

Chapter 1 • Our Guiding Directions



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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These principles guide and direct how we **operate and conduct our business**.

- ▲ Customer focus
- ▲ Service coordination
- ▲ Responsiveness to diversity
- ▲ Strategic thinking
- ▲ Collaborative leadership
- ▲ Community partnerships
- ▲ Accountable performance
- ▲ Organizational development
- ▲ Employee participation
- ▲ Result oriented data-based decisions
- ▲ Continuous improvement

MISSION

The mission of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is to improve the quality of life for individuals and families in need. We will help people achieve safe, self-sufficient, healthy, and secure lives.

VISION

Our vision is **a healthy, safe, and productive Washington**.

The people we serve are members of families, students in schools, and residents in communities. In most cases, they are more strongly connected to those institutions than they are to DSHS programs.

Therefore, to achieve our mission and vision, we are committed to providing our clients with **coordinated services through partnerships** with communities, tribes, counties, service providers, schools, the criminal justice system, and other agencies in the private and public sectors.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

RCW (Revised Code of Washington) 43.20A.010 defines the purpose of DSHS.

“The department of social and health services is designed to integrate and coordinate all those activities involving provision of care for individuals who, as a result of their economic, social or health condition, require financial assistance, institutional care, rehabilitation or other social and health services”.

“The department will concern itself with changing social needs, and will expedite the development and implementation of programs designed to achieve its goals”.

Many federal and state laws authorize DSHS programs and services. See **Appendix 1** for detailed information on each program’s statutory authority.

Our Guiding Directions

PRIORITIES OF GOVERNMENT (POG)

The Governor's biennial budget process includes a **results-based prioritization** of all state activities.

This prioritization process, the Priorities of Government (POG), helps ensure that the budget focuses on investments most likely to achieve the results citizens want.

DSHS actively takes part in the work of three result areas and has been reporting its performance measures at the Governor's Government Management Accountability and Performance (GMAP) forums since June 2005.

- ▲ Improve the **Health of Washington Residents** – by providing medical assistance, mental health care, and chemical dependency treatment to those needing help
- ▲ Improve the **Security of Washington's Vulnerable Children and Adults** – by providing services to keep them safe, healthy, and productive
- ▲ Improve the **Safety of People and Property** – by effectively managing and treating juvenile offenders and sex offenders

In addition, DSHS also contributes to the success of the following three POG result areas:

- ▲ Improve **Student Achievement** in Elementary, Middle and High Schools – by providing children and youth under our care with safe learning environments
- ▲ Improve the **Economic Vitality** of Businesses and Individuals – by assisting people in achieving independence and self-sufficiency
- ▲ Improve the **Ability of State Government to Achieve Results** Efficiently and Effectively – by continuous improvements in managing human resources, information technology, purchasing activities, and various risks and liabilities



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In 2005, the Legislature and the Governor enacted legislation that requires all agencies to establish a **quality management, accountability and performance** system.

The new statute (RCW 43.17.390) outlines the following **elements** of a performance system.

- ▲ **Strategic business planning** that includes engaging stakeholders and customers
- ▲ Clear and relevant **performance measures**
- ▲ Collecting and **analyzing performance data**
- ▲ Using data to evaluate and **improve program performance**
- ▲ Establishing performance **goals for employees**
- ▲ Using **performance measures** to report progress
- ▲ Regular **problem-solving sessions** to address gaps in performance
- ▲ **Allocating resources** based on strategies to improve processes

Washington State Management Framework

