

## TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION LETTER

<b>ID/No:</b>	WD 38-11, Change 1
<b>Date:</b>	December 20, 2011
<b>Keyword:</b>	Administration; General
<b>Effective:</b>	Immediately

**To:** Local Workforce Development Board Executive Directors  
Commission Executive Offices  
Integrated Service Area Managers



**From:** Laurence M. Jones, Director, Workforce Development Division

**Subject:** **Local Memoranda of Understanding with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to Serve Foster Youth—*Update***

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### PURPOSE:

To inform Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) of the requirement to enter into a local memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) that addresses current and former foster youth transitioning to independent living.

#### **This updated WD Letter:**

- **removes the restriction on the duration of the MOU; and**
- **revises Attachment 2 to correctly place the Southeast Texas Workforce Development Board under DFPS's Region 5.**

**Attachment 1 remains unchanged.**

#### **CHANGES TO WD LETTER 38-11:**

New information in this WD Letter is indicated by:

- A strikethrough of the original language, which indicates that language has been deleted; and
- **Bold** typeface, which indicates new or clarifying language.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Texas Family Code §264.121 requires DFPS and the Boards to jointly develop and adopt an MOU addressing the unique challenges facing current and former foster youth transitioning to independent living.

The purpose of the MOU is to define the principal parties' responsibilities relating to:

- furthering the objectives of the DFPS Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) program;
- ensuring services are prioritized and targeted to meet the needs of current and former foster youth; and
- making referrals, where feasible, for short-term housing for foster youth who need housing.

The goals of the DFPS PAL program include:

- helping foster youth transition to self-sufficiency;
- helping foster youth receive the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment;
- helping foster youth prepare for postsecondary training and educational institutions;
- providing personal and emotional support to foster youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults;
- providing financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support services to former foster youth between the ages of 18 and 21; and
- providing vouchers for education and training, including postsecondary education, to youth who have aged out of foster care.

#### **PROCEDURES:**

No later than November 30, 2011, Boards must enter into updated local MOUs with DFPS regional offices. The duration of the MOU can be mutually agreed upon by the Board and DFPS, ~~but must not exceed four years.~~

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Boards must ensure that MOUs set forth the cooperative actions to be taken by the Board and DFPS to:

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- formalize processes among DFPS, local PAL program staff, and Boards to:
  - address the challenges of current and former foster youth transitioning to independent living;
  - further the goals of the PAL program;
  - ensure that services are prioritized and targeted to meet the needs of current and former foster youth; and
  - make short-term housing referrals, where feasible, for current and former foster youth needing housing.
- prioritize employment, training, and support services for both current and former foster youth;
- coordinate a referral process to ensure that both current and former foster youth are identified and referred for workforce services;
- communicate the conditions of the MOU to Board-contracted service providers;

- ensure Board-contracted service providers comply with the conditions of the MOU;
- identify cross-training opportunities among local PAL program staff, Board staff, Workforce Solutions Office staff, and other community partners to promote the understanding of services, policies, procedures, and automation systems impacting foster youth; and
- provide access to current labor market information that identifies job vacancies; the skills necessary for high-growth, high-demand jobs; and information on employment trends.

Boards may use the sample MOU template included as Attachment 1, which lists both parties' required responsibilities, and gives examples of additional, optional actions, so that Boards and DFPS regional offices can expand on the requirements if both parties are in agreement.

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Boards may amend local MOUs with DFPS regional offices in writing and by mutual consent of both parties at any time. The MOU may be canceled by either party upon 60 days written notice, except where the cancellation is for cause (i.e., a material and significant breach of any provision of the MOU), when it may be canceled upon delivery of written notice to the other party.

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Attachment 2 is a chart with contact information for the 11 DFPS regional offices and the Boards associated with each DFPS region. The Board section lists two contacts: the executive director, who has final MOU signatory authority; and a primary point of contact during MOU negotiations (in some cases the same individual).

Boards must designate a point of contact at each Workforce Solutions Office as a foster youth, PAL staff, and PAL contractor liaison for assistance and services.

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Boards must be aware that DFPS provides similar guidance to its regional offices on executing MOUs with Boards.

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**INQUIRIES:**

Direct inquiries regarding this WD Letter to [wfpolicy.clarifications@twc.state.tx.us](mailto:wfpolicy.clarifications@twc.state.tx.us).

**ATTACHMENT:**

- Attachment 1: Sample Memorandum of Understanding Template
- Attachment 2: Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Regional Offices and Local Workforce Development Boards Contact Information

**RESCISSIONS:**

WD Letter 38-11

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**REFERENCE:**

Texas Family Code §264.121

**FLEXIBILITY RATINGS:**

**No Local Flexibility (NLF):** This rating indicates that Boards must comply with the federal and state laws, rules, policies, and required procedures set forth in this WD Letter and have no local flexibility in determining whether and/or how to comply. All information with an NLF rating is indicated by “must” or “shall.”

**Local Flexibility (LF):** This rating indicates that Boards have local flexibility in determining whether and/or how to implement guidance or recommended practices set forth in this WD Letter. All information with an LF rating is indicated by “may” or “recommend.”