

Written Testimony on the Sunset Review of the Texas Workforce Commission
Submitted by United Ways of Texas - August 12, 2026

United Ways of Texas represents nearly 70 local United Ways across the state. Our local United Ways work alongside families, employers, nonprofits, workforce partners, community colleges, and public agencies to advance economic mobility and help Texans achieve financial security.

Our state's prosperity depends on the financial security and wellbeing of Texas households.

Unfortunately, Too many Texans face barriers to accessing and completing workforce training and employment opportunities. Addressing these barriers requires a workforce system that recognizes the interconnected supports that Texans need to successfully participate in training opportunities, secure employment, and advance toward long-term financial security.

Workforce success depends on more than workforce services.

For many Texans, the ability to participate in upskilling, pursue job advancement opportunities, and move into higher-wage careers depends on more than access to a workforce program. Child care, food assistance, transportation, housing, health care, and other supports can determine whether someone is able to take advantage of training and career opportunities.

Services are often designed and delivered separately.

Workforce, education, and human services programs operate across different agencies and funding streams, with different eligibility requirements, timelines, applications, and performance measures. As a result, families face gaps between programs, duplicate processes, conflicting requirements, or difficulty connecting to the services they need. This fragmentation can undermine the workforce investments state leaders have made.

These are not separate challenges; they are interconnected and can determine whether someone can successfully participate in and complete workforce services. The Sunset review of the Texas Workforce Commission provides an opportunity to strengthen cross-agency coordination, better align

resources and incentives, and expand partnerships that help Texans overcome these barriers and advance toward economic mobility. **Specifically, United Ways of Texas asks the Sunset Advisory Commission to direct TWC to:**

Strengthen the Tri-Agency approach through strategic planning and cross-agency accountability.

Texas already has a foundation for coordinating workforce and education through the Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative, but stronger alignment is needed across the systems. TWC, THECB, TEA, and other relevant agencies should be required to establish defined roles and strategies to align programs, funding, and other performance measures. Moreover, the Tri-Agency initiative should include health and human services (HHSC) to strengthen the state's ability to coordinate investments and improve outcomes.

Establish two-generational coordination across state systems to improve outcomes for families.

A two-generational, family-centered approach can better align workforce, education, child care, health, transportation, and other supports around the needs of parents and children. TWC should work with HHSC, THECB, and other state agencies serving families to strengthen these connections, reduce duplication, improve service delivery, and identify opportunities to braid funding. Tennesseeⁱ and North Carolina have advanced two-generation policies across workforce, education, and health and human services, demonstrating how greater integration can improve government efficiency and outcomes for parents, children, and communities.

Strengthen partnerships and referral pathways across the workforce system.

Expanding coordination among TWC, HHSC, local workforce development boards, community colleges, and community-based organizations will also create stronger connections between Texans and workforce, education, training, and supportive services. This is particularly important for SNAP Employment & Training (E&T), where stronger partnerships with community colleges and other credential-based training providers can connect more Texans to quality education and training that lead to employment and family-sustaining wages.



Ashley R. Harris, Vice President of Policy & Advocacy
Ashley.harris@uwtexas.org

Establish coordination between TWC and 2-1-1 Texas.

For more than 20 years, Texas has invested in a statewide 2-1-1 infrastructure that connects Texans to community resources and helps address barriers to employment. Rather than creating duplicative referral systems, Texas should leverage 2-1-1 as part of a more coordinated workforce system. TWC should establish formal partnerships with 2-1-1 and local workforce boards through shared referral protocols, stronger communication, and clear pathways connecting Texans to workforce, education, training, and supportive services.

Thank you for your consideration and for your work to strengthen our state's workforce system.

ⁱ <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/tanf-opportunity-act/advisory-board.html>