

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS GOOD CAUSE & EXCUSED ABSENCE DESK AID

All TANF customers who receive a TANF check in a month for that month (for example, received a benefit in January for the month of January) are included in the Workforce Solutions denominator for that month. This is true regardless of the HHSC code. Those who receive a check but are exempt, have “Good Cause” or a penalty pending count in the denominator but do not count towards performance.

Exception: A customer caring for a disabled family member will be excluded from the denominator if the customer’s disabled family member does not attend school full time [Until changes are made to TWIST, continue to document school status in TWIST counseling notes. These customers will not count in production rates.].

Good Cause

“Good Cause” only covers a temporary period when customers who must cooperate to maintain benefits or who volunteer to cooperate are unable to attend scheduled appointments or participate in ongoing work activities.

Excused Absence

“Excused Absence” only covers one day at time. Customers may be excused from cooperation for approved federal holidays or for other short-term absences.

Excused absences may only be approved if the customer was scheduled to participate on the day the excused absence is requested. Credited hours cannot exceed the number of hours the customer was scheduled to participate.

- **Holiday Excused Absences** - may count as actual participation for an approved federal holiday (listed below) when the service provider is closed on that holiday. The approved holidays are:
 - New Year’s Day
 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
 - Washington’s Birthday
 - Memorial Day
 - Independence Day
 - Labor Day
 - Columbus Day
 - Veterans Day
 - Thanksgiving Day
 - Christmas Day
- **Short-term Excused Absences** - are for the same reasons as Good Cause but are expected to last only one or two days rather than an entire month. These other excused absences are limited to 10 days in a 12-month period and cannot exceed two short-term excused absences per month. This limit does not apply to holiday excused absences.

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Things to Consider

- If the customer can participate for additional hours in the following weeks so that it is possible for her to meet the requirements for the month, do not grant Good Cause.
- If the customer cannot participate in her current activity, discuss her ability to participate in another one. Do not grant Good Cause if she is able to cooperate in any core activity.
- Offer a customer in late term pregnancy whose doctor is not restricting her from work options on how she can cooperate. If she feels it is not the best time to look for a job, provide her the opportunity to prepare for her work search using other core activities such as workshops, school, community service, etc.
- Most customers with disabilities are able to work and search for work. These customers may need the help of a Personal Service Representative to plan and pursue employment goals. Customers with disabilities often have adjusted cooperation requirements. It is important to enter that information into TWIST. If the customer is meeting her reduced work requirement, but cannot participate the full federal participation hours level (i.e. 30 hours) – staff may allow Good Cause for the customer. Do not initiate a penalty if the customer is meeting her reduced work requirement.
- Customers who care for disabled family members may be able to work and search for work. If the customer is caring for a disabled family member who attends school full-time, staff must inquire about the school status of the disabled family member and document the information in TWIST counseling notes. Example: “Jane Smith states she cares for her disabled son, John. John attends school full-time at ABC Learning Center.” If the customer is not able to work and search for work – staff may grant Good Cause not to cooperate.
- Customers in two-parent families who are receiving child care financial aid are required to have one or both adults in the family look for work or work at least 55 hours per week – even if one parent is granted Good Cause.
- Require a doctor’s statement if the customer says she cannot participate due to her own, or a family member’s illness for a period of more than three days.
- Customers requesting Good Cause are highly likely to need the services of a Personal Service Representative to help the customer know how to continue to work or look for work.

Recording Good Cause

- “Good Cause” must be given each calendar month. Always enter a start and stop date for Good Cause in the same month.
- Enter a TWIST service planned completion date no later than the last day of the month to remind you to check on the customer’s situation.
- Document your conversation with the customer in TWIST counselor notes.

Recording Excused Absences

Enter the excused absence and holidays in TWIST Service Tracking. In the Daily Time Tracking screen, click on the Comments button for the holiday or excused absence.

- For holidays, select the holiday from the list of approved holidays in the drop down box. Add a comment “Customer is normally scheduled to cooperate X hours on this day. Site is closed this day.”
- For excused absences, select an absence reason from the list of allowable reasons in the drop down box. Add a comment “Customer is normally scheduled to cooperate X hours on this day.”