



Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network
Engaging TANF and Immigrant Populations into Work Activities
that Create Pathways to Self-Sufficiency



PROMISING PRACTICE PROFILE TEMPLATE

Contact Information:

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Geographic Scope (Please Be Descriptive): The LEP Pathway program is available throughout the state of Washington.

Participant Demographics:

Number of Participants Enrolled/Served per Year: 5,685 clients were served in state fiscal year 2009 (July 2008 through June 2009).

Number of Participants Served Over Duration of Project: This program began more than 10 years ago and is ongoing. We do not have participant data from the early years of the program.

Type(s) of Immigrant Populations (i.e. Refugees, Legal Immigrants, Asylees, etc): All low-income legal immigrants are eligible for services.

Number of Native Languages Represented in Current Participant Group: More than 100

Percentage of Current Participants with High School Diploma/GED: Unknown

Percentage of Current Participants enrolled in TANF: Approximately 80-85%

Does Your Program Enroll Clients Who Speak No English? (If So, What Percentage of Current Participants Spoke No English At Time of Enrollment?): Yes, all clients we serve are limited English proficient. Approximately 55% of our clients are at the lowest levels of proficiency (ESL Levels 1 and 2 as measured by the CASAS scale).

Briefly Describe Continuum of Services Provided (In the Box Below):

Services in the LEP Pathway include labor market orientation, job search preparation, job search assistance, job retention services, job skills training, Work Experience (WEX) and Community Service placements, and English as a second language (ESL) training.

Is the Client's English Language Comprehension and Speaking Level Professionally Assessed before Enrolling in Your Program?: Yes, we use the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Skills (CASAS) assessment for our clients.

To What Extent Is Interpretation Provided Throughout the Duration of the Program (In How Many Languages?; Are Program Handouts Translated?; If So, Into How Many Languages?): Interpreters are provided for all services and materials are provided in the client's target language.



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Briefly Describe Funding Sources (i.e., TANF, Other Money?):

Federal funds from the Office of Refugee Resettlement
TANF funds
General State funds

Approximate Cost per Participant: \$1,680 per Year (SFY 2009 data).

1. What strategies/processes are you currently using to help immigrant participants become engaged in work activities that will lead to self-sufficiency?

1. LEP Pathway employment and ESL service providers are able to provide services in culturally appropriate ways and have close ties to the refugee & immigrant community – many hire staff member who are former refugees themselves.
2. All TANF participants complete a Comprehensive Evaluation (CE), a set of formalized questions intended to get information about their skills and abilities so they can be placed in appropriate work activities.
3. Staff at local DSHS offices (local welfare offices) work closely with LEP Pathway service providers to keep participants engaged in work activities appropriately. DSHS staff can monitor participation through the state's eJAS system, an interactive database which contains data on scheduled and actual participation, and number of unexecuted absences in their caseloads.

2. What challenges and barriers have you encountered?

1. Our caseloads are growing – new refugee arrivals are increasing and TANF caseloads are increasing, but funds to support our programs are diminishing due to the current economic crisis.
2. Many newly arrived refugees have low literacy rates (including many who are illiterate in their own language), speak no English, and have few skill sets that lend themselves to employment in the U.S.
3. Cultural differences- for example, cultural norms against women in the work place, or cultural values that view people who are 50 years old as elderly and should not work.

3. What types of partnerships have you established with other agencies?

1. We partner with other state agencies for LEP Pathway services – the Employment Security Department for employment services in some areas, and the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges to provide ESL classes through local community and technical colleges.
2. We also contract with local Community Based Organizations, Mutual Assistance Associations, and Voluntary Refugee Resettlement Agencies (VOLAGS) to provide LEP Pathway services.

4. What relationship does your program have, if any, to the agency that conducts and monitors TANF work participation activity requirements in your jurisdiction? If a relationship exists, how did it begin and how is it maintained?

The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is the agency that conducts and monitors TANF work participation requirements. The Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance is part of DSHS and administers the LEP Pathway program.