



Child Care Vendor Handbook

1-888-469-JOBS (5627)

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FOREWORD

Workforce Solutions has developed this Handbook to inform you about child care financial aid services and to explain your role as a child care vendor.

All rules, policies and procedures in this Handbook are based on federal or state laws and Workforce Solutions policies and procedures.

Please read this Handbook carefully. Keep it handy as a reference for questions you may have later. Feel free to call us if you have any questions.

Workforce Solutions
Financial Aid Payment Office
Phone: 1-888-469-JOBS (5627) Financial Aid Option
www.wrksolutions.com

PURPOSE

This Handbook is for regulated and unregulated vendors providing child care services to customers receiving assistance through Workforce Solutions. It will:

- provide you with an overview of Workforce Solutions
- provide information on Workforce Solutions policies
- help you understand your role in providing child care services
- explain the conditions that child care financial aid are based on
- help you understand how to receive reimbursement for providing services to Workforce Solutions customers
- help you understand that a person may be prosecuted for obtaining or attempting to obtain, by fraudulent means, services and/or payments to which he/she is not entitled.

VENDOR REQUIREMENTS

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

All child care vendors are required to submit the following documentation before being reimbursed for child care services:

- an original signed Workforce Solutions Vendor Rate Schedule or Workforce Solutions Vendor Agreement
- IRS Form W-9
- A copy of the vendor's driver's license or other picture ID
- Copy of the vendor's social security card or proof of their Employer Identification Number (EIN)

These items must be kept up to date in order to remain a vendor with Workforce Solutions.

TAX IDENTIFICATION

Licensed vendors that employ more than one person must always be set up with an EIN. They are operating as a business and should have one. Licensed vendors that employ only one person (which is the owner, and that person is the operator) may be set up with an EIN or SSN.

REGULATED VENDORS

Regulated vendors must meet the following criteria to be eligible to be paid for providing child care:

- be licensed or registered with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, or in the case of summer camps, have a Department of Health permit for their location.
- have a copy of child care license or permit and current published rates for services available to the public.

RELATIVE VENDORS

Relative vendors must meet the following criteria to be eligible to be paid for providing child care:

- be a grandparent, great-grandparent, aunt, uncle of the children, OR be a sibling of the child over 18 years of age
- have a certification of relationship form signed by the parent
- maintain a separate residence from the family receiving child care financial aid
- be listed with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, and maintain the listing status.

VENDOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The child care vendor's major responsibilities are listed here and additional details are provided throughout this Handbook.

- 1) Maintain your license or listing status in good standing with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Inform Workforce Solutions immediately of any changes in your status.
- 2) Submit and maintain accurate information about your business with Workforce Solutions. Changes in ownership, location, licensing status, tax identification number, and bank accounts must be reported immediately.
- 3) Submit and maintain accurate and up to date information on staff members who are authorized to access Workforce Solutions Vendor Connection systems.
- 4) Reconcile billing with Workforce Solutions by the due dates listed in this Handbook.
- 5) Notify Workforce Solutions as soon as a child/ren receiving child care financial aid stops attending.
- 6) Collect the assessed parent fee from the parent. If the parent does not pay the assessed fee, report them to Workforce Solutions using the Vendor Connection system or Vendor Request for Termination form from Workforce Solutions website.
- 7) Wait for reimbursement from Workforce Solutions instead of charging the parent directly.
- 8) Report all earnings from reimbursement for child care services to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) at the end of each year in order to pay appropriate taxes

- 9) Report all earnings from reimbursements of child care services to the Texas Department of Human Services, if applicable.

INDEPENDENCE

Child care vendors are not employees of Workforce Solutions but are independent vendors. Workforce Solutions will reimburse vendors up to the maximum rate per day per child. The hours of care, child care vendor's rate and policies for providing child care are between the parent and the vendor and are not dictated by Workforce Solutions.

Workforce Solutions will not withhold any taxes from the reimbursement child care vendors receive for providing child care services unless directed by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). It is the sole responsibility of the child care vendor to report earnings in the child care vendor's annual tax return.

Reimbursements from Workforce Solutions to child care vendors are considered earnings and must be reported to the appropriate agencies. Child care vendors receiving government assistance such as TANF, Food Stamps, or SSI must report their child care earnings to the Texas Department of Human Services.

SERVICE AUTHORIZATION / REFERRAL

Children must be authorized for child care financial aid at a specific vendor location before Workforce Solutions will pay for the services. Workforce Solutions staff are responsible for referring (authorizing) children for services at specific vendor locations in Workforce Solutions' computer system. This information is available directly to vendors on the Vendor Connection. In addition, Workforce Solutions will call vendors with the referral information to authorize services. On these phone calls, the vendor will receive an authorization code. Without this code, the call is not a valid authorization.

If a vendor has received a telephonic authorization and does not see the referral information in the Vendor Connection within a day or two of the child starting in care, use the Vendor Connection system to submit a Billing Inquiry Action. Provide the authorization code you were given over phone. This will prompt Workforce Solutions Accounts Payable staff to investigate and resolve the situation before it affects your payment.

Workforce Solutions will not pay for services without a valid authorization. Vendors that accept children for care without a valid authorization from Workforce Solutions staff do so at their own risk, and any request for payment for such care should be directed to the parent, not Workforce Solutions.

DAYS OF CARE

Care is authorized for specific days of the week. For example, if the parent works Monday through Thursday, care will only be authorized and paid for on those days of the week, and care will not be authorized on Friday.

In some circumstances care will be authorized for a specific number of days at any time during the week. For example, care might be authorized any 5 days of the week. This means the parent can report attendance for any day of the week, but only for a total of 5 days each week.

CHILD'S AGE

Children are authorized and paid at different rates based on their age. Children under the age of 13 are eligible to receive Workforce Solutions services, and in rare cases, some children over 13 may be authorized. The following age definitions are used by Workforce Solutions for determining at which rate each child is paid:

Age Group	Age Range
Infant	0 – 17 Months
Toddler	18 – 35 Months
Pre-schooler	3 – 5 Years
School Ager	6 – 12 Years

FULL-TIME VS. PART-TIME CARE:

Full time care is from 6 to 12 hours a day, part time care is less than 6 hours a day.

School referrals will have a part time referral for the school year which will pay a blended rate. Summer care for school children will have a full time referral separately and paid at the full time rate.

Other children receive either a part time or full time referral based on the needs of the customer.

LOCATION

Services are authorized at a specific physical location. If the parent or vendor desires to change the location that care is provided, the parent MUST contact Workforce Solutions to authorize that change. Any new location must be established with Workforce Solutions as an authorized vendor before services may be paid for at that location.

REFUSING CARE

As with all other businesses, vendors must comply with all applicable laws when serving customers, including anti-discrimination statutes. However, Workforce Solutions does not prohibit vendors from excluding children from their services where there is a good cause or reason. Reasonable efforts should be made to accommodate a child; however, if a vendor needs to stop providing services to a child, the vendor must submit notification to Workforce Solutions. The parent’s eligibility for financial aid is not terminated, only services at that vendor.

Vendors should report to Workforce Solutions immediately if the parent refuses to report attendance or absences using the Child care Attendance Automation system (See Attendance section).

PARENT FEES

Parents receiving child care financial aid may be assigned a monthly parent fee. The amount of this fee will be deducted from the total reimbursement for child care services each month. As a child care vendor, it is your responsibility to collect the monthly parent fee from the parent. Parent fee information is provided to vendors when children are authorized for child care financial aid and is available to vendors on the Vendor Connection.

If the parent does not pay the fee and the customer is still using the vendor’s services, vendors may report the parent to Workforce Solutions for non-payment of parent fee. This will result in the IMMEDIATE TERMINATION of services for the customer. To report a customer for non-payment of parent fee use the Vendor Connection to complete a request for termination. You may also complete and submit the Vendor Request for Termination form from Workforce Solutions website. Termination requests are not valid if the customer has transferred their services to another vendor.

REPORTING ATTENDANCE

Vendor will use the Child Care Automated Attendance (CCAA) system to report attendance. Vendor will not be reimbursed for child care services if a parent fails to record attendance in the CCAA system, unless Vendor contacts Workforce Solutions within five calendar days of absence.

Below are the vendor security requirements for the CCAA system:

- Neither Vendor or its employees will possess, accept, or use a parent's or secondary cardholder's CCAA card or PIN, or perform the attendance / absence reporting function on behalf of a parent;
- Vendor staff will not be designated as the secondary cardholder by a parent with a child enrolled at the facility; and
- Vendor will report misuse of CCAA cards and / or PINs to Workforce Solutions.
- Workforce Solutions will take appropriate actions against anyone who fails to abide by the above security requirements for the CCAA system, including closing intake, moving children to another vendor selected by the parent, withholding vendor payments or reimbursement of costs incurred, termination of childcare services, recoupment of funds, and up to filing criminal charges with the appropriate authorities.

ABSENCES

Workforce Solutions will pay vendors for up to 3 consecutive days of absences at the child's initial enrollment, if the vendor contacts Workforce Solutions on the 3rd working day the child does not attend.

After initial enrollment, if the child is absent without an explanation by the parent, Workforce Solutions will reimburse the vendor for up to five consecutive days of absences if the vendor contacts Workforce Solutions by the 5th working day the child does not attend. Workforce Solutions will further reimburse the vendor for up to 10 consecutive absences when the child is scheduled to attend under the following conditions:

- The absence is due to illness
- The child is on court ordered visitation, with prior approval by workforce Solutions. A copy of the court order is required.
- The child is scheduled to attend but due to extenuating family circumstances is not able to, with prior approval by Workforce Solutions.

HOLIDAYS

Workforce Solutions will reimburse the child care vendor for each child currently enrolled with the vendor for up to nine holidays per calendar year. Vendors must submit their holiday schedule to Workforce Solutions annually. No more than nine holidays will be reimbursed during any calendar year.

EMERGENCY CLOSURES

Workforce Solutions will reimburse the child care vendor for each child currently enrolled when they are closed due to extenuating circumstances, such as weather conditions (when the local school is also closed for that day), fire, electrical or gas outage, etc., for up to five days per calendar year.

REIMBURSEMENT FOR CHILD CARE SERVICES

MAXIMUM REIMBURSEMENT RATES

Workforce Solutions sets maximum reimbursement rates that vendors can be reimbursed for child care services based on the following:

- The type of vendor,
- The age of the child receiving child care services, and
- Whether full-time or part-time care is authorized.

Workforce Solutions utilizes the annual survey provided by the Texas Workforce Commission to establish maximum reimbursement rates. Current Daily Reimbursement Rates for vendors are displayed on the Vendor Rate Schedule or Vendor Agreement and the Vendor Connection system. All vendors will be reimbursed for services rendered at the vendor's published rate up to the maximum reimbursement rate established by Workforce Solutions. Vendors will not be reimbursed at a rate higher than their published rate for the age of the child receiving child care financial aid.

BLENDED RATES

Vendors will be reimbursed a blended rate for all school age children during the normal school year including school holidays and teacher in-service days. Vendor will be reimbursed for school-age children according to the referral during the Summer months.

BILLING PERIODS AND PAYMENT SCHEDULES

Workforce Solutions operates with 3 billing periods per month which consists of the 1st - 15th, the 16th – end of the month for Regulated vendors, and the 1st - end of the month for Relative vendors.

Workforce Solutions processes payments on the 22nd of each month for services rendered during the 1st – 15th and on the 7th of each month for services rendered during the 16th – end of month and 1st – end of the month for Relative vendors.

PAYMENTS

Workforce Solutions pays for services rendered through one of the following electronic methods:

- Direct Deposit
- Workforce Solutions Debit Card

Both methods are free to vendors. All licensed child care facilities will receive payment through direct deposit into a checking or savings account. All child care vendors providing home-based care may have their payments directly deposited into a personal savings or checking account, or may choose to receive payment via Workforce Solutions debit card issued by JP Morgan Chase Bank. If you choose the debit card you will receive your card in the mail directly from the bank. The card will come with directions on how to use the card and a separate toll free phone number to call with questions about your card. The Direct Deposit Authorization Form is available on Workforce Solutions website.

Vendors can set up direct deposit to their checking or savings account by filling out the Direct Deposit Authorization Agreement and returning it with a voided check or deposit slip from the account.

Workforce Solutions makes payments according to Claims Submission and Payment Schedule, which is available in the Vendor Connection. While Workforce Solutions always attempts to meet the payment date on the schedule, occasionally there may be delays due to a number of reasons, including delays in the banking system or a temporary shortage of funding.

PAYMENT STATEMENTS

Payment statements are made available on the Vendor Connection and if they use Workforce Solutions debit card program, they may use any Chase ATM or the toll free phone number on their card to obtain net payment information when the payment is available on their debit card.

BILLING INQUIRIES

If you believe an error was made on your payment, please create a Billing Inquiry Action in the Vendor Connection system or contact your assigned Accounts Payable Specialist and submit a Billing Inquiry Form to Workforce Solutions Financial Aid Payment Office by fax or mail.

RECONCILIATION

Workforce Solutions reconciles billing and payment issues on a quarterly basis. Vendors are required to submit all inquiries and discrepancies with billing no later than the date shown in the chart below. Failure to submit your reconciliation by the date shown may result in non-payment of any outstanding amounts.

Service was provided in the month of:	Submit all inquiries by:
October – December	February 15 of the following year
January – March	May 15
April – June	August 15
July – September	October 31

Children paid with funds from Child Protective Services (CPS) are reconciled by the end of September of every year, meaning their reconciliation is done one month before other children. Vendors with CPS children will receive a special notice from Workforce Solutions to inform them of the need to reconcile those children.

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS SYSTEMS

Workforce Solutions maintains several systems to help child care vendors including:

- Child Care Attendance Automation (CCAA) system – is the way of reporting child care attendance and absences. Parents and guardians confirm that the care was provided to their children by using a swipe card and either a telephone or a card-reading machine called a Point of Service (POS) device. Licensed child care centers use POS devices, and child care homes use the telephone reporting system. Vendors can access the CCAA web portal at:
<http://www.workforcesolutionschildcare.com>
- Vendor Connection – provides information on vendor records, referrals, payments, parent fees and child absences to vendors and allows action requests to be submitted to Workforce

Solutions. Multiple staff can have a user ID for each location and staff at multi-site vendors can see all their sites through a single user ID.

All vendors will use the Vendor Connection system to access their payment statements and other information about their relationship with Workforce Solutions.

USER SETUP / SYSTEM SECURITY

Owners or designated representatives of each vendor are required to authorize which of their staff are allowed to access the CCAA Website and Vendor Connection. Staff can be allowed only to see information on the CCAA website, and, request actions through Vendor Connection system). Vendors are responsible for ensuring that staff who leave have their access terminated and new staff are set up.

Vendors using Workforce Solutions systems must maintain security over their User ID and Password. The owner of each User ID is responsible for the use of their access, and is liable for any misuse of their access. SHARING USER ACCESS WITH OTHERS IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.

POLICY VIOLATIONS

Failure to comply with Workforce Solutions' policies and/or federal and state rules may result in a range of actions, including:

- Repayment to Workforce Solutions - Vendors may be required to refund any payments that they are not entitled to, including overpayments, duplicate payments, or payments made in error. If an overpayment cannot be returned in full, a payment arrangement can be made. Vendors' failure to repay when requested will result in withholding of current and future payments to recover the amount owed.
- Refusal to refer additional children to a vendor,
- Removal of current children from care,
- Termination of vendor rate schedule or agreement,
- A vendor who knowingly and intentionally misrepresents information or uses any fraudulent means to obtain child care funds will be referred to the appropriate authorities including the district attorney's office or the Regulatory Enforcement Division of Texas Workforce Commission.

VENDOR LICENSING STATUS

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Service (DFPS) may place child care vendors on Corrective or Adverse Action in either Probationary or Evaluation status when they are found in noncompliance with their licensing standards. Workforce Solutions will notify parents in writing of the **Vendor's Corrective or Adverse Action** status.

Parents at the vendor on Corrective Action in either **Probationary or Evaluation Status** are allowed to continue a child's enrollment, as long as the parent acknowledges the provider's DFPS status in writing and elects to maintain the child enrolled. Care will close if the parent fails to return a signed acknowledgement letter to Workforce Solutions Financial Aid Payment Office within 10 business days of the date of notification. Vendors on Corrective Action will not qualify to receive enhanced reimbursement rates from Workforce Solutions. In addition, vendors under **Probationary Status** will not be paid for any new children until all of the conditions imposed by the Corrective Action are complied.

If a vendor is on **Adverse Action**, Workforce Solutions will immediately transfer children to another eligible child care vendor. Vendors will not be paid for new children and will not qualify to receive enhanced reimbursement rates from Workforce Solutions.

COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES

Child Care Vendors have the right to have complaints or grievances heard without the threat of losing child care reimbursement. Vendors should begin by explaining the problem or complaint to Workforce Solutions staff; if this is unsuccessful, ask to speak with the management staff and explain the problem.