

About the Economic Services Administration

Nearly one out of three Washington residents turns to the Economic Services Administration (ESA) in the Department of Social and Health Services for assistance with cash, food, child support, child care, disability determination, transition to employment, and other services. Each day, more than 4,000 ESA employees provide families and individuals across the state with the resources and support they need to transform their lives. In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2016, ESA served more than 2 million people – representing nearly 30 percent of all Washington State residents.

ESA's core services focus on:

- **Poverty Reduction & Self-Sufficiency** – helping low-income people meet their basic needs and achieve economic independence through cash grants, food, and medical assistance; employment-focused services; and subsidized child care. Major programs include Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and WorkFirst (Washington's welfare to work program); Basic Food Assistance; Aged, Blind or Disabled; Pregnant Women Assistance; Refugee Cash Assistance; Working Connections Child Care; and medical assistance.
- **Child Support & Financial Recovery** – ensuring parents fulfill their responsibility to support their children and improve the self-sufficiency of families through increased financial and medical support. In addition to child support, the collection of other debts owed to DSHS helps support programs that provide financial assistance, medical care and other benefits and services to the state's most vulnerable residents.
- **Disability Determination** – determining whether individuals applying for Social Security disability benefits have a medical condition that prevents them from working. Under contract with the Social Security Administration, Disability Determination Services determines whether individuals qualify for benefits from the Social Security Administration and for medical assistance.

Community Services Division

ESA's Community Services Division (CSD) provides direct client services to the public through a network of 52 local Community Services Offices (CSOs). Services are also provided through a variety of outstationed staff in different communities, two Mobile CSOs, and a single statewide Customer Service Contact Center.

- Most client-related services can be provided by phone at 1-877-501-2233, or online at: www.washingtonconnection.org. These services include checking benefit status information, completing an interview for food or cash benefits, renewing program benefits, reporting changes, and accessing the Answer Phone system.
- Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) applications can be completed by phone at 1-877-501-2233, or online at: www.washingtonconnection.org. CSOs will refer WCCC applications received at the office (e.g., over the counter or by mail) to the unit processing these applications.
- Constituent-related services are available by phone at 1-800-865-7801.

Division of Child Support

ESA's Division of Child Support (DCS) consists of a headquarters office and nine field offices throughout the state.

- To locate a local DCS office, get additional information, pay child support, and download an application for child support services, go to www.childsupportonline.wa.gov.
- Most client-related services are available by phone at 1-800-442-5437.
- Constituent-related services are available by phone at 1-800-457-6202.

ESA Partnerships

ESA works collaboratively with other state agencies and community partners to carry out programs and initiatives that help vulnerable adults, children, and families meet their basic needs and achieve economic self-sufficiency. -For example:

- Coordinated employment and training services are provided by staff from the Employment Security Department, colleges, community action agencies, and nonprofit organizations.
- ESA staff work with any DSHS client via the Employment Pipeline and Alternative Solutions programs by connecting Community Based Organizations and employers with clients to help remove employment barriers, thereby helping to increase self-sufficiency.
- To ensure eligible individuals are connected to food benefits, local Community Services Offices work with a variety of community-based organizations, such as food banks, Basic Food outreach contractors, and other organizations that advocate for children and families.
- WorkFirst services are provided through regional contracts with community-based organizations, including agencies that offer services to persons with limited English proficiency (LEP).
- ESA clients use their Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card to access their cash and food assistance benefits through ATMs and point of sale (POS) machines at participating retailers/businesses across the state.
- ESA staff work with Indian Tribes on a government-to-government basis consistent with the principles of Tribal self-governance embodied in the Centennial Accord and DSHS Administrative Policy 7.01.
- Individuals can apply online for a variety of state and federal benefit programs through the Washington Connection website, with portal access available at more than 900 community partner sites around the state.

How to Access ESA Services

- A list of services and contact information is available at: www.dshs.wa.gov or www.access.wa.gov. To do business in person, locate an office, or get additional contact information, individuals can go to: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/esa-find-office>.