

Community Services Division



Programs at a Glance



Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services

Transforming lives


The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) strives to transform the lives of those we serve. The programs offered by the Community Services Division (managed by the Economic Services Administration) are designed to help our clients build strong foundations so they can live their best lives and thrive at all stages of life.

As the Director of the Community Services Division, I am honored to work with more than 2,400 dedicated staff to ensure we provide the highest quality of service to the people of Washington. We do our work through a network of local offices, out-stationed workers, two Mobile Community Services Offices and a statewide Customer Service Contact Center.

I hope you find the information in this booklet helpful as you learn more about the services and programs we provide. If you have any questions or need additional information about our services, please do not hesitate to contact our Customer Service Contact Center at 1-877-501-2233.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Babs Roberts".

Babs Roberts / Director / Community Services Division

Vision:

Individuals, families and communities thrive

Mission:

To transform lives by empowering individuals and families to thrive

Values:

Innovation, Collaboration, Respect, Accountability



Basic Food

The Basic Food program provides assistance for children and adults to purchase and access nutritious foods, which plays a critical role in supporting our communities in reaching their full potential. Basic Food is a combination of Washington state's federally funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the state-funded Food Assistance Program (FAP), which is for legal immigrants who do not yet qualify for federal SNAP benefits.

Eligible households receive an electronic benefits (EBT) card. The card is automatically reloaded monthly with the determined benefit amount. Basic Food can be used to purchase food and food-producing plants and seeds at participating grocery stores and farmers markets.



Basic Food Employment and Training

Employment, training services and work supports are available through the Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) program, to qualified individuals receiving Basic Food who are not a recipient of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or FAP benefits. Participation in the program is voluntary. See www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/community-partnership-program/basic-food-employment-training-bfet for more information.

The Employment Pipeline is an employment and training program designed to help customers served by DSHS and in need of assistance in accessing education, employment, and training services provided by workforce development partners. Participation in the program is voluntary. The program is staffed by Navigators connecting participants to a broad array of DSHS services, supports, and benefits as well as the employment and training opportunities they are interested in, or may need in order to enter employment, or get a better job. Navigators also stay in touch with participants for one year after they become employed to help ensure success. During that time, Navigators assist with needs that may arise that could make retaining employment difficult, and provide connectivity to needed services and supports. Employment Pipeline is offered regionally in select counties at this time. Please see the contact information below to connect with an Employment Pipeline Navigator in your area:

Region One: Spokane County


R1EPNavigator@dshs.wa.gov

Region Two: King, Snohomish, Skagit, Whatcom, Island Counties

R2EPNavigator@dshs.wa.gov

Region Three: Pierce, Kitsap, Mason, Lewis, Thurston, Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Pacific, Clark, Skamania, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum Counties

R3EPNavigator@dshs.wa.gov



Aged, Blind, or Disabled Assistance program

The Aged, Blind, or Disabled (ABD) program offers a cash grant to people who are age 65 or older, blind or living with a disability that would likely meet Supplemental Security Income (SSI) criteria.

Through the ABD program, individuals have the opportunity to connect with healthcare services to address barriers preventing them from participating more fully in our communities. These services include:

- Seeking career guidance and training through vocational rehabilitation services to identify meaningful employment
- Accessing the Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) Referral program to locate a safe, healthy and affordable home
- Personalized assistance accessing the federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program for long-term financial support

Housing and Essential Needs Referral program

The Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) Referral program offers individuals who are unable to work for at least 90 days due to a physical and/or mental incapacity, with access to essential-needs items. These items may include personal health and hygiene supplies, bus passes and potential housing support such as limited rent, utility and moving assistance.

Eligibility for referral to the HEN program is determined by DSHS. Eligibility for HEN housing assistance is determined by the Department of Commerce through a network of local community service organizations that assist people experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless.



Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and State Family Assistance

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and State Family Assistance (SFA) programs make sure Washington families have the tools to build a strong foundation for their lives, which allows them to weather the storms of life. We do this by connecting children and parents to resources such as temporary, small cash grants based on family size, referrals to community resources (including learning opportunities for children), and WorkFirst services for most parents.

TANF/SFA households may also be eligible for:

- **Additional Requirements for Emergent Need** – TANF/SFA recipients who experience emergency situations, such as an eviction or a utility shut-off notice, may qualify for up to \$750 in a 12-month period in addition to their monthly grant to meet the emergent need.
- **Diversion Cash Assistance** – TANF/SFA applicants who experience need for expenses such as rent or utilities may qualify for a one-time payment instead of a monthly grant in order to stabilize the applicant's situation before they are able to receive a reliable income.



WorkFirst

WorkFirst is Washington state's employment and training component of TANF/SFA and offers services for parents on their path to economic well-being so they and their children can thrive.

Dedicated WorkFirst staff support participants to identify personal goals and engage in activities that increase their success in the program. The Department of Social and Health Services, Employment Security Department, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Department of Commerce partner with WorkFirst to connect parents and caregivers with education, job training and employment opportunities. Each agency recognizes every individual's value and contribution of unique skills within their communities.

WorkFirst staff also help people build a strong foundation for well-being by providing supportive services to help eliminate systemic barriers to entering the workforce. Supportive services include professional clothing, gasoline, car repairs, educational expense, tools and equipment and relocation expenses.

Pregnant Women Assistance program

Pregnant Women Assistance (PWA) is a state-funded program that provides a cash grant to pregnant individuals with low incomes, who are not eligible for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or State Family Assistance (SFA) program.



Office of Refugee & Immigrant Assistance

People who are refugees and immigrants can access specialized programs and services that lead to economic stability and integration into their communities.

These services include:

- Refugee cash and medical assistance
- Refugee Health and Wellness programs
- Employment services
- English as a Second Language programs
- Comprehensive case management
- Immigration Assistance and Naturalization Services
- Refugee School Impact Program
- Unaccompanied refugee minor foster care
- Mental health services for refugees
- Services for Older Refugees

The Community Services Division's Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance partners with more than 60 different organizations, including refugee resettlement agencies, community-based organizations, ethnically-focused organizations, state agencies and educational institutions. ORIA's partners specialize in providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services.

Please note that all information shared with DSHS and our community partners is confidential and protected. We do not share it with other government agencies.



Medical Assistance programs

Medical Assistance programs administered through the Community Services Division are often referenced as Classic Medicaid. Classic Medicaid programs provide health care coverage to individuals who are age 65 or older, blind or considered disabled by Social Security standards. In order to qualify for Classic Medicaid programs, an individual must meet income and resource limits as well as age or disability standards. Classic Medicaid programs include:

- **SSI-Related Categorically Needy (CN) Medical program –** This program provides coverage to individuals who meet the SSI income and resource limits.
- **SSI-Related Medically Needy (MN) program –** This program, also known as “spenddown”, provides MN coverage to individuals with income above the SSI income and resource limits. Individuals who qualify, become eligible for MN coverage after incurring medical costs equal to the amount of the household’s income that is above the SSI income standard.
- **Medicare Savings program (MSP) –** This program helps Medicare recipients pay for all or part of their Medicare premiums.
- **Medical Care Services (MCS) –** This program provides coverage to individuals who are found eligible for the Aged, Blind, or Disabled (ABD) or Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) Referral program but who are ineligible for Classic Medicaid and other medical assistance programs due to their citizenship status.

Paper applications for cash and food are available at www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/community-services-offices/how-apply-services or by calling the Customer Service Contact Center at 1-877-501-2233.

Paper applications for Classic Medicaid are available at www.hca.wa.gov/health-care-services-supports/forms-and-publications or by calling the Customer Service Contact Center at 1-877-501-2233.



General Information

There are several ways to apply for these services at DSHS:

- In-person interviews at a local Community Services Office (CSO): These are offered on a first-come, first-serve basis; however, anyone who checks in prior to 3 p.m. will be seen that day.
- Online at www.WashingtonConnection.org
- Submit a paper application:
 - In person: Deliver a paper application to a local CSO drop-box.
 - Fax: 1-888-338-7410
 - Mail: PO Box 11699, Tacoma, WA 98411

Find a Mobile Community Services Office event at a location near you at www.dshs.wa.gov/MobileOffice

Paper applications are available at www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/community-services-offices/how-apply-services or by calling the Customer Service Contact Center at 1-877-501-2233.

For information about other DSHS programs and services, please visit our website at www.dshs.wa.gov.



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