bus or other public transit passes, tokens, tickets, and the like
- Prepaid vouchers for ride-sharing services
- Prepaid gas cards
- Service contracts between the AEL provider and shuttle services or transit providers to provide transportation services for AEL participants

Providers must ensure that there are no available federal, state, or local funds for transportation support services before using AEFLA funds for this purpose, as required by the "supplement not supplant" rule found at WIOA §241(a).

Providers must develop a transportation support service acknowledge form, to be signed and dated by the individual receiving the services, which contains:

- an acknowledgement of the purpose of transportation services;
- a state establishing the allowable use of transportation services for the AEL program;
- an assurance that the individual has not received transportation services from another AEL program for the same purpose; and
- an assurance that the individual will use transportation services as explained by the AEL provider.

The AEL provider must maintain this form in the participant's file.

Providers must create a transportation support services standard operating procedure that addresses the following elements:

- Which AEL program staff members are responsible for the disbursement, oversight, and management of transportation services to AEL participants
- How the provider will determine:
  - when transportation services will be offered to a participant; and
  - for how long services will be available to a participant
- With what frequency the provider will reassess the support service needs of an AEL participant and modify the referral to support services or provision of transportation support service, as appropriate
- What maximum dollar amount of transportation expense funds a participant may receive within a given time frame (Example: "To support program participation, an AEL participant may receive a maximum of $25 each week in transportation expenses, which could include prepaid gas cards or bus passes.")

What controls are in place to minimize waste or loss of transportation cards, tokens, and so forth

- What internal controls are in place for determining that any transportation costs are:
  - o necessary, reasonable, and allocable to the AEFLA grant; and
  - o based on a participant's need for transportation assistance to support program participation and/or completion
- Documentation justifying support services in the participant's file and in the Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS), including the following:
  - o The date the AEL provider approves the justification
  - o Documentation of the AEL participant's signed acknowledgement form on allowable use of transportation services
  - o The type of transportation service being provided
  - o Why transportation services are needed for the participant to be successful in the AEL program
  - o How long the transportation services will be available to the participant
- Monitoring, internal controls, and accountability of transportation transactions and documentation to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local policies, including
  - o 2 CFR Part 200, the Office of Management and Budget's "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"; and
  - o TWC's Financial Manual for Grants and Contracts, available at https://www.twc.texas.gov/agency/financial-manual-grants-contracts
- A reconciliation of distributed transportation services against the Cash Draw and Expenditure Reporting (CDER) system by the monthly data validation date

Providers must track transportation services in the CDER system in the transportation assistance supplemental cost category under program costs when it becomes available in the CDER system.

Providers must provide a narrative on the use of transportation support services in the quarterly narrative report.

Providers must document the transportation services provided to a participant in the participant's file and in the Participant Note Details screen in TEAMS. AEL providers must document in the participant's file in TEAMS any changes to the transportation services being provided to a participant.

Providers must enter the transportation support service in TEAMS on the Support Services page on the participant's record when this functionality becomes available.

Providers may partner with community agencies or nonprofit organizations through a vehicle resource cost-sharing agreement to provide transportation services based on fixed routes that connect AEL participants to:

- AEL classes;
- Workforce training sites;
- Workforce Solutions Offices; and
- Locations offering support services for AEL participants.

It is recommended the AEL participants work with Workforce Solutions Office staff to develop best practices in overseeing transportation support services.

Appendix G: List of Revisions

The table below lists all major revisions to the July 2021 Standards and Guidelines.

Section	Revision
IX. Outcomes, Measures, Performance, and Funding	Updated Funding Code Table for Program Year 2021-2022
XI. Workforce Integration	Added in information regarding the Education Connector through Workforce Solutions Career Offices
Appendix B: HSE Subsidy Voucher Program	Updated Eligibility requirements stated in AEL Letter 06-21. Added Customer Acknowledgment form requirements for customers participating in the HSE Program. Updated HSE Voucher Process. Providers are required to enter all redeemed voucher codes in TEAMS in the Supportive Services page by the 15th of each month.

Appendix H: List of Revisions

The table below lists all major revisions to the July 2022 Standards and Guidelines.

Section	Revision
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE	Program Specialists– work directly with all service providers to answer questions related to their area of expertise They serve as an extension of the lead organization to help identify areas in need of improvement. Monitoring will be conducted annually and consistent with the monitoring process outlined by H-GAC. Program Specialists work closely with the Lead Organization Director, Professional Development Coordinator and Quality Assurance Lead to assist in meeting deadlines and service delivery requirements. ***The Program Assistant term will not be used in 22.23.**
Appendix D: Lead Agency Testing Cohort	The testing cohort will be open five days a week (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, by special appointment only.) Testing lists must be received via email one business day in advance; When the Testing Cohort schedules testing, students will be administered the BEST Plus Oral exam, in fifteen to thirty-minute increments. If a student fails to appear for their testing time, the tester may call or text to see if assistance is required; • Scores may be recorded to a log and are saved to the hard drive, in addition the number of tests administered is logged on the Technical Assistance Report. • For time effectiveness, a **maximum** of eight students should be scheduled per testing proctor.
Appendix D: Lead Agency Testing Cohort	ETS HiSET™ ETS is ready to launch HiSET® Exam at home (Remote proctoring) option in partnership with Proctor in Texas in English and Spanish. Available now https://www.ets.org/s/cv/heist/the- Americas/ ***The HiSET is no longer offered in Texas.**

Testing in One Content Area Flexibility	According to TWC, if a program chooses to only test a student in one area due to remote testing complications, it needs to be documented as an exception in the student's folder and the participant's notes in TEAMS. H-GAC has developed a unified Assessment Documentation Form which should be utilized by all programs and for all students effective September 1st, 2020.
Comprehensive Assessment	Exceptions to these assessments can be found in the AEL Testing Guide and must conform to the assessment publisher's administrative guidelines. o Scheduled pre-and post-tests that are administered in environments conducive to testing and coincide with service enrollment dates to avoid lengthy gaps between assessments and service; and
Career Pathways	Any participant who wishes to enroll into an IET must be eligible to work in the U.S. The collection of SSNs for IET participants is used for data matches related to post-exit employment, post-exit earning levels, and achievement of a credential as well as the most efficient way to verify enrollment opportunities in education, workforce and social service programs. Refer to AEL Letter 02-19. Prior to implementation, providers must submit a new IET Implementation Plan for all proposed IET offerings. Requests will be sent to and reviewed by the Career Pathways Specialist prior to submission to the Consortium Director for consideration. Providers should allow 10 days to expect a response for the solicited offering. IETs that are conditionally approved are due to the circumstances with delivering services. IETs that have been conditionally approved will need to be shared mid-year of the 2022-2023 program year. Emailing the Career Pathways Specialist, the current list of IET offerings on a quarterly basis (add dates) is a sufficient means of communication. For the 2023–2024-year board staff will need to run all of the conditionally approved IETs through the EMSI system to determine eligibility of providing those IETs in the requested regions. AEL providers using MSG Type 4 for services with employers must have a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or letter of agreement with the employer that outlines the types of services and progress milestones AEL participants are expected to meet while enrolled in the program. Services likely fall into the following three categories:

	• Workplace literacy activities • Workplace literacy with employer-provided training that does not lead to a recognized postsecondary credential • IET with an employer that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential, including Apprenticeship. 11 AEL providers will work closely with WFS College/Career Navigators for the Education Opportunity Connector Project in their initiative to collect employment and education outcomes. College/Career Navigators are responsible for collecting employment and education outcomes for all students who have exited the AEL program for up to a year. The new exit interview initiative will be implemented in the 2022-2023 Program Year. AEL grantees must be aware that before implementing Integrated EL Civics in Added the perquisites for implementing an IET. Transitions to Postsecondary Education or Training (Transitions) means preparatory course models designed with the objective of increasing the transition success of participants at National Reporting System Levels 4–6 who are enrolling in initial postsecondary education and training courses according to AEL Letter 02-16, change 1. Best practice is to screen participants who meet this criterion for greater educational outcomes.
Educational Technology and Distance Learning	TWC Provider curricula for which proxy contact hours are to be calculated must first meet criteria established by TWC. Curriculum providers must certify that their products meet these criteria by submitting a Distance Learning Curriculum Survey at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/D Lcurriculumsurvey. Once the survey is received and accepted by TWC, it is forwarded to the Distance Learning Curriculum Approval Committee for further approval. This may include contacting the vendor to set up a demonstration or other activity as determined by the Committee. Once the Committee has approved, the distance learning curriculum is added to the List of Approved Distance Learning Curricula and available for entry of proxy hours into TEAMS. Curricula that employ the clock time model must stop counting time after a specified number of idle minutes. TWC will approve the number of minutes that is allowed before the program stops counting time. ● Module 1 of the Distance Learning Academy is required for key administrative staff, teachers, and support staff members who are engaged in distance learning, including any instructor assigned to a class that reports proxy hours in TEAMS. Module 1 is an introductory course that explains the state guidance

for distance learning in Texas and how distance learning is tracked, documented, and entered into TEAMS. Module 1 must be completed before engaging in distance education.

- Module 2 of the Distance Learning Academy is not required but is highly recommended before selecting an approved distance learning curriculum.

- Module 3, D-Learning in Texas, covers best practices for developing and implementing a distance learning program that is specific to the needs of AEL customers. By the end of Module 3, participants will have completed either a detailed analysis of their current distance learning plan or draft of a new plan. Module 3 is required for all Distance Learning Leads or others who develop, modify or are otherwise responsible for the PD Plan.

- Module 4 of the Distance Learning Academy, Distance Learning and TEAMS, is recommended for all staff who collect, enter, or use DL reports and remit proxy hours into TEAMS.

All Distance Learning Academy Module trainings can be accessed via the [PD Portal](#).

Texas Adult Education Professional Development & Distance Education Call Center

- The Texas Adult Education Professional Development and Distance Education Call Center provides the following services:
  - o The call center is open 7 days a week to provide technical assistance to Texas adult education students and educators. Their representatives can answer questions about distance learning curriculum, learning management systems, remote questions about distance learning curriculum, learning management systems, remote learning applications, the GED.com website, etc.

Call center staff can provide suggestions for online study materials for students, remote teaching tools for instructors, and other resource recommendations.

	• The Distance Education Professional Development Center exists to serve the PD needs of TX AEL practitioners. They work with AEL programs to design training to increase capacity of instructors in the following areas: 　1. Distance Learning 　2. Tech Integration 　3. Remote Instruction 　4. Digital Literacy Instruction Programs seeking services can contact the call center by going to the Texas Adult Education Professional Development & Distance Education Call Center website, by calling 1-833-498- 2255, or by emailing support@txdistanceedhelp.com
Required Syllabus for AEL Instruction	Providers must include information in the syllabus for each course in an HSE program showing how course objectives address WIOA performance criteria.
Eligibilty Requirements	AEL grant recipients must be aware that GED vouchers must be redeemed by June 30, 2023. This means that all GED tests that were purchased with a voucher must be taken by June 30,2023. AEL grant recipients must be aware of previous vouchers redeemed by a subsidy recipient to ensure that the amount of subsidy given to that subsidy recipient does not exceed the cost of an exam. AEL grant recipients must be aware that a Program Year 2022–2023 TEAMS release requires grant recipients to enter the following voucher information in a participant's record on the Support Services Details page: 　• HSE Voucher code 　• Test type 　• Test subject 　• Test format 　• Voucher amount
Appendix B: HSE Subsidy Voucher Program	To be eligible for a HSE voucher, a customer must: 　• Be a Texas Resident; 　• Be 21 years of age or older at the time that a voucher for the subsidy is issued; 　• Lacks a high school diploma or its equivalent; and 　• Be determined to be HSE test-ready 　• Have a government (national or foreign) issued photo ID, such as one of the following: **NOTE: expired IDs are not accepted. (take off the date information)**

DATA Management	**NOTE:** On October 17, 2022, Houston-Galveston Area Council implemented a one-time requirement for all staff with TEAMS access to recomplete security trainings for P-41c, Cybersecurity and FERPA for the 2022-2023 program year. Deadline date for recompleted P-41c, Cybersecurity, and FERPA security trainings is *November 14, 2022.* Deadline date for submittal of recompleted P-41c, Cybersecurity, and FERPA security trainings certificates to Region 6 is *November 14, 2022*.

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