

One Department, One Vision, One Mission, One Core Set of Values



Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services

VISION *Safe, healthy individuals, families, and communities.*

MISSION *The Department of Social & Health Services will improve the safety and health of individuals, families, and communities by providing leadership and establishing and participating in partnerships.*

VALUES

*Excellence in Service
Respect
Collaboration and Partnership
Diversity
Accountability*

ORIENTATIONS *Early childhood development. Person- and family-centered, strengths-based.*

OUR IMPACT *Together we will decrease poverty, improve safety and health status, and increase educational and employment success to support people and communities in reaching their potential.*

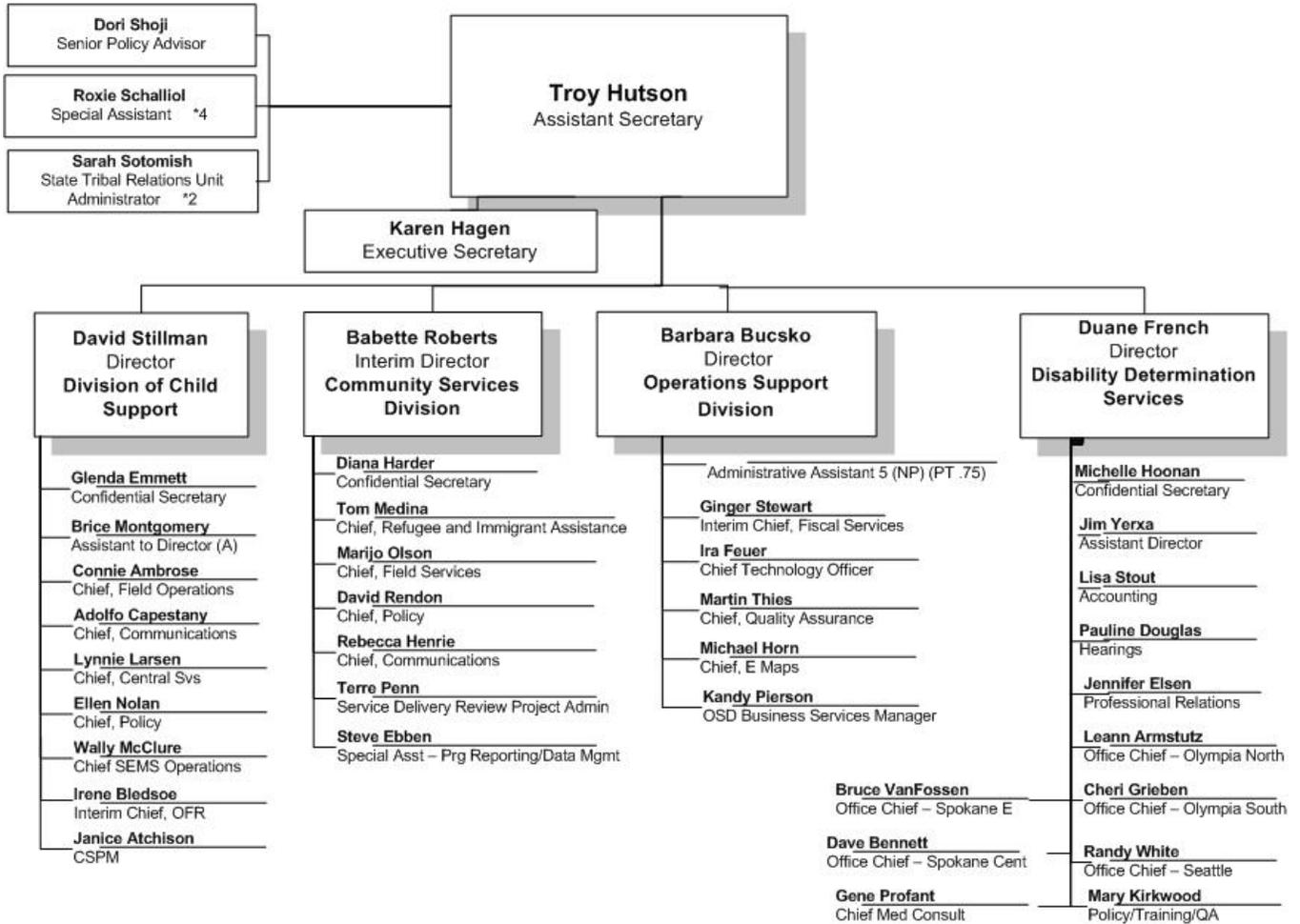
Economic Services Administration

Business Plan

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Economic Services Administration



Introduction

Almost one out of every four Washington citizens turns to ESA every day for assistance with cash, food, child support, child care, disability determination, or other services available through Economic Services. Each day, over 4,500 Economic Services Administration employees provide families across Washington State with the resources and help they need to build better lives. **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, subsidized child care, and child support enforcement. Major programs include WorkFirst (Washington's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program), Basic Food (formerly the Food Stamp Program), General Assistance for the Unemployable, Refugee Assistance, and Working Connections Child Care, as well as eligibility determination for medical assistance.
- ❑ **Child Support Enforcement & Financial Recovery** — Ensuring parents live up to the responsibility of supporting their children and improving the self-sufficiency of families through increased financial and medical support. For many single-parent families, child support payments constitute an essential portion of their income and enhance their economic security. In addition to collecting child support, use of administrative collection processes and tools to collect other debts owed to the Department helps programs meet current expenditures and provide financial assistance, medical care, and other benefits and services to those in need.
- ❑ **Disability Determination --** Determining whether individuals applying for Social Security disability benefits have a disability that prevents them from working. Under contract with the Social Security Administration, DDS determines whether individuals qualify for benefits from the Social Security Administration and medical assistance.

Economic Services Administration serves many clients who live on the margin. Even if they are not receiving a cash grant, they may be relying on food assistance, work-related support services, assistance with child support, medical coverage, or child care subsidies. A family crisis or change in the economy, even a small one, can force these families into situations requiring public assistance, whether it's the full support of a cash grant or temporary assistance to avoid losing housing. When unemployment rates rise or there are downturns in the overall economy, the demand for services increases, as does the pressure on programs, funding, staffing, and other resources.

DSHS Goal 1: *Improve the health status of Washington residents.*

DSHS Goal 2: *Improve economic stability and self-sufficiency.*

DSHS Goal 3: *Improve individual and public safety.*

DSHS Goal 4: *Improve individuals' readiness and ability to succeed in school.*

DSHS Goal 5: *Improve individuals' capacity to gain and retain meaningful employment.*

DSHS Goal 6: *Increase public trust through strong management practices that ensure quality and leverage all resources.*

ESA's Business Plan touches on most of the Department's goals, with a major focus on three areas that are core to ESA's service to clients:

- improving economic stability and self-sufficiency;
- improving individuals' capacity to gain and retain meaningful employment; and
- increasing public trust through strong management practices that ensure quality and leverage all resources.

Although there are a number of significant initiatives in the ESA plan, two of the most critical involve review and redesign of major programs and services – the State's Disability Lifeline Program (formerly the General Assistance Program) and the WorkFirst Program.

The Disability Lifeline Program provides cash and medical support to individuals with a temporary incapacity. With the passage of legislation this past session, ESA staff will collaborate with the Medical Purchasing Administration and others to redesign the program and implement provisions of the Disability Lifeline law.

Since its inception, WorkFirst has been one of the hallmarks of Washington's efforts to assist individuals and families gain and retain employment. Over the coming months, ESA staff, in conjunction with a wide range of partners, will engage in the most significant review and redesign of the WorkFirst program undertaken since the program was launched in 1996. The Department's two orientations – early childhood development and person- and family-centered, strengths-based, integrated case management – are vital as core assumptions in the program's redesign.

While the Administration will be working on a variety of strategic initiatives, transforming the way we do business is the foundation of ESA's business plan. Whether it is re-examining major policy and program areas, redesigning our service delivery models, or using innovation to increase capacity for operational support, the Administration is committed to business process re-engineering to improve services. Major strategic initiatives throughout the plan will be supported with strong project management and the resources critical to ensure success.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies, Performance Measures

DSHS Goal 1: Improve the health status of Washington residents

Strategic Objectives

DSHS Objectives

- *Increase access to health and behavioral health care services to improve the health status of DSHS clients*
- *Increase the use of prevention services and activities to foster well-being among DSHS clients and employees*

ESA Objectives

- *Provide individuals who are temporarily incapacitated with cash, medical, and other supports necessary*
- *Provide responsive, accurate and timely services to families and individuals who apply for benefits*

Strategies/Actions

- *Redesign the Disability Lifeline Program and implement the provisions of HB2782 to improve basic support outcomes for recipients*
- *Reduce the time it takes to obtain an accurate determination of available medical insurance for a child or children*
- *Provide timely and accurate eligibility determinations for Non-Grant Medical Assistance (NGMA)*

Interdependencies: Who are our key business partners?

- *Employers*
- *Medical Purchasing Administration*
- *Hospitals and other medical providers*
- *Legislators*
- *Health and human service advocates*
- *Legal advocates*
- *Department of Commerce*
- *Department of Veterans Affairs*
- *Division of Vocational Rehabilitation*

Key Performance Indicators

- *# and % of long- term disabled or exempt participants that become eligible for SSI/SSA*
- *Time to determine accurate medical insurance*
- *# of NGMA recipients and clearances*

DSHS Goal 2: Improve economic stability and self-sufficiency

Strategic Objectives

DSHS Objectives

- *Connect people with benefits and services that reduce poverty and help them become self-sufficient*
- *Improve individual and family skills, knowledge, opportunities, and their capacity to increase self-sufficiency through person-centered, strengths-based services.*
- *Increase service coordination to improve success during life transitions*

ESA Objectives

- *Connect people to benefits and services that reduce poverty and help them become more self-sufficient*
- *Enhance economic security of children through child support enforcement efforts*
- *Work with tribes on a government-to-government basis to provide services in ways that best meet the needs of native Americans*
- *Provide culturally competent services to families and individuals*
- *Increase available funds for programs to provide financial, medical, and other services through OFR collection efforts*

Strategies/Actions

- *Working with community and other partners, develop and implement a Benefit Portal to support on-line eligibility screening and application for a variety of programs throughout the Department and beyond*
- *Develop targeted outreach strategies in collaboration with state and local community partners to increase participation by eligible families and individuals in Washington's Basic Food programs*
- *Collaborate with Tribes to support IV-A and IV-D programs*
- *Collaborate with Tribes to support Tribal eligibility determinations for Basic Food and Medical*
- *Strengthen services for refugees and immigrants*
- *Increase the percentage of child support cases with a support order by simplifying and streamlining the administrative order establishment process*
- *Develop comprehensive person- and family-centered planning and strengths-based WorkFirst assessment/case management to ensure services are appropriate and support a smooth transition to self-sufficiency*
- *Review DCS business model and identify and implement process improvements to improve services to children and families*
- *Identify and implement process improvements for the OFR business model to increase recoveries returned to programs*
- *Provide disability determination services to individuals applying for Social Security disability benefits through the Social Security Administration*

Interdependencies: Who are our key business partners?

The following are either directly involved in the strategic initiatives or have an interest in the efforts:

- *Legislators and legislative staff*
- *Advocacy groups*
- *Community-based organizations and service providers*

- *Tribes and Tribal Organizations*
- *Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys*
- *County clerks*
- *Philanthropic organizations (e.g. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation)*
- *Key federal agencies (e.g. USDA, DHHS, OCSE)*
- *Refugee and immigrant service groups*
- *SSA Field Offices / Seattle Regional Office / Quality Branch*
- *DDS Medical Consultants*
- *Hospitals and health-care providers*

Key Performance Indicators

- *% of individuals who are at or below 125% of the federal poverty level who are participating in the Basic Food Program*
- *Total IV-D collections*
- *% of child support cases with a support order*
- *Total IV-D collections distributed to families*
- *# of SSA recipients and clearances*

DSHS Goal 3: Improve individual and public safety

Strategic Objectives

DSHS Objectives

- *Improve the safety and permanency for individuals who are at-risk or who are in state care, treatment, or out-of-home placement*
- *Improve safety through effective investigation of and response to abuse*

ESA Objectives

- *Provide responsive, accurate and timely services to families and individuals who apply for benefits to prevent homelessness and hunger*
- *Provide case management to transition vulnerable adults eligible for Disability Lifeline to safe, stable housing*
- *Provide screening, information and referral to victims of domestic violence*

Strategies/Actions

- *Coordinate services with other providers who supply housing, food, and treatment by developing written service level agreements*
- *Research and adopt proven methodologies to provide case management that will impact the entire household or family unit*
- *Partner with the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence to increase awareness of domestic violence and victim services*

Interdependencies: Who are our key business partners?

- *Department of Commerce*
- *Washington Food Coalition*
- *Housing Authorities*
- *Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence*
- *Mental health providers*
- *Substance Abuse Treatment providers*
- *Tribes*
- *Community Action Agencies*

Key Performance Indicators

- # of housing vouchers issued*
- # of signed community partnerships agreements*
- # of staff development sessions provided*
- # of households receiving coordinated services from multiple providers*

DSHS Goal 5: Improve individuals' capacity to gain and retain meaningful employment

Strategic Objectives

DSHS Objectives

- *Connect people with benefits and services that reduce poverty and help them become self-sufficient*
- *Improve individual and family skills, knowledge, opportunities, and their capacity to increase self-sufficiency through person-centered, strengths-based services*
- *Increase service coordination to improve success during life transitions*
- *Increase access to job readiness, job search and employment programs*

ESA Objectives

- *Connect people to benefits and services that reduce poverty and help them become more self-sufficient*

Strategies/Actions

- *Reset TANF/WorkFirst as an asset to economic recovery -- Work within the WorkFirst partnership to create and refine services and evidence-based approaches that meet the needs of WorkFirst families and quickly assist their transition to employment and economic self-sufficiency*
- *Identify and implement strategies that connect people with work*

Interdependencies: Who are our key business partners?

- *Legislators and legislative staff*
- *Advocacy groups*
- *Community-based organizations and service providers*
- *Tribes and Tribal Organizations*

Key Performance Indicators

- *# and % engaged full time in work or work-like activities*
- *Exits due to self-sufficiency*
- *# and % of exits from TANF returning within one year*
- *Percent of adults who do not seek TANF within 12 months of receiving Division Cash Assistance*

DSHS Goal 6: Increase public trust through strong management practices that ensure quality and leverage all resources.

Strategic Objectives

DSHS Objectives

- *Operate in a fiscally responsible, transparent, and cost-effective manner*
- *Recruit, develop, and retain an informed, inspired, diverse and engaged workforce*
- *Expand and leverage data and performance management practices to improve decision-making and client outcomes*
- *Minimize financial and legal risk across the Department*

ESA Objectives

- *Build and retain a strong, committed, and diverse workforce*
- *Maintain systems and support to ensure financial accountability*
- *Ensure accountability for program results and expenditures*
- *Use process improvement, data, and technology to streamline administrative and service delivery models and increase capacity and productivity*

Strategies/Actions

- *Complete implementation of ESA's Service Delivery Redesign*
- *Develop and implement a comprehensive workforce capacity and development plan (recruitment/retention of a diverse workforce, succession model, staff development and training, leadership development, staffing needs, wellness, and career path development)*
- *Increase use of telework, co-locations, and other approaches to increase community presence, assist with pressing budget and facilities issues, and facilitate integrated case staffing*
- *Use process improvement tools to refine and streamline recruitment, screening, and hiring processes within ESA*
- *Work with other Administrations to develop and refine a long-term facility plan for the Department to address aging facilities, changing service delivery, and the needs of our programs and ensure adequate funding for all facility needs*
- *Build our capacity to analyze and use data to improve program planning and decision making, including data dashboards, data warehouse, and data mining*
- *Improve internal controls and monitoring processes to minimize and help prevent payment errors in our programs and services*
- *Develop and implement strategies to meet federal TANF participation requirements while minimally impacting field services*
- *Develop and implement initiatives designed to improve performance levels for operations support services and demonstrate contribution to overall performance and mission of ESA*
- *Use technology to support administrative and field operations, streamline processes to create capacity, and develop agile, responsive systems (e.g. remote access for staff, statistical modeling, on-line services for clients, etc.)*
- *Build the infrastructure to support a culture of continuous improvement, focused on transforming the way we do business; provide funding and support for innovative ideas; and provide staff with process improvement tools to help the organization streamline processes and services, including application for the National Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award*
- *Ensure automated eligibility is supported into the future (continue planning for ACES modernization)*

- *Improve data transfer and communication between ESA divisions and programs*
- *Identify potential options within ESA, across the Department, and across agencies to maximize use of limited resources and improve services*
- *Assess OFR receivables system; identify and implement process improvements*

Interdependencies: Who are our key business partners?

- *Other Department Administrations/Divisions (ADSA, CA, ISSD, RDA, ORC)*
- *DIS*
- *MPA*

Key Performance Indicators

- *# of audit findings from State Auditor's Office or Operations Review and Consultation*
- *Number of dollars of questioned costs needing to be repaid to the federal*
- *Federal TANF participation rate*
- *% of staff indicating they have the tools and resources to do their jobs effectively as reported on the DSHS staff survey*
- *Basic Food program accuracy*
- *Application processing times*