



Tuesday
December 5th
9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Quarterly Meeting Notes

We apologize, there was a glitch in our survey. If you would like to provide feedback, ideas for future meetings or would like us to highlight your agency in one of the quarterly meetings – please send it to SWBFETPolicy@DSHS.wa.gov.

Fond Farewell

Dave Skaar, BFET Operations Supervisor will be leaving March 2023.

Congratulations on the BFET Promotions!

Anita Callahan, BFET Operations Lead Consultant
Kellyn Westra, BFET Management Analysis
Felicia Talbott, BFET Lead Program Manager

Program Updates

Policy

Felicia - The last few years, we have had a Retention Services Waiver where we have been able to provide job, retention, services beyond the 90-days and the waiver that we received from Food and Nutrition Services is going to be expiring April 30, 2023.

This means if your agency has been providing the Extension Retention services beyond the 90-days, you'll want to start thinking about that as your participants gain and obtain employment and are in retention services. Some examples would be a participant could have gained a job on December 2nd, and you started them in retention services, after talking with them and their transition into employment, your retention services might have been up to 9 months. You were going to work with them along the way, but you and the participant have identified they need extended retention services. You'll need to reassess, and look at that knowing that the Extension services beyond 90-days will end on April 30th, 2023.

We just want to give a heads up and we will likely send out a reminder email after the New Year, closer to April. Please consider effects on your services.

Providers can send questions to SWBFETPolicy@dshs.wa.gov, and we can help you out.

ABAWD and Work Registration Workgroup Updates

Corinna - We've received a few questions from our providers about tutoring costs or tutoring services. We talked to our Federal partners, and they came back with an answer and we have a final policy for you. It will be in the handbook by the end of the week. Tutoring is not considered an allowable participant reimbursement cost, however it can be considered an administrative cost. It is not a participant reimbursement, but it can be an administrative cost. This is because our Federal partners think that tutoring is a part of providing these services.

Corinna - Tutoring is not considered an allowable Participant Reimbursement cost, however it can be considered an administrative cost following the guidelines below:

- Tutoring service expenses must be allocated based on the number of BFET clients that use the service.

Example: Provider subscribes to a tutoring service annually for all their clients to access for \$500. BFET participants make up 25% of their caseload. The agency can budget \$125, which would be 25% of the expense towards tutoring services for the year.

- For individual tutoring to be an allowable administrative cost, it must be specialized. Tutoring cannot be generalized or part of any general “free” tutoring.

Example: Participant is struggling to meet mathematic goals for a class and needs additional support to complete the component successfully. The provider hires a math tutor for the participant to work with for two months.

Tutoring must be included in your agency’s administrative budget details and invoiced as a line item.

The policy and examples are going to be in the handbook. This cost is coming out of the administrative funds. We understand that nobody has this as a line item in their budget right now, if you are interested in having tutoring, as an administrative cost you will need to amend to your contract. If you have any questions send an email SWBFETPolicy@dshs.wa.gov.

Barb - Columbia Industries joined our BFET providers. Our sad news is effective at the end of this year, we are losing Entrust. Thank you for being a provider, and all the work that you have done, and you will be missed in Eastern Washington.

Dave – Anita is taken on the role of the Lead Program Consultant on the team which is exciting news. She is stepping into that role. She's doing a fantastic job! This is a tremendous support for not just the operations team in the Program, but also for you, the provider. Right now Anita is doing two jobs at once. She is still taking care of her providers, and she is taking on that Lead Program Consultant position, so she's got quite a bit on her plate.

Kellyn has transitioned to a Management Analyst position for BFET, as a result she's wrapping up her duties and assignments, on the operations team. We're going to be taking all providers who have been supported by Kellyn and we're trying to support you with the entire team.

I will do temporary caseload assignment changes until I'm able to fill the vacancies. Once the vacancies are filled and the new staff are trained, they're going to be given caseloads. We're going to be mixing things up a little bit. We're still going to provide the support, but it may be coming from different individuals on the team. Reach out to BFET Help.

If you need assistance, you can reach out to your program consultant directly. They're here to serve you and assist you in whatever way possible, but their availability may be limited. We are down on staff and we're trying to provide the coverage that we need to all of you. We all have been experiencing the pain of this component change and as a team, we are working on changing all the components over. If you're having trouble with closing components, or entering PR's for old components, once we make the transition you'll be able to do all of that.

I am transitioning from state service and taking on a new opportunity. The transition date is in March 2023. Aman is looking at filling my position and I'll be slowly transitioning out of my role.

As I start training and preparing the new supervisor to take over the duties that I have been doing I'm still available; I'm still here to assist you. We have a transition plan to make sure that all of you are supported and nothing gets dropped, but I will be slowly moving out of that role and transition and handing over responsibilities. I'm Excited for the new opportunities for the program, as well as the team Changes. I appreciate all of your patience and understanding, and as we go through these changes. We're trying very hard to make sure we don't drop, anything. If something does come up, please let us know so that we can put that on our radar and make sure that you are getting the help and assistance.

Secure email troubleshooting

Our provider handbook outlines the secure email options, but I will talk through some of the nuances.

We are using different methods when we're sending encrypted emails. We use [DSHS secure] in our subject line and that will encrypt our emails.

This works best when we're sending attachments and if you use Microsoft Email exchange it just opens up automatically in your server, because Microsoft is doing all the encryption. This is our preferred method of encrypting emails. If there is an issue in you opening or receiving those emails and attachments, we will use [secure]. This is very useful when you need to reply and send us an encrypted email. This is one that you can hit reply on when it says [secure] and the email will be encrypted when it comes back to DSHS. When we use this you will get a code to open it up and there are times we do have trouble with attachments. If you're having trouble opening attachments, just ask us to resend it through [DSHS Secure], and that's way it should you should be able to get the attachment but do not reply to [DSHS secure].

A few of you have windows operating systems that are older and you're not getting these emails. Unfortunately, our email exchange only works with current operating systems that are being patched. Your system has to be compatible with Microsoft Email exchange. If it's not, we got to figure a different way of communicating because our system will not allow you to open up those encrypted emails. If you're having that problem please contact the BFET Operations Team and We'll figure a different way of communicating back and forth but email is not an option.

One of the options is you can use your own encrypted email services when communicating to DSHS. If you have your own you can use that, we'll just have our security team do a security check on it and then we'll get the code and we'll be able to use your own encryption email services to communicate to DSHS.

The other option is replying to an email with secure in the brackets. When you're doing that it will encrypt from your system to our system and we'll be able to open up that email. This works when you have a Microsoft based, email system.

I can't stress this enough, **do not reply** to an email that says [DSHS Secure] unless all protected information is removed. You can reply to anything that says [secure]. All of this is in our handbook instructions. If you have any difficulties, please reach out we'll troubleshoot with you.

If it has to do with invoicing, reach out to Billie Malcolm.

Question - With this method, will it take the place of faxing?

Answer - We are talking just the BFET program. I don't know of a situation when we use faxing. Often when a fax does come in, it comes in as an email attachment.

Supervised Job Search documentation requirements was updated in October.

The first one is under the component section in the handbook under the component activity Supervised Job Search. The text here says supervised job search verification may be noted in eJAS with an activity month capturing the date, type and result of the contact to be considered as participants.

The second text here is in the case management chapter under eJAS case documentation, and this has to do with ongoing case notes. How do you document ongoing and it says if in supervised job search, you must document addressing how job search logs were received from the client, the information about reviewing the job log, you reviewed it with them and what was the results of that review and any follow-up plans.

These are different parts of the handbook they're all addressing supervised Job search, specifically, how to document job search activity.

I'm going to break down the different scenarios:

The first scenario has to do with going back to that component piece, if you are using eJAS to document job search activity instead of a separate document, that is a job search log. We have situations, here, one is the client is using a job search log that would be placed in the participant file.

The second scenario is, you are working with the client and you're reviewing job search activity one on one, if you are reviewing it one on one, that first section is what we want to see documented, because you're using each EJAS to document the job search activity. It's not in a separate document. You're using eJAS in that case what we want to see is the date of employer contact the type of job search activity, what was the type, was it an application, was it an interview,

was it a follow-up, what was the activity the participant was doing and then what was the result? We want to see that documentation in eJAS.

A job search log would have, what is the date of the employer contact, what was the type and what was the result. We're not asking you to take that job search log and transcribe it into eJAS.

What we're asking for is:

- How did you get the job log?
- What was the information?
- What was the follow-up plan?

If your using eJAS as the job search log documentation, it is sufficient, but if the client is providing a separate job search log then follow the second set of documentation that is found in the eJAS documentation requirements.

You will be receiving more information on this topic, however I want to encourage you to reach out to your program consultant for more clarification.

Invoicing Process Update

Billie - I have been processing the invoices and if the invoice is not correct, I send it back with instruction on why the invoice is denied. BFET received a finding from FNS a few years ago! Our program responded by agreeing to review all participant reimbursements (PRs) over the amount of \$75.

Policy is reviewing the PRs and comparing to them to eJAS. We are looking for -- Was a participant reimbursement created in eJAS? And does the balance match in eJAS and on the invoice PR Tracking form? If it does not match, it needs to be modified to match.

Do the notes tell the story of who, what, when, where and why?

We have been finding gaps in our process in reviewing these PRs and we are attempting to follow up to support our providers. Starting FFY23, as long as your invoice is correct, and an error is found in PRs, I will approve the first invoice **only** and send you an email letting you know what the issue is. I copy our operations department email for your corresponding operations person to reach out for guidance in eJAS or to provide training.

If there is an additional month at any time throughout the fiscal year, the invoice will be denied until the PR is corrected in eJAS.

We want to ensure you as our providers are getting the support and training you need while balancing the fact that we could have findings from FNS if these are not completed correctly.

Thank you and you are welcome to contact me directly or send questions to SWBFETPolicy@dshs.wa.gov.

Monitoring

The Why

Monitoring is mutually beneficial because were not only identifying areas of improvement, it also helps us understand what we may be able to identify within our BFET Program as an improvement ,while also advocating for all of your needs.

OVERALL- It is our goal to share through Monitoring how we identify the success our providers.

Support & Collaboration

In FFY22 you may have noticed a more indepth focus

Discuss the policy and Ops collaboration with a audit piece process that support measurements of the Program.

Basic Food Employment and Training

Fiscal Team meets **separately** to monitor fiscal documents for compliance with the agency's internal fiscal Staff.

Program Change Effects

There are smaller findings that can be easily avoided. This was identified as a prone error.

Ways Providers Are Supported

Providers receive a wealth of training resources to support the growth and success of their individual Programs that support the successful outcomes of their perspective monitoring's

Report Out

The why behind the report out--Mindful of objective

In Closing

In closing...YOU ARE THE SUCCESS.....

Official Monitoring Report

Reminder that the report goes to the Contract Signer and the authorized staff listed in the DSHS system.

SBCTC

We just welcomed our very new student services director Dr. Lauren Hips. She started with us on December 1st, Dr. Hibs joins us from Central Washington University, where she served for 5 years as the Executive Director for Extended learning. This included Oversight of Central Washington, 8 Regional Centers, located throughout the State. Six of those Centers are Co-located with Community Colleges.

Kathy Medcalf transitions out of the State Board December 2nd. She now a Senior Consultant with Seattle Jobs Initiative. We're eager to fill this position. We have a goal of February first as the start date if things, run smoothly. I'll be your main point call for the time.

Why do we have quarterly meetings? Program Updates

- Program updates
- Training
- Reduce or/and eliminate contract findings
- Networking



All of the above

ABAWD

There are changes coming and we want to be sure that we are keeping all of you, our valued providers, updated on these changes.

As we progress through these slides, we will be using a few acronyms and before we dig in any further, we just want to touch on a few of these to be sure that we don't lose anyone as we proceed.

ABAWD: Able Bodied Adults without Dependents. This refers to a specific subset of Basic Food recipients who are required to meet participation requirements in order to continue to receive food assistance. We will be going into more detail on ABAWDs as we continue with this presentation.

BFET: Basic Food Employment and Training Program. Most if not all of you should be familiar with this one. BFET acts as the Employment and Training Program for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Washington State.

CBO: Community Based Organizations. Public or private not-for-profit resource hubs that provide services to community and/or targeted populations within the community.

FNS: Food and Nutrition Services is an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture. FNS is responsible for administering domestic nutrition assistance Programs and they are our overseeing entity.

SNAP: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is the largest federal nutrition assistance Program. It provides food benefits to eligible low income individuals.

We want to give a refresher on work registrants and ABAWDs in light of the upcoming changes that we will be discussing.

We are going to talk about the upcoming work registration oral script and the consolidated work registration notice.

There are exciting updates to talk about regarding BFET referrals and screening.

And finally...we will be discussing the return of ABAWD time limits, waived areas for ABAWDs, the use of discretionary exemptions, Workfare as an option for ABAWD clients, and participation tracking.

The first thing that I want to say in regards to work registrants and ABAWDs...all ABAWDs are work registrants but not all work registrants are ABAWDs. 😊

Work registration requirements do not apply to those who are under 16 or over 60. Requirements do not apply to clients who have a qualifying exemption.

Furthermore, ABAWDs have their own requirements but those requirements don't apply if a client is exempted for any of the reasons listed or if they have a qualifying exception from meeting ABAWD requirements.

Work registrants register as such during the interview Process when it is determined that they are a work registrant with no qualifying exemptions.

Work registrants must accept suitable employment if offered and may not voluntarily quit a job of 20 hours or more per week or reduce hours below 20 hours per week without good cause. As an agency it is difficult to enforce rules surrounding turning down employment the focus is mainly on job quit or reduction in hours.

ABAWDs have additional requirements: they must work 20 hours or more per week (average of 80 hours per month), participate in a work Program for hours or more per week, meet participation requirements by combining these activities for 20 hours or more per week, or participate in Workfare at an approved Workfare site.

If a work registrant client voluntarily quits a job there are penalties that apply:

The 1st instance results in a one month suspension of food benefits, the 2nd instance three months, and the 3rd instance six months. **IF** the client can show good cause for their job quit, the penalties do not apply.

Furthermore, ABAWD clients will be ineligible for SNAP benefits for the remainder of the 36 month time period if they exhaust their three months of time limited eligibility. ABAWD clients can requalify again if their three months are used up. **IF** they regain eligibility by meeting participation requirements.

There are more updates for work registrant clients that we will cover in the next few slides.

They include the new consolidated work registration notice, the new oral script for work registrants, the new BFET screening Process before referrals are made, and the new provider determination Process.

We will cover these in detail as we proceed through the presentation. These are all new rules codified in the 2018 Farm Bill.

There is a new consolidated work registration notice that will be going out to all households with a work registrant in the assistance unit. This notice will be included at new applications and at eligibility reviews. This notice will be ready just after the first of the year in 2023.

The letter will:

Identify who in the assistance unit is a work registrant

Inform clients about additional rules that apply to work registrants including if there are ABAWDs in the home

List any possible exemptions that the household should report.

The new work registration script tells the head of household who in the assistance unit is considered a work registrant and who is an ABAWD.

Many of you are already aware that there is a new BFET and ABAWD work registration script that has been developed and is scheduled to be released and ready for use by the end of the year.

The reason behind this new script is that we are in compliance with FNS rules. This is now a part of SNAP eligibility.

The script is mandatory to be read to all work registrants. A second portion of the script is specifically for ABAWD clients. This new script gives clients the opportunity to be referred to the BFET.

For a quick visual we have provided a couple of screen shots that you can all see what this looks like when clients are read the script and possibly referred to BFET.

The new script will be read if the assistance unit includes any work registrant clients and the additional ABAWD script will all be read if the assistance unit includes any ABAWDs.

Once the script is completed, the eligibility worker will check "client accepts BFET" or "client declines BFET." If they accept, a COMM tickle is created and the DSHS Virtual Case Management Center (VCMC) will follow up with the client for the BFET referral.

As part of this new Process, VCMC staff will be assigned to handle these referrals and make contact with interested clients. VCMC staff will go through a screening once they reach the client in order to refer them to an appropriate provider.

FNS is requiring a specific screening for clients to ensure that each person that is being referred has specific questions asked and to be sure that this information is captured in the client ECR. There are screening questions that the client is asked to determine the client needs and interests in order to refer them to an appropriate provider.

After the initial screening questions are answered, staff will complete the referral by working with the client to select a provider (or providers) based on the client's responses. Depending on how the client answered the initial screening questions, different providers will show up as options in different categories.

This is a big deal because this means for the first time it will be **required** for DSHS staff to offer the BFET referrals. It is still up to the client to accept and follow through with the referral.

We are going to take a bit of time to go over ABAWDs including which areas will still be waived from ABAWD requirements and me other specific information that pertains to ABAWD clients.

The map shown is not official yet as we do not have a written approval for the waiver yet.

It is *rumored* that the HHS will extend the PHE past January 2023, but we are proceeding as normal for the time being and the current plan is to be ready to implement ABAWD rules on February 1, 2023.

These counties are:

Chelan, Clark, King, Kitsap, Snohomish, Spokane, Thurston, Walla Walla, and Whatcom. The tribal areas within these non-waived counties will be exempt.

All other counties and any tribal areas in those counties will be exempt from ABAWD requirements.

Discretionary waivers (SW) for ABAWDs will be used for five counties in the state as well as any tribal areas that are not waived by area waivers. The counties selected have a very small population of ABAWDs but do not qualify for their own waiver and these areas do not have access to a lot of employment and training services.

Discretionary waivers will be used for clients in the ACP as well as clients who would not receive timely notice due to LEP translations.

ABAWDs are required to work 20 hours or more per week, averaged monthly;

Participate in a work Program for 20 hours or more per week;

Participate using a combination of working and participating in a work Program for 20 hours or more per week;

Or by participating in Workfare at an approved Workfare site.

ABAWD requirements can be found in the Washington Administrative Codes listed on this slide.

There are a few state approved work Programs that satisfy ABAWD requirements including BFET Programs.

There are other Programs available to ABAWDs as well including WIOA Title Programs and AmeriCorps Programs.

State approved Programs can be found on the website listed on this slide.

Clients may come to you with a termination notice, it will include a document called the 11-034 - "Basic Food Eligibility Requirements What You Need to Know to Keep Your Benefits".

This will be a good indicator that their termination is ABAWD related.

The letter will have a termination date on it. If the termination date *has not passed* the client is still active on Basic Food and may be eligible to enroll in BFET which could stop their termination. Follow your enrollment Process.

If the termination date has passed, the client is not active on Basic Food and will need to do another activity before becoming eligible for benefits and BFET again. Have the client contact a local office or the call center.

There are several BFET components that are countable for ABAWD participation.

Accurate and timely notes are essential for ABAWDs to verify their participation through BFET.

It is important to include very detailed notes in eJAS for ABAWD clients that ABAWD participation through BFET can be easily verified by DSHS staff.

Changes or barriers that prevent a client from meeting their participation must be clearly documented that good cause can be granted if necessary for that month.

There is an activity report form that the client can utilize to verify participation that staff can access in the DSHS barcode system. But most BFET participation will be verified in eJAS good case notes are essential.

Workfare sites provide parameters regarding the essential skills and abilities that they require of Workfare participants. Workfare participants are strictly volunteer and they can gain valuable work experience by engaging with an approved Workfare site.

Workfare is an opportunity for ABAWD clients to meet their participation requirements at approved workfare sites by volunteering for a specific number of minimum hours. These hours are based on the amount of food benefits that the client is receiving and the minimum wage in their area.

These sites will be in non-waived areas only as these areas have the need to provide opportunities for ABAWD clients to participate.

ABAWD clients who utilize Workfare as a means of participation must provide monthly verification. The usual verification provided is DSHS form 01-205, Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents Activity Report. Workfare clients have this form completed by their workfare site and then turn the form in for verification.

Workfare sites are non-profit or religious organizations that enter into no-risk \$0 contracts to provide volunteer opportunities for ABAWD clients.

These sites will be in non-waived areas only as these areas have the need to provide opportunities for ABAWD clients to participate.

We are currently working on the future communications that will go to potential mandatory ABAWDs to make sure that they are aware of the coming changes and their participation requirements.

There will be a phone/text campaign as well as notecards that will be sent out to potentially affected ABAWDs.

We have already sent out internal DSHS communications and we will continue with communications intended for interested parties in the community that work with DSHS clients.

We will continue to keep our DSHS ABAWD site updated as well.

Work registration and rollout of the new oral script is scheduled to be ready by 12/27/22 when staff return from the long holiday weekend. However, the consolidated work requirements document is not scheduled to be ready until 01/05/23 the work registration timeline may be pushed back a week.

Currently, ABAWD requirements are scheduled to go into effect on 2/1/23, but due to the public health emergency that is still in effect, the ABAWD date may be pushed back. We are still waiting on final word on this and we will do our best to keep interested parties aware of any changes.

In November we celebrated National Native American Month.

In honor of that we welcome Christelle Arnett on her story of Surviving Assimilation. Christelle serves as DVR's first Tribal Relations Administrator and is an enrolled member of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes in Idaho. Throughout the years, Christelle learned more about her people's experiences from tribal elders and participated in cultural activities, including beadwork and traditional dancing. As a non-native speaker, Christelle was taught the Shoshoni language in college and the Bannock language in community immersion classes. As a result, of efforts to revitalize her culture, Christelle learned about the struggles and accomplishments of those who came before her. She returned to the Fort Hall Indian reservation in to live closer to family and her culture. Over the next years, Christelle became very involved in her community, both personally and professionally. As a community advocate, she helped to establish the Bannock Language Preservation Group, a Native American Business Association, and a bead workers group to bring greater business opportunities to traditional artists. Today, she is proud of her identity as a Shoshone-Bannock tribal member.

Surviving Assimilation

My Story My Mother's Maternal Families

Before Contact

Great Basin Indians – Traditional & Customary Lands

Shoshone and Bannocks-Before Contact

After Contact

Shoshone and Bannocks –After Contact

Shoshone and Bannocks-After Contact Cont.

Fort Hall Indian Reservations

1850's-1880's

Life On The Fort Hall Reservations

Waiting for Rations in Fort Hall

1877-1934

Fort Hall Boarding School

Edmo/Randall Family

Edmo/Randall Family circa

Visual Family Tree

Family Members Become Assimilated

1920's Sho-Ban Women

Some Family Members Defied Assimilation

Adjusting to Assimilation

Frank Randall, Tribal Leader

Excerpt from Frank Randall Letter to Commissioner

1940's-1960's

Modern Day Warriors

Assimilation is Complete

By 1960
 Christelle
 Restoring My Native Identity
 Revitalizing our Shoshone-Bannock Culture

Refer to your BFET Provider's handbook for any clarification.

Save the date! March 7th from am-pm is our next Quarterly provider's Meeting.

DSHS provides notices to the first three points of contact on our list for your agency. Please forward to any of your staff.

If you have a best practice or specialty presentation for a future meeting. (Around minutes) we can learn from each other, please send to billie.malcolm@DSHS.wa.gov

Our survey shows that success stories are important to showcase! Please send any success stories to SWBFETPolicy@DSHS.wa.gov.



Partnering Together in Transforming Lives