# Board VR Requirements Chapter 2: Wage Services for VR Participants in Paid Work Experience

<https://twc.texas.gov/partners/board-vr-requirements/paid-work-experience>

**Revisions effective May 15, 2019**

## 2.3 Scope of Paid Work Experience Services

Through Paid Work Experience Services, Boards pay the wages of VR Participants for time worked on a job site, thereby enabling Participants to receive wages as they develop work skills that improve their career preparation and increase their employability.

VR Participants are placed at the job site by TWC-VR, and TWC-VR is responsible for monitoring each worksite and providing case management. Paid work experience assignments will not exceed 12 weeks per Participant per worksite assignment. Paid work experience assignments will not exceed 20 hours per week per Participant. A VR Participant may participate in more than one paid work experience assignment, where the VR counselor determines that additional assignments will assist the Participant with career exploration and development of work readiness skills.

### 2.3.1 VR Responsibility

TWC-VR staff are responsible for developing paid work experience opportunities and worksites in both the public or private sector for paid work experience placements. TWC-VR staff may directly develop these paid work experience opportunities. TWC-VR will comply with the Board's exclusions and exceptions to the type of worksites or businesses. TWC-VR staff may work in collaboration with Board or contractor staff to identify worksites based on the Boards' expertise in the local labor market and established relationships with area employers.

TWC-VR regional management will participate in an orientation and coordination meeting with the Board and/or, as applicable, the Board’s contractor, prior to initiating Work Experience Services under this Chapter.

As necessary based on the significance of a Participant's impediments to employment and associated support needs, TWC-VR may also purchase Work Experience Services from a TWC-VR contracted Employment Services Provider (ESP). For additional information about Work Experience Services delivered through ESPs, refer to [Chapter 14 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Standards for Providers Manual](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-14) which is posted on TWC's internet site at this link: [http://www.texasworkforce.org/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-14](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-14). ESPs develop worksite placements as appropriate for the individual Participant and monitor the Participant's progress. ESPs do not provide wage payment services.

TWC-VR staff or ESPs will conduct a worksite orientation with the designated worksite supervisor or contact person. The orientation will include:

* an overview of worksite and Participant responsibilities;
* the hourly rate the Participant will be paid as specified by the Board in Section 2.3.2 of this chapter;
* the maximum number of hours that the Participant may work per week (up to 20);
* the start and end date for the work experience placement (not to exceed 12 weeks), and
* the worksite supervisor's or contact person's responsibility to ensure a complete and accurate timesheet or payroll record is timely provided to the Board or the Board's contractor.

Form I-9 is used for verifying the identity and employment authorization of individuals hired for employment in the United States. TWC-VR staff may assist Participants with preparing any required I-9 paperwork. TWC-VR staff may sign I-9 as a preparer or translator, however, if they do; should be mindful that they are attesting under oath that they have assisted in the completion of the form and that to the best of their knowledge the information is true and correct.

Local TWC-VR staff will issue a Service Authorization to the Board or designated Board contractor, authorizing Board payment of wages for a VR Participant. With the Service Authorization, TWC-VR staff will provide information about the Participant, worksite, designated worksite supervisor or contact person, maximum number of number of hours per week and the end date for the Paid Work Experience Services.

TWC-VR staff or, as applicable, ESPs, are responsible for worksite monitoring and for addressing any needs or concerns shared by the worksite supervisor or contact person regarding the Participant's performance at the worksite. TWC-VR staff will notify Board staff or designated Board contractor staff within 48 hours regarding worksite incidents involving injury, property damage, or behavioral situations that result in termination of the student's placement at the worksite.

### 2.3.2 Board Responsibility

Wages must be paid in a timely manner and include other costs associated with payroll, including Federal income tax withholding, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) expenses, workers' compensation insurance, and any fees associated with payroll processing.

Boards must set an hourly wage rate for the paid work experience component that is consistent with or based on the hourly wage the Board uses for paid work experience under the WIOA Title I formula youth program.

Boards must notify TWC-VR of the hourly wage rate that will be paid to VR Participants in paid work experience within thirty (30) days of contract execution. Boards must include in their notification to TWC-VR a description and breakdown of the other costs associated with payroll as described in Section 2.5.1 of this chapter.

If Boards contract with another entity to perform all or part of the Paid Work Experience Services deliverables, Boards must also notify TWC-VR of the name and contact information of the contractor. The Board or the Board contractor will assume responsibility as the employer of record. The employer of record will need to complete and sign the employer sections of the I-9 form prior to the commencement of the work.

Boards must notify TWC-VR of any exceptions or exclusions to the type of worksites or businesses that may serve as a worksite under this chapter.

Boards must notify TWC-VR thirty (30) days in advance of changes in the Board's contractor, hourly wage rate, other payroll costs, or exceptions or exclusions to the type of worksites or businesses. If such changes are made, the hourly wage rate for a VR Participant must not be reduced during the Participant's paid work experience assignment.

Boards must conduct an orientation meeting with TWC-VR regional management within thirty (30) days of contract execution and prior to initiating Paid Work Experience Services under this chapter. This requirement is established by the September 2018 revisions to this chapter, which are effective on September 19, 2018. For contracts in effect prior to the September 2018 revisions, the meeting must occur within thirty (30) days of the effective date of the chapter revisions.

The orientation meeting must include the Board’s contractor(s), if such contractors will perform functions under this chapter. The purpose of the meeting is to:

* identify points of contact for the Board, Board contractors, and TWC-VR;
* review the Board’s hourly rate and associated payroll costs;
* review the Board’s exceptions and exclusions to the types of businesses or worksites, if applicable; and
* establish procedures to facilitate local coordination and referral, including information and documentation necessary to set up a customer to receive wages. The Board must document the procedures and provide a copy to TWC-VR.

Boards must submit to TWC-VR per-participant fees for fringe benefits. The Board or the Board contractor will need to complete and sign the employer sections of the I-9 form prior to the commencement of the work; whichever will be the employer of record.