2013-2015 Business Plan

Economic Services Administration

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Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services

Vision

Safe, healthy individuals, families, and communities

Mission

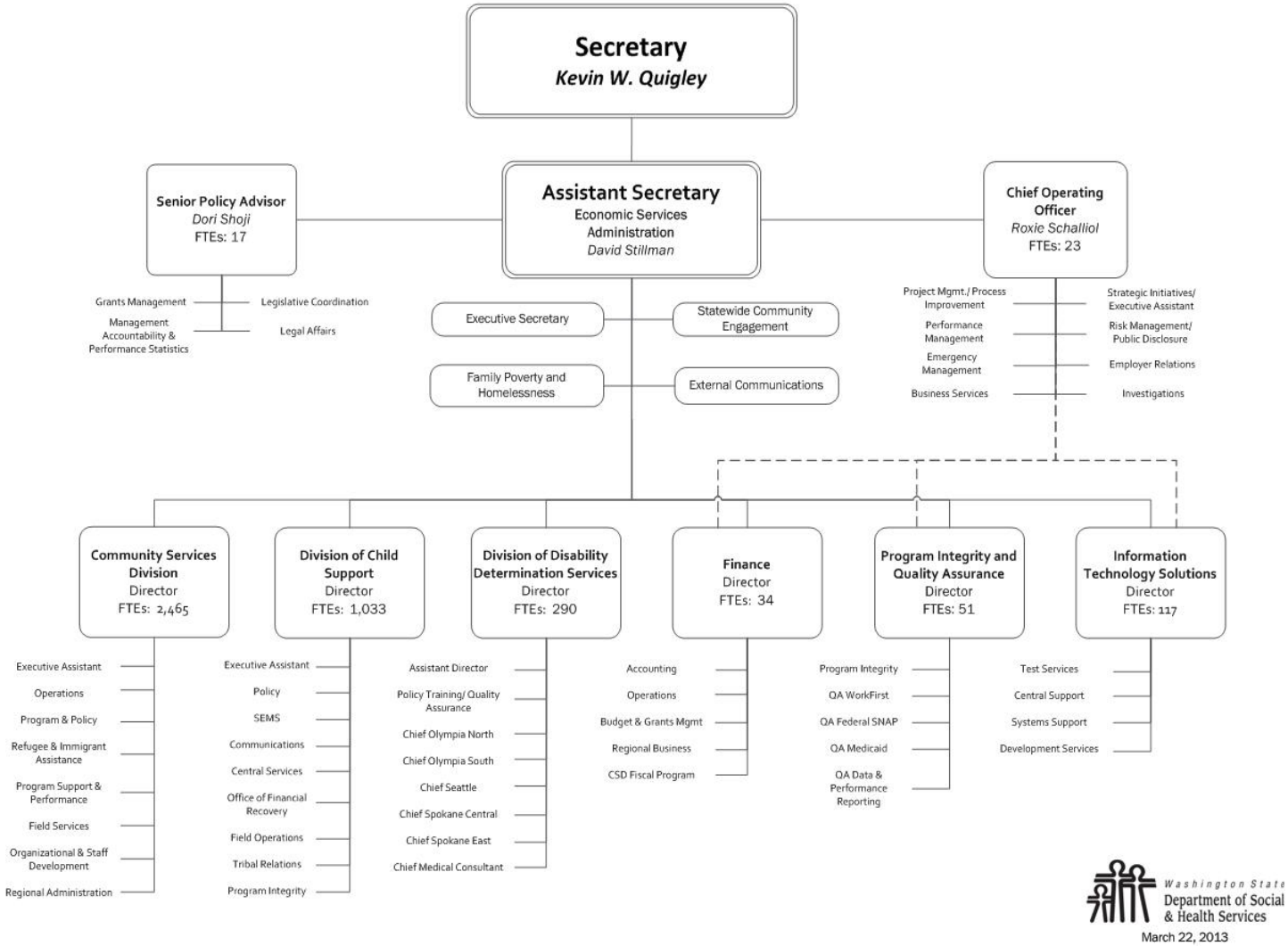
The Department of Social & Health Services will improve the safety and health of individuals, families, and communities by providing leadership and establishing and participating in partnerships.

Values

Excellence in Service
Respect
Collaboration and Partnership
Diversity
Accountability

Economic Services Administration

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services



Introduction

Nearly 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 4,200 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 TANF and WorkFirst (Washington's Welfare to Work program); Basic Food (formerly the Food Stamp Program); Aged, Blind, and Disabled; Pregnant Women's Assistance; Refugee Assistance; and Working Connections Child Care, and 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 child support, the administrative collection of 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, Disability Determination Services (DDS) determines whether individuals qualify for benefits from the Social Security Administration and medical assistance.

DSHS Goal 1
Improve the health status of vulnerable populations.

DSHS Goal 2
Improve economic stability, employment 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
Increase public trust through strong management practices that ensure quality and leverage all resources.

Economic Services Administration serves many people who live on the margin. Even if not receiving a cash grant, they rely on food assistance, work-related support services, and 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 becoming homeless. When unemployment rates rise or there are downturns in the overall economy, the demand for services increases, as do pressures on programs, funding, staffing, and other resources.

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

- improving the health status of vulnerable populations;
- improving economic stability, employment and self-sufficiency; and
- increasing public trust through strong management practices that ensure quality and leverage all resources.

ESA seeks new and innovative ways to improve access to and the effectiveness of our programs. We are focusing on operational improvements that better support the daily needs of a large, changing organization.

To do that, ESA is continually reviewing service delivery models, use of technology and community partnerships, and designing a series of initiatives that will help us achieve our vision, such as:

- Short and long-term facilities "footprint" and service delivery planning.
- Options to specialize, consolidate, or otherwise improve service delivery models in the interest of efficiency, value, and effectiveness. This includes telework and remote access options.
- Staffing models that reflect the needs of the current workload.
- Enhancement of Washington Connection and expansion of our community partnerships to build a strong voluntary outreach network that serves as additional access points for clients, through partners who have agreed to provide services at various levels, from on-line access on a computer at their location to assisting customers in completing an application
- Expansion of child support electronic payment systems to accept payments at kiosks or from retail outlets like Western Union.
- Document imaging technology to support administrative functions, reduce paper handling, and increase timeliness of administrative functions.

The WorkFirst program is critical to Washington's efforts to support individuals' and families' efforts to gain and retain employment. Throughout the next year, ESA staff, in conjunction with a wide range of partners, will continue with implementation of the most significant redesign of the WorkFirst program undertaken since the program was launched in 1996. ESA will focus on several of the WorkFirst Subcabinet's recommendations to implement a more complete range of strategies designed to help child-only TANF families and WorkFirst participants succeed on a pathway out of poverty.

Recommendations include:

- Improve employment pathway activities - redesign job search services into the new Career Scope Program, and broaden the "Career Jump" program to allow expansion in the private sector.
- Implement a continuous evaluation process - develop WorkFirst program measures and targets.
- Consider key areas where changes to TANF requirements (such as reauthorization) would help address the participation difficulties we face.
- Strengthen the assessment process – explore development and testing of a predictive modeling tool and increase the number of staff with Motivational Interviewing skills.

ESA will continue to work collaboratively with the Health Care Authority and the Health Benefit Exchange (HBE) to support development and implementation of health care reform and the state's Health Benefit Exchange. ESA will be heavily involved in the technical, service delivery, and staffing impacts of changes resulting from the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

Whether it is re-examining major policy and program areas, redesigning our service delivery models, or using innovation to increase capacity for operational support, ESA 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 vulnerable populations.

Strategic Objectives

DSHS Objectives

- *Increase access to coordinated delivery and management of medical, behavioral health, and long-term services and supports 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 necessary supports*
- *Provide responsive, accurate, and timely services to families and individuals who apply for benefits*

Strategies/Actions

- *Reduce the time it takes to obtain an accurate determination of available medical coverage for a child or children*
- *Provide timely and accurate eligibility determinations for Non-Grant Medical Assistance (NGMA)or new medical assistance programs with a disability determinations component established under the ACA*
- *Collaborate with other state agencies in the implementation of health care reform (e.g., development of the state's Health Benefit Exchange, provision of coordinated and effective support for people who are dually eligible for Medicaid and Medicare, and expansion of the Medicaid eligible population)*
- *Simplify Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) enrollment and renewal using technology to offer clients user-friendly options to save time and reduce paperwork (CHIPRA grant)*

Interdependencies: Who are our key business partners?

- *Employers*
- *Health Care Authority*
- *Hospitals and other medical providers*
- *Legislators*
- *Health and human service advocates*
- *Legal advocates*
- *Department of Commerce*
- *Department of Veterans Affairs*
- *Division of Vocational Rehabilitation*
- *Community-based organizations*
- *Philanthropic organizations*
- *Health Benefit Exchange*

Key Performance Indicators

- *Time to determine accurate medical coverage*
- *# of NGMA recipients and clearances*
- *Milestones achieved for Eligibility Service for the Health Benefit Exchange*
- *Milestones achieved for the Children's Health Insurance Program grant*

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

Strategic Objectives

DSHS Objectives

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

ESA Objectives

- *Connect people to benefits and services that may help reduce poverty and help them become more self-sufficient*
- *Provide responsive, accurate, and timely services to families and individuals who apply for cash, food, medical and child care benefits and services*
- *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 Office of Financial Recovery (OFR) collection efforts*
- *Work with internal and external partners to assist TANF clients and DCS non-custodial parents find and maintain work.*
- *Ensure successful participation in self-sufficiency activities by providing eligible families with access to quality child care assistance*

Strategies/Actions

- *Continue expansion of the benefit portal, Washington Connection, to support on-line eligibility screening and application for programs in DSHS and other government agencies*
- *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*
- *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*
- *Implement and monitor the redesigned TANF program*
- *Implement the Basic Food Employment and Training five-year strategic plan*

- *Improve access to quality child care services via timely subsidy eligibility decisions and authorizations to eligible TANF participants, other low-income households working towards self-sufficiency and migrant/seasonal farm families.*
- *Increase access to childcare subsidy program services by expanding access points for benefit applications in local offices, online, and by phone*
- *Train staff in motivational interviewing, wrap-around and trauma-informed care to improve case management practices*
- *Identify and implement strategies that will assist DSHS clients in obtaining employment and to live more independently*
- *Provide disability determination services to individuals applying for Social Security disability benefits through the Social Security Administration*
- *Increase the percentage of child support cases with an order established by*
  - *simplifying and streamlining the administrative order establishment process and*
  - *working with the judicial case processing task force to improve information available to courts establishing support orders*
- *Refine Division of Child Support's (DCS) business model to identify and implement improved services to children and families*
- *Collaborate with Tribes to support public assistance and child support programs*
- *Collaborate with Tribes to support Tribal eligibility determinations for Basic Food and medical*
- *Strengthen services for refugees and immigrants*
- *Identify and implement process improvements for the Office of Financial Recovery business model to increase recoveries returned to programs*
- *Implement Kellogg Foundation Grant with external partner CARES of Washington*
- *Promote creation of jobs and employment for DSHS clients*

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*
- *CARES of Washington*
- *Division of Vocational Rehabilitation*
- *Community Colleges and Trade Schools*
- *Employment Security Department*
- *Department of Early Learning*

Key Performance Indicators

- *% of individuals who are at or below 125% of the federal poverty level who are participating in the Basic Food Program*
- *# of families receiving TANF*
- *# and % of TANF recipients engaged in full-time work or work-like activities*
- *# and % of TANF exits due to self-sufficiency*
- *# and % of people who leave public assistance due to increased income/earnings or at their request*
- *# and % of adults who exit TANF and remain off TANF for 12 consecutive months*
- *Total IV-D (child support) collections*
- *Total # of disability determinations*
- *# and % of eligible families receiving Working Connections Child Care*
- *# of eligible migrant and seasonal farmworker families receiving Seasonal Child Care services.*
- *# of staff trained in childcare subsidy program eligibility – in local offices and the customer service contact center*
- *% of calls answered on the childcare phone queue*
- *95% childcare applications completed within Standard of Promptness*
- *% childcare applications screened same day*

DSHS Goal 3: Improve individual and public safety.

Strategic Objectives

DSHS Objectives

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

ESA Objectives

- *Provide responsive, accurate, and timely services to families who apply for benefits to prevent homelessness and hunger*
- *Provide case management to transition eligible vulnerable adults to safe, stable housing*

- *Provide screening, information, and referral to victims of domestic violence*
- *Improve the safety and well-being of children by providing eligible families with access to Working Connections Child Care and Seasonal Child Care in licensed and family home.*

Strategies/Actions

- *Coordinate services with other providers who supply housing, food, and treatment by developing written service level agreements*
- *Research and adopt evidence-based methods that facilitate case management for the entire household or family unit*
- *Partner with the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence to increase awareness of domestic violence and victim services*
- *Improve access to quality child care services via timely subsidy eligibility decisions and authorizations to eligible TANF participants, other low-income households working towards self-sufficiency and migrant/seasonal farm families.*
- *Increase access to childcare subsidy program services by expanding access points for benefit applications in local offices, online, and by phone*

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*
- *Department of Early Learning*

Key Performance Indicators

- *# of signed community partnership agreements*
- *# of staff development sessions (case management) provided*
- *# of households receiving coordinated services from multiple providers*
- *# and % of eligible families receiving Working Connections Child Care*
- *# of eligible migrant and seasonal farmworker families receiving Seasonal Child Care services.*
- *# of staff trained in childcare subsidy program eligibility – in local offices and the customer service contact center*
- *% of calls answered on the childcare phone queue*
- *95% childcare applications completed within Standard of Promptness*

- *% childcare applications screened same day*
- *% of applications processed within federal Standards of Promptness*
- *% of call answered on the triage phone queue*

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

Strategic Objectives

DSHS Objectives

- *Promote stable living situations for children and youth to improve educational success*

ESA Objectives

- *Embed person and family centered integrated case management across the administration*
- *Expand our partnership with OSPI to support children and families*
- *Improve access to quality child care services via timely subsidy eligibility decisions and authorizations that support early learning and child development for eligible TANF participants, other low-income households working towards self-sufficiency and migrant/seasonal farm families.*

Strategies/Actions

- *Implement the TANF redesign family-centered engagement initiative, including finalizing revised performance outcomes that focus on the educational outcomes of TANF children*
- *Coordinate efforts with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to improve direct certification rates of SNAP and TANF participants for free and reduced price meals for students*
- *In conjunction with FNS, evaluate the Summer EBT for Children (SEBTC) pilot in Clark County to demonstrate the viability of the EBT delivery system as a way to improve food security of school-age children in summer months*
- *Continue to promote participation in the Summer Food Service Program administered by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction by making information about the summer meals program available in local community services offices*
- *Add OSPI's Free & Reduced Price School Meals program to Washington Connection for direct certification and online application.*
- *Partner with Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) and McCarver Elementary School to help children from 50 low-income families succeed in school through THA's 'Innovative Education Project' funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.*

Interdependencies: Who are our key business partners?

- *Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction*
- *Health and human service advocates*
- *Department of Early Learning*
- *Advocacy groups*
- *Community Action Agencies*
- *Community-based organizations and service providers*
- *Washington Food Coalition*
- *USDA/FNS*
- *JP Morgan*
- *Tribes*
- *Tacoma Housing Authority*

Key Performance Indicators

- *% of eligible students enrolled in OSPI's Free & Reduced Price School Meals program*
- *Successful implementation of SEBTC program*
- *TANF Youth Enrolled in School (K-12)*
- *TANF Youth Make Grade Progressions*
- *TANF Youth Pass Achieve Successful Outcomes on State Educational Assessments*
- *TANF Youth Successfully Complete High School or GED*
- *Academic achievement rates of children in families participating in the 'Innovative Education Project' who receive a special THA housing voucher and services that support family stability*
- *# and % of eligible families receiving Working Connections Child Care*
- *# of eligible migrant and seasonal farmworker families receiving Seasonal Child Care services.*
- *# of staff trained in childcare subsidy program eligibility – in local offices and the customer service contact center*
- *% of calls answered on the childcare phone queue*
- *95% childcare applications processed within Standard of Promptness*
- *% childcare applications screened same day*

DSHS Goal 5: Increase public trust through strong management practices that ensure quality and leverage all resources.

Strategic Objectives

DSHS Objectives

- *Expand and leverage performance management practices to improve decision-making and client outcomes*

- *Minimize financial and legal risk to the Department*
- *Implement process improvement activities within the Department that promote efficiency, identify and eliminate waste, and improve customer satisfaction*
- *Recruit, develop, and retain an informed, inspired, diverse, and engaged workforce, and maintain a safe working environment*
- *Establish and strengthen Department messages and engage staff and communities in dialogue*

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*
- *Provide responsive, accurate, and timely services to families and individuals who apply for benefits*

Strategies/Actions

- *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)*
- *Develop and implement strategies designed to improve the workplace and make ESA a model employer*
- *Expand use of telework, co-locations, and other approaches to increase community presence, assist with pressing budget and facilities issues, and facilitate integrated case staffing*
- *Deliver high-performing, integrated information technology solutions and services that meet our needs, promote statewide consistency, streamline processes to create capacity, improve communication, reduce costs and minimize risk (e.g., remote access for staff, statistical modeling, on-line services for clients, Client Hub,, ACES Modernization, New Barcode planning and analysis and TANF-PRISM)*
- *Implement DSHS program integrity efforts to establish rigorous controls, oversight mechanisms and other approaches to meet the accountability objectives of the Department*
- *Create and support consistent business practices to ensure effective and appropriate use of available resources, to limit risk to the Department and to promote efficient customer-focused processes*
- *Expand the knowledge and use of Lean to promote efficiencies, identify and eliminate waste and improve customer satisfaction*

- *Work with other DSHS 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*
- *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*
- *Build capacity to analyze and use data to improve program planning and decision making, including data dashboards, data warehouse, and data mining*
- *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 opportunities for development and process improvement tools to help the organization streamline processes and services (e.g. National Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award, "Lean communities of practice" and Building Leadership Together, etc.)*
- *Improve data transfer and communication among ESA divisions and programs*
- *Upgrade Office of Financial Recovery receivables system; identify and implement process improvements*
- *Develop a disaster recovery plan that is executable and sustainable for all necessary components of ACES, SEMS and other critical IT systems*
- *Upgrade and optimize wide area network where needed based on performance*
- *Implement workforce optimization for Statewide Contact Center*

Interdependencies: Who are our key business partners?

- *Other Department Administrations/Divisions (ADSA, CA, ISSD, RDA, ORC)*
- *Consolidated Technology Services*
- *Department of Enterprise Services*
- *Office of the Chief Information Officer*
- *Health Care Authority*

Key Performance Indicators

- *% of staff indicating they have the tools and resources to do their jobs effectively as reported on the DSHS staff survey*
- *% of staff indicating they are encouraged to come up with better ways of doing things, and ESA uses customer feedback to improve our work processes, as reported on the DSHS staff survey*
- *Basic Food program accuracy*

- *# of audit findings from State Auditor's Office or Operations Review and Consultation*
- *# of questioned costs (in dollars) that need to be repaid to the federal government*
- *% of staff hired who are ethnically diverse*
- *% of employees leaving ESA (turnover)*
- *Employee survey ratings of management support, engagement, and communication*
- *Federal TANF participation rate*
- *% of applications processed within federal Standards of Promptness*
- *Total monthly recoveries for the Department*
- *# of CSD staff trained in the scorecard tools and feeder measure reports*
- *% of offices/teams meeting production capacity targets*