

Employment and Training

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services
Economic Services Administration
Community Services Division

Program Description

The Department of Social and Health Services' Economic Services Administration's employment and training programs, in partnership with other state agencies and partners, focus on supporting individuals and families in building their skills and fully making use of their talents through employment and/or education and training. Each program is tailored to serve a particular target population based on eligibility to other assistance programs. Participants are eligible for support services with a focus on bolstering engagement by reducing barriers, such as assisting with transportation and accessing quality child care.

ESA strives to align its employment and training programs with other programs and services implemented under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which allows partner agencies that administer education, employment, and training programs to leverage resources and coordinate approaches to help workers and job seekers, including youth (age 16-24 years old) and adults with low incomes, acquire skills and credentials that meet employers' needs. Partners include local Workforce Development Councils (WDCs), community-based organizations (CBOs) and fellow state agencies.

Providing participants access to these supports increases the ability of Washington state residents, employers, and communities to realize their full economic and social potential and overall well-being:

- **Helping parents prepare and go to work.** WorkFirst is for families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or State Family Assistance (SFA). WorkFirst provides families with opportunities to engage in work activities that support financial stability and resilience through partnerships with Employment Security Department, State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, Department of Commerce, and CBOs.
- **Connecting job seekers to education, employment and training.** Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) is Washington's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training program. It is available to SNAP recipients not eligible for TANF/SFA or the state funded Food Assistance Program (FAP) who are ready to engage in Employment and Training activities. BFET, in collaboration with the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges and CBOs, provides recipients the opportunity to increase their skills through training and education to improve their employment prospects and financial well-being.
- **Providing opportunities immediately.** Employment Pipeline is a DSHS-administered program that employs navigators to quickly connect individuals receiving DSHS services to employment opportunities. Navigators work with local workforce development partners and WorkSource to identify opportunities that fit the job seeker's skill level, need and readiness, and provide up to one year of post-employment support to help ensure success for the individual and their employer.

Highlights

- **62 percent of clients remained employed** a year after exiting the BFET program.
- **75 percent of WorkFirst families participate** in work or training activities that strengthen their skillsets.
- **Washington's BFET program is a national model** for SNAP employment and training services.

More information:

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Transforming lives

(10/2020)