

October 25, 2024

Dear Early Learning Program:

On **December 9, 2024**, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) will launch a new case management system for the Child Care Services (CCS) program—Texas Child Care Connection (TX3C). Below is more information about upcoming changes to policies and procedures resulting from the TX3C launch.

### **New Statewide Application for Families**

TX3C will include an online statewide application for parents who are applying to the Child Care Services (CCS) program. The application is web-based and mobile device–friendly.

Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas (WSNCT) Child Care Services will continue to determine eligibility for CCS families, manage a waiting list, authorize services, and pay early learning programs.

### **Improvements to Provider Payments**

#### **NEW: Advance Payment**

Beginning in December 2024, WSNCT will pay licensed centers, licensed homes, and registered homes for authorized child care before care is provided (similar to private-paying families that pay tuition beforehand). The following are details on these prospective payments:

- Payments will cover two-week periods, Monday–Sunday; you will be paid for the days that a child has been authorized to attend your program at the beginning of each two-week payment period.
- The first two-week payment period beginning December 9th will be transitional, and payments may not be issued until around the 19<sup>th</sup> of December.
- WSNCT will provide a payment period calendar in future correspondence; the calendar will outline each two-week payment period and how quickly providers should anticipate receiving payments each cycle.
- For children that enroll in CCS in the second week of a payment period, payment for the initial week of child care will not be paid prospectively but will be paid with the next available payment run (typically one to three weeks after services).
- If you receive an overpayment for a child whose authorization changes or ends during a period for which payment has already been made, WSNCT will adjust a future payment or require you to repay the overpayment.
- TX3C will determine each child’s age group for rates based on the first day of the two-week billing cycle. In other words, if a child has a birthday that places them in the next age group, the change will not be applied until the beginning of the next pay period.
- TX3C will base the prospective payment on the ELP’s location (Board area), rather than the child’s residence. The change will ensure that payments reflect the market rates and costs where the ELP operates.

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**Parent Copays**

To align with the new prospective payments that will be based on a two-week payment cycle, parent copays will also be aligned to weekly fees (which may be paid weekly or biweekly, in alignment with the payment period) beginning December 9, 2024, for new or recertifying families and in January 2025 for existing families. Staff will notify you of each family’s weekly copayment amount, which will be converted from their current monthly rate.

The new system will continue to calculate payment amounts by determining the applicable rate for the type of care provided and subtracting the parent copay. Ensuring parents pay based on a weekly or biweekly interval will help ensure payments are accurate.

**Child Attendance**

A child’s regular attendance is imperative; consequently, WSNCT will continue to monitor attendance to ensure that funds go to the families that are most in need of services. Your payments are not affected by a child’s occasional absences—payment is based on the child care authorized. However, a child’s eligibility may be affected if they are not consistently attending care.

WSNCT will use the new time and attendance features in TX3C to monitor attendance. In accordance with your agreement to provide subsidized child care, you must **ensure that parents record attendance** directly in TX3C or through an approved child care management system (CMS) that uploads CCS attendance data to TX3C. Additionally, if you are not making the attendance system or your approved CMS available to parents to record their children’s attendance, the Board may terminate your agreement to provide subsidized care.

More information about the attendance tracking system is available [on the TX3C information site](#).

**Expanded Age Groups**

A new state law requires TWC to match age groups for ELP payments with Child Care Regulation age groups, and TX3C will support this change. You will be able to designate rates for more age groups, as demonstrated in the following table.

<b>Rate Groups Before December 9, 2024</b>	<b><u>New</u> Rate Groups December 9, 2024</b>
Infant: 0–17 months	Infant-0: 0–11 months Infant-1: 12–17 months
Toddler: 18 months–2 years	Toddler-1: 18–23 months Toddler-2: 2 years
Preschool: 3–5 years	Preschool-3: 3 years Preschool-4: 4 years Preschool-5: 5 years
School Age: 6–13 years	School Age: 6–13 years (no changes for this age group)

WSNCT Child Care Services will be sending out an updated rate agreement that reflects the age groups provided above no later than November 1, 2024. You will have until Friday, November 15 to return the new rate agreement back to Child Care Services. Please note that if we do not receive your rate agreement back by November 15 this could affect payment amounts made to you in December.

**Transition Period**

Processing of parent applications may be delayed during the TX3C transition period in early December.

For more information or if you have questions, please contact WSNCT Child Care Services at 940-382-6712.

Respectfully,



Phedra Redifer

Executive Director

Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas