

PERMIAN BASIN WDB CEO ACTIVITY REPORT
November 23, 2020

- I would like to begin my report by thanking the thousands of local employers who continue to hire and provide jobs during these COVID times. One of the questions I am regularly asked by community leaders and my Board members is will the Permian Basin have enough skilled workers when we return to normal? If you remember one year ago, Midland had a 2.1% unemployment rate and Odessa's rate was 2.7%, some of the lowest in the state. Now fast forward to October 2020 and Midland is at 8.1% and Odessa is at 11.4%; Odessa having the highest rate in Texas. The answer to whether there will be enough skilled workers will depend on our local workforce pipeline. Permian Basin WDB continues to strengthen our partnerships with the local schools, colleges, universities, the military, vocational rehabilitation, economic development and others. The key is making sure our job seekers are provided training in local demand and targeted occupations so that their skills meet the needs of employers and they are more employable.
- The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) reinstated the work search requirements for Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants effective 11-1-20. TWC requires all UI claimants to perform at least three (3) work search activities per week. TWC also elected to give the state's Workforce Boards the option to reduce the number of work search activities to less than three based on the conditions (i.e. number of COVID cases) in each workforce area which would impact the ability of the job seeker to look for work. Workforce Boards have the option to change the number of contacts every 30 days as circumstances change. In PBWDB's 17-counties, UI claimants are required to make three contacts per week.
- Our Workforce Solutions Permian Basin Offices are responsible for providing services to our customers – employers, dislocated workers, job seekers, youth, families. They are currently conducting virtual job fairs, offering curbside services, and providing in-person services by appointment. We continue working with our local community colleges for customer training in medical, HVAC, CDL, auto/diesel, IT, lineman, welding, bookkeeping and several other areas that are on the Permian Basin WDB's targeted occupation list. Our Business Services staff are outreaching local employers to assist them with

registering their job openings in www.WorkInTexas.com. Finally, we have call center staff who are reaching out to the hundreds of UI customers trying to help them reenter the workforce or provide information about the training opportunities available to them.

- We continue to provide Child Care services to over 1700 children daily. The Child Care program assists low-income families to remain in the workforce or in job training. In the Permian Basin, we have agreements with 95 Child Care providers, paying approximately \$500,000 per month in subsidies on behalf of the families enrolled in our program. The Child Care providers who are participating in our program are also receiving a 25% enhanced reimbursement based on the number of our children enrolled at their facility. The enhanced reimbursement has helped provide some financial stability to our providers as their enrollment dropped due to COVID and to hopefully help them remain open until our economy returns to normal. This reimbursement will continue through the end of December 2020. If you know of anyone who needs Child Care assistance, please have them contact our local office at (432)367-3332 or (432)287-5200.
- If you reading this report and would like to more information about the PBWDB's workforce and child care services, please go to www.workforcepb.org.

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