

Texas Workforce Commission *Report on Customer Service*

2007-2008 Biennium



— TEXAS —
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS
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Customer Service Report 2007-2008 Biennium

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) serves the employers, workers, and communities of Texas by providing innovative workforce solutions. To provide the highest level of service to our customers, the agency conducts ongoing research and evaluations to identify successes, as well as opportunities to improve service delivery. By collecting comprehensive customer feedback through a variety of methods, TWC uses the data to revise standards and develop initiatives to improve service delivery for our customers. This report reflects TWC successes and provides the information necessary to set the bar higher for outstanding customer service.

Highlights of TWC customer service initiatives begun or expanded during 2007-2008 include:

A Streamlined Unemployment Insurance Tax System for Employers

- Employers can file, manage, and pay Unemployment Insurance (UI) taxes online.
- More than 127,000 employers submitted UI quarterly tax reports online the first quarter of 2008, more than twice the number from two years ago.
- Of the employers filing tax reports online, more than 64,000 also made their quarterly tax payments online, up more than 220 percent from two years ago. Results of the online customer satisfaction survey showed a 90 percent satisfaction rate for employers using the online tax system.
- TWC began offering employers the option of paying their UI quarterly tax payments by credit card in October 2007. The number of employers paying by credit card has more than doubled from 910 credit card transactions in October 2007 to 1,838 credit card transactions in April 2008.

UI Claims Filing

- UI filing online increased the convenience of filing initial UI claims. From April 2006 through March 2008, there were 1,261,425 UI initial claims for benefits filed. An average of 39 percent of these initial claims was filed online, with one week reaching a high of 47 percent.

- TWC reviewed and revised the Unemployment Insurance Benefits and Work Search Information booklet that is mailed to all claimants after filing their initial claim to make it more user friendly.
- Effective July 14, 2006, TWC began a UI Internet Payment Request program in English and Spanish languages. Claimants have the option of using the online system or automated Tele-Serve phone system to request payment.

TWC UI Debit Card

The Texas Workforce Commission's Unemployment Insurance Debit Card went statewide for UI claimants in June 2007.

Those who meet all state and federal requirements for UI benefits and have a payable claim receive the UI Visa® debit card, issued by JPMorgan Chase Bank. Claimants can use the debit cards to make purchases at thousands of retail outlets nationwide, including gas stations, supermarkets, and other stores, and to withdraw cash from Chase or other ATMs, or from a teller at Chase or any other Visa member bank.

The debit card:

- eliminates the need for TWC to mail a warrant (check) with each payment of UI benefits;
- decreases the time between when claimants request payment and get access to the funds;
- provides greater protection against consumer fraud;
- eliminates lost or stolen warrants; and
- protects the claimant if the card is lost or misused by another person

Before TWC changed to debit cards, the average period between requesting and receiving payment was approximately four business days. Debit card payments normally are available to the claimant by the morning of the second business day after the claimant requests payment. Frequently, the cash is available on the prior evening.

Since the debit card project started, TWC made 2,185,673 payments to 367,664 claimants of more than \$1.14 billion. The electronic payment method saved TWC \$730,014.78 in postal costs.

For Employers and Workers, WorkInTexas.com

- TWC's online job-matching tool, WorkInTexas.com, has exceeded all expectations since its launch in June 2004. More than 41 percent of Texas employers are registered to enter jobs into the system. Over the last four years, TWC continued to monitor customer satisfaction and upgrade the effectiveness of WorkInTexas.com for employers and job seekers.
- Employers use this recruiting system to create unlimited, no-cost job postings, view applicant résumés, match their job postings to applicants online, and receive e-mail notifications of the results.
- Job seekers can manage their job hunts online through detailed job searches, find contact information for employers, apply for jobs online, and use helpful career tools and tutorials directly from their own computers.
- WorkInTexas.com features live assistance at every step from workforce professionals at all of Texas' 266 local workforce centers.
- As of April 2008, more than 227,000 or 45 percent, of Texas' 510,000 employers have registered with WorkInTexas.com. Employers have immediate access to more than 383,000 highly qualified job seekers
- In February 2008, WorkInTexas.com partnered with JobCentral.com, a national job-search clearinghouse, and boosted the number of available jobs for Texas job seekers by 125,000.

TWC Outreach to Customers

The Texas Workforce Commissioners and their staffs interact with customers every day. Calls, letters, conferences, newsletters, and one-on-one or group meetings all demonstrate the commitment to constituent needs and customer service. Commission offices respond to thousands of phone calls and written correspondence. They also interact with hundreds of constituents by mail with the distribution of more than 100,000 employer newsletters.

TWC hosts an annual conference with more than 1,400 workforce board members, CEO, workforce development, and economic development professionals who discuss workforce issues and represent employers, job seekers, and communities.

Through the sponsorship of the Commissioner Representing Employers, every year well over 100,000 employers are educated and informed on the latest issues in employment law, workforce and economic development, and business. Annually, more than 100,000 employers subscribe to the Employer Commissioner's newsletter *Texas Business Today*, 40,000 employers request and receive the labor and employment law handbook *Especially for Texas Employers*, and nearly 5,000 employers attend one of the many business conferences held around the state. With 50,000 employers attending since 1998, the Texas Business Conferences help employers address many of the workforce and employment law issues that business owners, managers, and human resource professionals face each day. In addition to the publications and conferences, employers can also reach the Employer Commissioner's office regarding their questions through a toll-free phone number and by e-mail. For TWC customers receiving child care services, resource and referral are provided through a toll-free 2-1-1 phone network, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, year round to serve Texas' working parents.

Ongoing Commitment

TWC's commitment to customer service was formally outlined in the Compact with Texans developed in 2000. The agency continuously assesses interactions with customers. Clear procedures and established timelines are met 99 percent of the time. These measures require that all written and electronic complaints be acknowledged within five business days and all telephone calls returned within one business day.

During the course of this biennium, TWC has surveyed a variety of customer groups using Web-site user surveys and through customer evaluation surveys. A formal complaint answering and tracking system provides management data to assist TWC in exploring new and better ways of providing excellent customer service.

Customers

TWC's customers are Texas' employers, workers, and communities. Each of these customer groups is offered a wide variety of services in an integrated service delivery system.

Employers: There are more than 510,000 employers in Texas, and most run small businesses. More than 76 percent have fewer than 10 employees, and 97 percent employ fewer than 100 workers.

The remaining 3 percent are considered large employers and supply 68 percent of all Texas jobs.

TWC recognizes employers create jobs, and the Texas workforce system must meet their demand for skilled workers for Texas to continue down the path of economic success.

TWC, the 28 local workforce boards, and their contractors comprise the Texas workforce system and assist employers in recruiting, training, and retaining a labor force that allows business to grow and remain profitable. Skills Development Fund grants are among the most effective tools to foster the growth of business. In FY 2007, TWC funded 55 grants involving 281 businesses. The average grant was \$464,071. These grants were instrumental in adding 7,073 new jobs and upgrading 13,758 current jobs to help Texas businesses compete in the global marketplace. In FY 2007, the average wage for participants completing a Skills program was \$19.04 per hour.

Whether administered directly by TWC staff or through Board contractors, Texas employers can access training funds, job matching services, labor market and career information, labor and employment law information, tax credits assistance, and support services for their employees through the state workforce system, as well as help employers manage their UI tax accounts online.

Workers: All 11 million people who make up the Texas workforce are potential customers of the Texas workforce system. Last year, nearly 879,728 workers entered employment after obtaining services at Texas workforce centers. Employed, underemployed, unemployed, and future workers have access to general services such as career development information, skills training, résumé-preparation classes, and interview preparation skills. Job training is provided to upgrade skills for workers through collaborations with employers and community colleges, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) training, or Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSE&T) for eligible participants. Apprenticeship programs also provide a viable career path. Veterans, international trade-affected workers, ex-offenders re-entering employment, older workers, and youth all benefit from TWC services.

Specialized training services are available for adults receiving public assistance through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSE&T) programs. They may receive support services including child care and transportation while in training or working.

Communities: The local workforce boards serve employers and job seekers and are a vital link to community resources. Boards provide leadership and serve as catalysts for building public-private partnerships through the Texas workforce system. Boards work in partnership with their local chief elected officials, the business community, local labor organizations, schools, including post-secondary institutions, and faith-based organizations to ensure that local workforce needs are met and new opportunities are created. TWC provides the boards with technical assistance and training for both board staff and contractors in all areas of responsibility.

Methodology and Analysis of Findings

TWC used a variety of methods to determine the level of customer satisfaction, including customer service evaluations that provided valuable qualitative information, but not all are developed to statistically validate the standards due to funding constraints. While it is not a statistically valid means of gathering information, it is a barometer of how customers perceive TWC services and is a valuable tool for management.

Overall, TWC is meeting customer satisfaction goals. Each of the surveys that were used provides insight into continuous improvement opportunities, many of which have already been implemented. Specific TWC customer satisfaction initiatives over the past two years included:

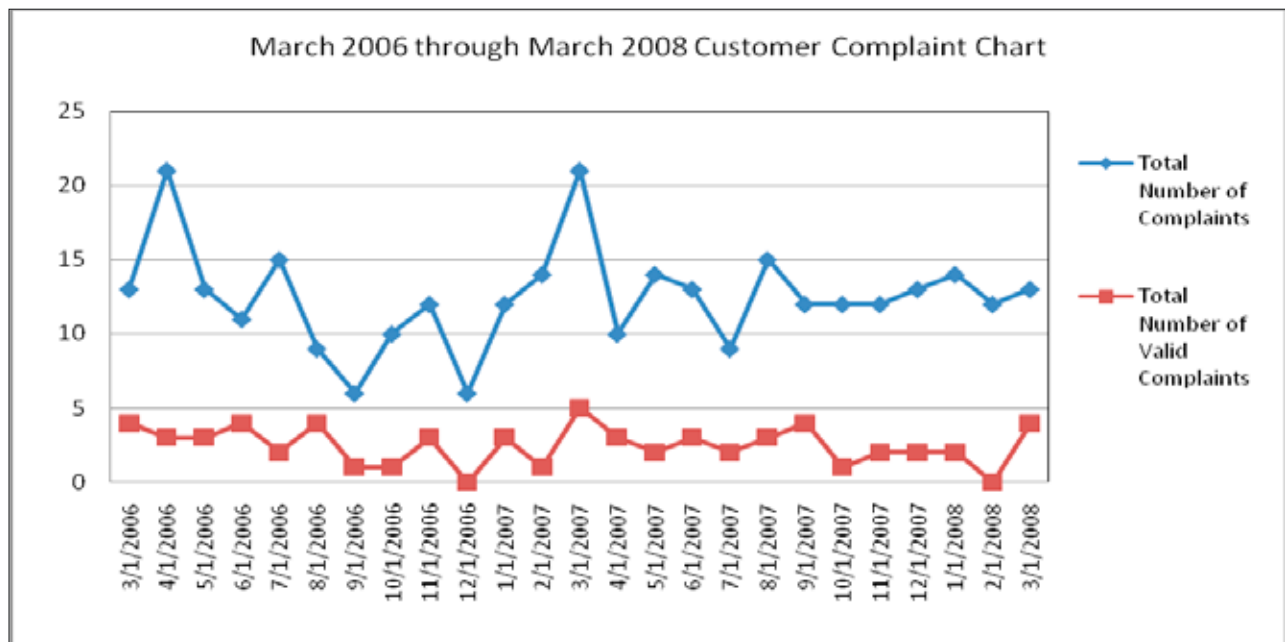
Online Surveys: TWC conducted a customer satisfaction survey through the University of Texas-Austin, Center for Social Work Research (UT/CSWR). The survey met the requirements of Section 2114.002(b), Government Code. An online survey was placed on the employer and job seeker home pages of TWC's Web site. Additional links were placed in the confirmation box for those registering for work online and in the menu site for employers who were registered users of TWC's tax information online system. TWC provided UT/CSWR with e-mail addresses for new users of TWC online tax applications and WorkInTexas.com, on a quarterly basis, that were also used to solicit a response to the online customer satisfaction survey.

The online surveys were conducted August 2007 through April 2008 on a quarterly basis. A total of 5,295 job seekers and employers were surveyed, and the overall satisfaction was more than 83 percent. Separate results were compiled for employers and job seekers in most of the same categories. The survey results for services to both employers and job seekers included satisfaction with service involving UI claims, wage claims, employment services, and Labor Market and Career Information (LMCI). Employers were surveyed about UI tax filings and WorkInTexas.com, and job seekers were surveyed if they used WorkInTexas.com and UI Online application services.

TWC is committed to continuously offering the opportunity for our customers to provide feedback through an open data collection process. The online survey allows for assessment of elements measured in the Customer Service Standards Act and provides an opportunity for a customer to comment directly to TWC's customer service representatives. This open data collection method provides a large amount of data electronically at a cost lower than traditional paper and mail-in surveys. However, this open data collection method inherently possesses data limitations due to the lack of control of the sample population and the anonymity of the survey.

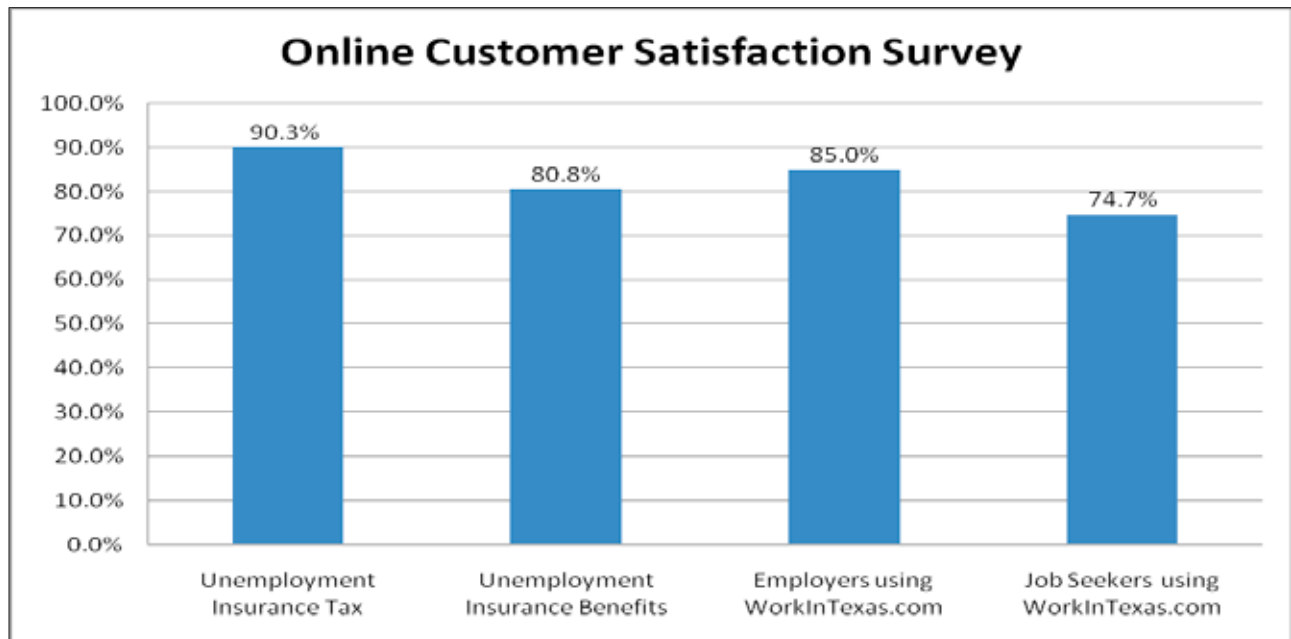
Customer Complaint Tracking: TWC established an agencywide complaint tracking system pursuant to Section 301.023 of the Texas Labor Code, as amended. Reports are compiled monthly, and include information regarding whether the response met the timeliness guidelines established in TWC’s Compact with Texans and whether the complaint was found to be valid or invalid. The performance measure for complaint resolution states that all written and electronic complaints and concerns will be acknowledged within five business days and telephone calls within one business day. The measure for written complaints and concerns applies unless program-specific requirements or time limits pertain to the action.

From April 2006 through March 2008, 297 complaints were reported and 58 were determined to be valid. TWC takes complaints seriously and strives to respond in a timely manner. Ninety-nine percent of the complaints were addressed within five business days if mailed or e-mailed and within 24 hours if made by phone. The complaint tracking system provides information on current customer concerns and service delivery issues. While it is not a statistically valid means of gathering information, it is a barometer of how customers perceive TWC services and is a valuable tool for management.



Customer-Determined Service Quality

The TWC Online Customer Satisfaction Survey results indicate overall satisfaction of 83 percent. When asked about specific services, satisfaction results ranged from 74.7 percent to 90.3 percent and are shown in the following chart.



Resulting Action Taken

TWC listens to customers to improve services to meet customer needs.

As more TWC customers use online services, TWC recognizes that continuous monitoring and improving the effectiveness of these systems.

TWC's Customer Relations Department is responsible for compiling reports on customer's activities and trends, responding to customer complaints and inquiries, compiling information for the agencywide complaint tracking system, and conducting customer satisfaction surveys. This department also serves as TWC's representative for the Compact with Texans and as TWC's Ombudsman. Customers can contact Customer Relations by e-mail from two links on the TWC Web site, as well as by telephone, fax, and mail.

In order to ensure that quality customer service is delivered throughout the agency and that customer complaints are accurately documented, a computer-based training program was developed for all TWC employees. The training teaches staff how to accept, process, and track customer complaints. This requirement for every TWC employee to complete the training emphasizes that customer service is and will always be one of the agency's key priorities.

Next Steps

TWC will continue quarterly customer service surveys, as well as look at opportunities to improve these surveys.

Customer satisfaction is a priority for the Texas Workforce Commission, the local workforce development boards, and other statewide partners.

TWC, in its efforts to make the UI process more user friendly, is in the process of:

- reviewing and revising all claimant correspondence
- developing a direct deposit system
- developing an online UI claim status system

Standard Customer Service Performance Measures	FY 2006 - 2007
<p style="text-align: center;">Outcome Measures</p> <p>Satisfaction index scores of online-surveyed customers responding who express overall satisfaction with services received</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Percentage of surveyed customers responding who identify ways to improve service delivery</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Average hold time for customers filing Unemployment Insurance initial claims using Tele-Centers (April 1, 2006 through March 1, 2008)</p> <p>Percent of external written and electronic complaints and concerns acknowledged within five business days and telephone calls within one day</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Employers and Participants 83%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6.12 minutes</p> <p style="text-align: center;">99%</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Output Measures</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Number of Customers Surveyed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Number of Customers Served</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5,295</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2 million</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Efficiency Measures</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cost per Customer Survey</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">\$6.61</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Explanatory Measures</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Number of Customers Identified</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Number of Customer Groups Inventoried</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Potentially All Texans</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Three Customer Groups Employers, Workers, and Communities</p>

Customer-related Performance Measure Definitions

Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents Expressing Overall Satisfaction with Services Received

Short Definition: Number of respondents to the survey question expressing no dissatisfaction with Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) services

Purpose/Importance: The purpose is to measure the level of customer satisfaction in order to gauge attainment of customer services goals. We are committed to providing effective and efficient service to all customers; therefore, we are continuously seeking ways to improve service delivery, customer satisfaction, and overall performance.

Source/Collection of Data: Employers and job seekers complete a survey instrument on our Web site. In addition to the previously cited surveys, other surveys may be identified as a result of state and federal mandates or other Commission initiatives.

Method of Calculation: The number of customers expressing satisfaction with our services is divided by the total number of respondents to the survey to obtain the percentage.

Data Limitations: TWC serves a universal population of approximately 2 million customers, but only a certain percentage of those customers will respond to surveys. At no time will it be possible to obtain a 100 percent response rate. The frequency may vary as a result of the number of responses reported quarterly. This would be contingent on the valid responses completed and received to date. The reported number may change because of late responses to questions.

Calculation Type: Noncumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than the target Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents Identifying Ways to Improve Service Delivery

Short Definition: The percentage of customers identifying ways to improve service delivery

Purpose/Importance: The purpose is to seek ways to improve service delivery, customer satisfaction, and overall performance continuously.

Source/Collection of Data: Employers and job seekers complete a survey instrument on our Web site. In addition to the previously cited surveys, other surveys may be identified as a result of state and federal mandates or other Commission initiatives. Once the results from these surveys are collected and analyzed, they are entered into a database from which specific information is extracted.

Method of Calculation: The percent is the total number of customers identifying ways to improve service delivery divided by the total number of respondents to the survey.

Data Limitations: TWC serves a universal population of approximately 2 million customers, but only a certain percentage of those customers will respond to surveys. At no time will it be possible to obtain a 100 percent response rate. The frequency may vary as a result of the number of responses reported quarterly. This would be contingent on the valid responses completed and received to date. The reported number may change because of late responses to questions.

Calculation Type: Noncumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than the target

**Percent of External Written and Electronic Complaints and Concerns
Acknowledged within Five Business Days and Telephone Calls within One Day**

Short Definition: The percent of acknowledgements to written and electronic complaints, and concerns that are made within five business days and telephone calls that are acknowledged within one day

Purpose/Importance: The purpose of this measure is to gauge whether we are acknowledging complaints and concerns in a timely manner. We are committed to providing effective and efficient service to all customers; therefore, it is our goal to respond to customers as soon as possible.

Source/Collection of Data: Written, electronic, and telephone complaints are received from external customers and distributed to all TWC departments, including the Customer Relations Department. Once the department resolves the complaint or concern, all information, including the dates received and addressed, is sent to the Customer Relations Department for entry into the TWC complaint-tracking database.

Method of Calculation: Add the total number of complaints entered in the database; calculate the number that has been acknowledged within five business days for written and electronic correspondence and one day for telephone calls. For the percentage, divide the number satisfying the time limits by the total number of complaints and concerns entered into the database.

Data Limitations: None

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than the target

Output Measures

Number of Customers Surveyed

Short Definition: This is a tally of the total number of individuals or entities responding to survey instruments or customer evaluations conducted by or for TWC.

Purpose/Importance: The purpose of this measure is to obtain a representative sample of different customers surveyed. It is important to ensure statistical reliability.

Source/Collection of Data: Employers and job seekers complete a survey instrument on our Web site. Customer service evaluations are conducted on behalf of TWC. In addition to the previously cited surveys, other surveys may be identified as a result of state and federal mandates or other Commission initiatives. Once the results from these surveys are collected and analyzed, they are entered into a database from which specific information is extracted.

Method of Calculation: The numbers reported are the sum of the total number of all valid responses received during the reporting period.

Data Limitations: TWC serves a universal population of approximately 2 million customers, but only a certain percentage of those customers will respond to surveys. At no time will it be possible to obtain a 100 percent response rate. The frequency may vary as a result of the number of responses reported quarterly. This would be contingent on the valid responses completed and received to date. The reported number may change because of late responses to questions.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Increase survey participation

Number of Customers Served

Short Definition: This is the total number of customers who receive services and information from TWC.

Purpose/Importance: The purpose is to identify the universe from which the survey samples are drawn. We are committed to providing effective and efficient service to all customers; therefore, we are continuously seeking ways to improve service delivery, customer satisfaction, and overall performance.

Source/Collection of Data: The data for this measure is a combination of employers and general workforce customers. General workforce customers include not only those voluntary participants in activities, but also UI claimants who are required to register for work. The data for the number of employers is collected from status reports processed by the TWC Tax Department. The data for the number of general workforce customers is a count of the number of participants during the reporting period. Data for this measure was collected by field staff and entered into WorkInTexas.com on the TWC mainframe. In order to be included in the count, an individual must be an active applicant for services at some time during the reporting period.

Method of Calculation: The employers' data and the general workforce client's data are added together to derive the total number of customers served for the reporting period.

Data Limitations: Data are limited to the universe of liable employers that have been identified and registered by the Tax Department. Unidentified and/or unregistered liable employers are not included.

Calculation Type: Noncumulative

New Measures: No

Desired Performance: To serve more customers

Explanatory Measures

Number of Customers Identified

Short Definition: This is the total number of customers who could receive TWC services.

Purpose/Importance: This measure provides background information about the scope and breadth of TWC's services and sets the context for other measures.

Source/Collection of Data: TWC provides universality through our programs and, as a result, all Texans could receive services of some kind.

Method of Calculation: The reported numbers are obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau's most recent reported figures.

Data Limitations: Not applicable

Calculation Type: Noncumulative

New Measures: No

Desired Performance: None; explanatory measures provide no contextual background and do not result from TWC actions.

Number of Customer Groups Inventoried

Short Definition: As directed in enabling legislation, statutory requirements, performance measures, and the mission statement, TWC serves three groups of customers: employers, workers, and communities.

Purpose/Importance: The purpose of this measure is to provide general information in regard to the scope and breadth of TWC's customers. The importance of this measure is to set the context for other measures.

Source/Collection of Data: Legislation, TWC's mission

Method of Calculation: This is the total number of groups identified in TWC's mission.

Data Limitations: Not applicable

Calculation Type: Noncumulative

New Measures: No

Desired Performance: Not applicable

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