
A Guide to Our Waitlist Process

Dear Parent,

This guide has been developed to inform you of our waitlist process and provide you with additional resources that may benefit your family. Finding the right place and the right people to care for your children while you work or go to school is an important decision. When it comes to finding child care, there are a number of options from which to choose. Workforce Solutions Child Care Services is here to provide you with the resources that will allow you to find a child care arrangement that is right for you and your child(ren).

The goals of our program are:

- To enable low-income parents to work or to attend training in preparation for work;
- To support the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of children;
- To help prevent abuse and neglect of children;
- To promote the healthy and safe growth and development of children; and
- To support the improvement of the quality of child care services.

This guide has been developed to inform you of our waitlist process and provide you with additional resources that may benefit your family.

As all of our funds are obligated to families currently in care, we may be unable to provide child care services to incoming families at this time. However, we encourage you to use this guide in order to understand the child care services offered through the center as well as our waitlist procedures.

Workforce Solutions Child Care Services (CCS) customers include parents who reside in Travis County; are currently working; participating in a job-training program and/or enrolled in school;

and whose income does not exceed established guidelines. Applicants cannot be pursuing a graduate or doctorate degree.

THE WAITLIST PROCESS

Due to the nature of our funding stream, it is extremely difficult to predict when funds will become available in order to enroll additional families. Moreover, there are several factors that affect this decision. In order to be notified when funds become available, you must complete all waitlist documentation. The steps below detail how to complete the waitlist process. However, when funds do become available, a letter will be mailed to your residence with instructions on how to enroll for our services.

The following steps outline our waitlist process:

1. Complete the Waitlist Pre-Assessment Form located at the end of this packet. Please make sure to fill in all blanks (for questions that do not apply to you, please use NA). *Incomplete information will delay determination for eligibility.
2. Your Pre-Assessment Form will be reviewed and upon clearance of all eligibility criteria, you will be placed on our automated waitlist. You will receive a confirmation letter notifying you that you have successfully been placed on the waitlist. If you do not meet the eligibility criteria, a notification letter will be sent out detailing reason for ineligibility. If ineligible, you are welcome to re-submit the Waitlist Pre-Assessment Form at your discretion once you believe criteria can be met.
3. Your name is placed on the wait list on a first come, first serve basis. Your date of submission is how we determine who we will notify first to enroll for services. You may, however, fall under a priority group which includes but is not limited to veterans and veteran’s spouses. Individuals marked as priority will be among the first contacted once funds become available.

*The information provided on the Waitlist Pre-Assessment Form will allow the information desk to determine if you fall under a priority group.

Workforce Solutions Child Care Services accepts Waitlist Pre-Assessment forms at the following locations:	
Main Office - North	9001 N IH 35, Suite 110C 78753
East	3401 Webberville Road, Bldg 1000 78702
South	6505 Burleson Road 78744

Your Responsibilities

1. In order to remain on the waitlist, you must call us at this number 512.597.7191 option 3 at minimum, every four months. Failure to contact us will result in your name being permanently removed from the waitlist.
2. You must also inform us of any changes to your work/school hours, salary, and most importantly, change in address. When funds do become available, a letter is sent to your address to notify you that you are able to enroll for services. Help us ensure that all correspondence goes to the correct place. To report changes contact us directly at 512.597.7191.

What Do I Do Now?

We understand that most parents are in need of immediate child care assistance. We regret we are not able to assist you immediately. We have listed additional resources and tips throughout this guide that may assist your family while you wait to hear from us.

WHAT TO DO ONCE ENROLLED

Child Care Provider Options

Once enrolled, child care may be provided by multiple means—an eligible relative who is listed by the State, by individual caregivers who are registered by the State licensing agency, or by licensed child care centers. Provider options are further detailed below:

1. ***Regulated Providers.*** The State requires providers to meet minimum licensing standards. These standards encompass basic health and safety standards; and do not address the overall quality of the provider's program. The provider can be:
 - ***Licensed Child Care Center*** - A child care facility that provides care for 13 or more children under the age of 14 that has been authorized to operate by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) Child Care Licensing Division. A licensed facility must comply with the Minimum Standards and Guidelines for day-care centers required by DFPS and is subject to regular monitoring by DFPS.
 - ***Licensed Child Care Homes*** - A DFPS authorized child care facility which operates child care for no more than 12 children at any given time. A licensed child care home must comply with the Minimum Standard Rules for Registered and Licensed Child Care Homes and is subject to regular monitoring by DFPS.

- **Registered Child Care Homes** - A home in which the caregiver lives and takes care of no more than six children under the age of 14, plus no more than six additional school-age children. The total number of children, counting the caregiver's own, may not be more than 12 at any time. It is authorized to operate by DFPS and must comply with the Minimum Standards Rules for Registered and Licensed Child Care Homes. Registered Family Homes may be monitored by DFPS as needed; or every three years.

2. Relative Providers. Parents may choose to have a relative, grandparent, aunt, uncle, sibling, etc., of the child act as child care provider. This may be a relative over the age of 18 and not living in the same household as the child. Additionally, the relative provider caring for a child **must** be listed with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). Relative child care providers cannot reside in the same household as the eligible child unless:

- The eligible child is a child of a teen parent; or
- Workforce Solutions Child Care Services determines and documents that other child care arrangements are not reasonably available.

***Note:** An individual appearing on the Texas Department of Public Safety's Sex Offender Registry, pursuant to Chapter 62 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, is not eligible to be a relative provider. Criminal background checks must also be submitted for current and new individuals who regularly or frequently work or live in the home and are turning 14 years of age.

INDICATORS OF CHILD CARE QUALITY

Parents are encouraged to inquire whether a chosen provider is quality rated. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), a nationally-recognized accrediting body, has identified key characteristics that define quality early childhood programs. These characteristics include:

- Safe and healthful physical environments.
- Small class size with low teacher to child ratios.
- Positive relationships between child and caregiver.
- Curriculum that promotes learning and development in the major development areas.
- Qualified and knowledgeable teaching staff.
- Age-appropriate approaches to teaching and an ongoing assessment of children's progress.

Your client services representative will be able to tell you if the provider you have chosen participates in a project emphasizing child care quality.

- Texas Rising Star and Nationally Accredited Providers: These providers exceed minimum state licensing standards. They have smaller group sizes, more qualified staff, program components that address sound practices for the development of children.
- Texas School Ready!™ Grant Project (TSR!): Formerly known as TEEM-Texas Early Education Model, the TSR! Grant Project is a high quality early childhood model, based on proven school readiness components. This program is administered by the Children’s Learning Institute (CLI).
- Kindergarten Readiness System (KRS): Formerly known as Texas School Ready Certification System (SRCS. KRS evaluates the effectiveness of prekindergarten, Head Start, and community-based licensed child care programs in preparing children for kindergarten.

You can obtain a list of all quality rated child care centers on our website at www.wfscapitalarea.com

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What eligibility guidelines do I have to meet in order to be placed on the waitlist?

A: You must reside in Travis County. You must fall below our income guidelines and be working, training or going to school to meet participation requirements. You must not be pursuing a graduate or doctorate degree. A single parent household must have at least 25 hours of participation a week. A two parent household must have at least a combined 50 hours of participation per week.

Q: How soon will I be able to receive assistance?

A: This is a difficult question to answer. The availability of funds is difficult to predict. Some parents have waited more than a year to receive assistance and others have only waited a few months. It all depends on when funding becomes available.

Q: How will I be notified when funding is available?

A: It is extremely important that you notify Workforce CCS of any address changes because we will mail you a letter to let you know we can enroll you for services. It has been our experience that when we mail out these enrollment letters, many of them get returned because we do not have the correct address. When this happens, we send letters to the next person in line.

Q: Once I get assistance, will I have to pay for any of the child care?

A: Yes, the parent will be assigned a parent fee. Workforce Solutions – Capital Area Board has established a sliding scale based on income and household size to determine your parent fee amount. You may be eligible for some discounts if all of the children receiving care are school-age. These parent fees are paid to the child care provider at the beginning of each month. Failure to do so will result in termination of services.

ADDITIONAL TIPS AND RESOURCES FOR YOUR FAMILY

- Look at your monthly budget. Is there something that you can remove that is not a necessary cost (cable television, cellular phone, magazine subscriptions, etc.) that may free up money for child care expenses?
- You may be eligible for other sources of child care funding if you are currently receiving TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families). Speak with your TANF caseworker to see if you qualify for any of the programs that offer child care assistance. Ask about the Choices Program.
- If you were on TANF or applied for it and were denied because of income from a job, you can call us to see if you are eligible for child care assistance. Be sure to tell us you were on TANF and/or were denied due to income.
- Ask your child care provider if they offer scholarships or sliding scale fees. These programs charge tuition based on your income and most have a wait list.
- It may be easier to find help paying for other household expenses, such as rent, utilities, etc. Having less rent and/or utility expenses will free up some of your money to pay for child care. 2-1-1 Texas does not have money to help pay for expenses but they can give you names and phone numbers of agencies that may be able to help you. **Call 2-1-1 or 512.973.9203** or visit www.unitedwaycapitalarea.org
- You may qualify for Head Start (ages 3-5 years) or Early Head Start (ages newborn-3 years). In the Austin/Travis County area, **call Child Inc. at 512.451.7361** to see if you qualify. To find a Head Start in other areas, call the Head Start Information and Publication center at **1.866.763.6481 (toll free)**.
- Contact your local school district and ask about programs for young children. Generally, school districts offer Pre-K Programs for children who are 4 years old and on-site after school care for kindergarten and older. These programs usually offer sliding scale fees or scholarships.

- Ask your child care provider if they allow you to pay bi-monthly or according to how you are paid by your employer. This can make it easier than paying the whole fee at the beginning of the month when many other bills are due.
- The Lone Star Card (food stamps) can reduce your household budget. Many working families are not aware that they are eligible for the Lone Star Card. This program is not tied to the TANF program. **Call 1.888.834.7406 (toll free).**
- The Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) can also help with the food budget. It provides supplemental food for pregnant women, nursing mothers and children under 5 years of age. For a WIC office near you, **call 1.800.942.3678.**
- CHIP/Children's Medicaid provides low cost children's health insurance for children from birth to 18 years. **Simply call 512.324.2447** or visit www.insureakid.org

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR OTHER FAMILY NEEDS

Career Centers (Job Search Aid)	
3401 Webberville #1000	223-5400
9001 N IH 35, Suite 110	454-9675
6505 Burleson Rd	381-4200
TANF/Food Stamp Offices	
1165 Airport	929-7330
725 Eberhart	445-0022
1601 Rutherford	339-8868
Travis County Health and Human Services	
Downtown	854-4120
Post Road	854-9130
South Rural Community Center	272-5561
Northwest Rural Community Center	267-3245
East Rural Community Center - Manor	247-4407
West Rural Community Center - Oak Hill	892-0226
North Rural Community Center - Pflugerville	251-4168
Housing Authorities	
Austin Housing Authority	477-4488
Travis Co. Housing Authority	480-8245
Other	
Austin/Travis County Health Dept	972-5000
Salvation Army	476-1111
SafePlace - domestic violence help	267-7233
Capital Metro - bus route info	474-1200
Capital Metro - to purchase passes	389-7454
Consumer Credit Counseling	447-0711