

TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION

SKILLS FOR VETERANS INITIATIVE

Program Overview

(Revised December 2014)

Introduction

The Skills for Veterans Initiative (SVI) is a new initiative by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to address the unique challenges and training needs of Texas Veterans returning home and entering the Texas workforce. TWC has set aside \$1 million to fund this special initiative that will strive to enhance the professional skills of veterans thereby benefiting the employer's business operations.

Individuals who are post 9/11 era veterans, especially those veterans who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)/Operation New Dawn (OND) or Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), and are newly hired, are eligible to participate in this training initiative through their employers.

As the SVI grant recipient, a local public community or technical college or the Texas Engineering Extension Service (College) will be the fiscal agent of this program and will be the recipient of grant funds that will pay for training provided to veterans under this initiative. The college will work closely with the business in identifying appropriate training courses that will enhance the professional skills of veterans and benefit the employer's business operations.

Below is information on eligibility, program parameters, and data reporting requirements. Following that is the application that must be completed, signed, and returned to TWC for review and approval prior to the start of training.

Our Business Outreach and Project Development team is available to answer any questions you have about the program and/or assist you in completing the application. Please call us at (877) 463-1777 or by e-mail at SkillsforVeterans@twc.state.tx.us.

Eligible Applicants

- To participate in the SVI program, a business must:
 - Be a private business, including private non-profit hospitals;
 - Employ at least one full-time, permanent individual;
 - Be financially stable;
 - Be liable to pay Unemployment Insurance contributions to TWC, and be in compliance with the reporting and payment requirements; and
 - Be in compliance with the Texas Business and Commerce Code.

Program Information:

- The program will cover the following costs:
 - Tuition and fees costs for course offerings provided by public community and technical colleges, and the Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) in the local area of the business – see listing of eligible institutions at: [the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, http://www.theceb.state.tx.us/apps/GM/](http://www.theceb.state.tx.us/apps/GM/). (*Important Note: The SVI program will not cover costs for course offerings from third-party vendors, universities, or proprietary or vocational schools*);
 - Up to \$1,450 to be utilized in a 12-month period for an eligible post 9/11 era veteran who meets the definition of a new employee. *Funding for training for this individual is not available after this 12-month period.*
- For the purposes of this program, a **new employee** is defined as an individual who is hired in the 12 months prior to TWC's receipt of the application requesting training.
- For the purposes of this program, a **Veteran** will be identified by the submission of a copy of the Veteran's Form DD-214 (Member-4 copy). A copy of this form will be required with the application submission. Individuals who are post 9/11 era veterans, and are new employees of the business partner, are eligible to receiving training under this initiative.
- Businesses will be responsible for all course costs not covered by SVI funding.
- It is a requirement of the program that the hourly wage of each employee for whom training is being requested meets or exceeds the prevailing wage for that occupation in the local labor market. TWC will use local labor market wage data to determine if this requirement is met.

Data Reporting Requirements:

If your application is determined to be fundable, please provide TWC with required specific data on each participating veteran before the application is approved and funds are released to the college. Securely provided data will be used by the college to track each employee's progress in the approved courses and report monthly to TWC.

The following are the required data elements that must be provided to TWC before the agency will give final approval on the application and release funds to the college for the requested training:

- Employee's full name, middle initial (if applicable), and last name
- Employee's Social Security number*
- Employee's mailing address
- Employee's birth date
- Employee's date of military discharge
- Employee's hire date

* **IMPORTANT:** There is NO alternative to the use of a SSN as the identifier of individual employees participating in the Skills for Veterans Initiative program. Employees who do not allow the release of this information to TWC will not be able to participate in the program. Upon application approval, TWC staff will follow up with your business for secure receipt of required information.

Procedure for Submitting an Application:

After you have completed your application, please e-mail the Microsoft Word version (without signatures) to the attention of Cristina Ramos at SkillsforVeterans@twc.state.tx.us. Please also send us the original, *signed* application by fax to (512) 463-7187 or by mail to the following address:

Texas Workforce Commission
Workforce Business Services
Attention: Cristina Ramos
101 E. 15th Street, Room 424-T
Austin, Texas 78701

If you do not have e-mail capabilities, you may either fax the signed application to Cristina Ramos at (512) 463-7187 or mail the original signed application to the address above. It is recommended that applications are submitted at least two weeks prior to and no more than six weeks in advance of requested training.

Funding Notification:

Once your application is determined to be fundable, please provide the required information on each participating employee (see “Data Reporting Requirements” above). The college will use this information to track and report to TWC on the employee’s progress throughout training. This information must be received by TWC before final approval of the application and release of funds to the college.

All SVI program funds will be disbursed directly to the college to cover the costs of the approved training. The business will be responsible for any balance due to the college, which must be paid in full prior to the first day of classes or by the selected college’s payment deadline.

Important Note: If an employee withdraws from an approved course before the withdrawal deadline, TWC will be refunded the amount paid by the SVI program, with any remaining balance going to the business.

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Application Instructions

The Program Overview provides information on eligibility, program parameters, reporting requirements, and submission of the application. You are now ready to complete the application for submission to TWC. As always, our Business Outreach and Project Development team is available to answer any questions you have about the program and/or assist you in completing the application. Please contact us at (877) 463-1777 or e-mail SkillsforVeterans@twc.state.tx.us.

1. Table 1: Please provide information about the business requesting training assistance. Important points to consider in completing this section:
 - a. The address, including the nine-digit ZIP code, provided must be the physical business location of the participating employees.
 - b. If you do not know your Experian Business Identification Number (BIN), please go to <http://www.SmartBusinessReports.com/ExperianBIN>, type in your company name, city and state, and then hit “search.” The next page will show you your BIN number in the upper left corner beneath the company address.
 - c. Your TWC Account Number is the account under which the business reports employee wages to the [TWC Tax Department](#).
 - d. To determine your NAICS Code (North American Industrial Classification System Code), please access the current web site at: <http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics>.
2. Table 2: Please indicate the name and address of the public community or technical college you have chosen for your requested training. Include the name of the contact person with whom you have consulted in completing this application (if applicable).
3. Table 3, Attachment A of the application please provide the information listed below. You may add rows as needed.
 - a. The job title of each individual for whom training is requested;
 - b. The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Code for each job title listed. You may access SOC Code information and brief definitions at [the Bureau of Labor Statistics, http://stats.bls.gov/soc/home.htm](http://stats.bls.gov/soc/home.htm). (More detailed information on determining correct SOC Codes can be found in the Occupational Outlook Handbook at [the Bureau of Labor Statistics, http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm).) The SOC Code must be the “Detailed Occupation – Level 4 classification” and contain six digits (XX-XXXX).

(If you need assistance in determining the correct SOC Code, please contact TWC’s Business Outreach and Project Development team at (877) 463-1777 or e-mail SkillsforVeterans@twc.state.tx.us).

 - c. The actual hourly wage of the employee in the occupation for which you are requesting training. *Do not provide average wages or wage ranges.*
 - d. The course title and section, as shown on the active, current Schedule of Classes or other college publication.
 - e. The course period, including the date the course begins and the date the course ends.

- f. The total cost of the course (tuition and fees only).
- g. The amount of the course cost to be paid by the SVI Program.
- h. The amount of the course cost to be paid by the business.

See the table below for examples of how to calculate the cost of training for post 9/11 veteran employees, i.e., the total course cost and the portions paid by the SVI Program and Business:

Course	Course Cost (Tuition & Fees Only)	Amount Paid by SVI Program	Amount Paid by Business
Business Practices	\$500	\$500	\$0
Accounting I	\$600	\$600	\$0
Computer Skills	\$500	\$350	\$150
Totals:		\$1,450	\$150
Participating Veterans are allowed up to \$1,450 in a 12-month period. Funding for training is not available after the initial 12 months of training.			

- 4. Please explain how each training course(s) listed in Attachment A will have an immediate, positive impact on the business' daily operations.
- 5. Please identify which, if any, occupations for which training is being requested align with the occupations targeted for training by the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) in the area where the business is located (see [the TWC Skills for Small Business page at http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/funds/ssb.html](http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/funds/ssb.html) for links to LWDB Targeted Occupations Lists).
- 6. Please place an "X" by the appropriate response (YES or NO) to indicate if:
 - a. The business has applied for or intends to apply for a Texas Enterprise Fund grant; and
 - b. If the business received a Texas Enterprise Fund grant.
- 7. Please sign the "Business Assurances and Attestations" page and include it with your application.