

# COMMUNITY\*JOBS

## A Washington State WorkFirst Initiative

### Mission Statement

Community Jobs provides transitional community-based employment and related training for WorkFirst participants unable to get a job on their own.

Through public/private partnerships, participants gain increased self-confidence, develop marketable skills, assistance with managing barriers, and avenues to unsubsidized employment.

# Community Jobs Program

- Typical program is 20 hrs per week paid job plus at least 10 hours of training per week, building personal and economic success
  - Participants can work up to 30 hours per week if education is not a viable option
- 6 month program – average 4.5 months
- Paid \$8.55 per hour state minimum wage
- 50% wage disregard against the TANF grant
- Educational activities include GED, Basic Ed, LEP, Job Skills Training, and Life Skills
- Serves approx 3,500 participants per year
- Over 25,000 participants served

# Advantages of Contracting

- Department of Commerce administers Community Jobs through performance based contracts
- 17 Community based partners under contract (with 18 sub-contractors) serve all counties in Washington
  - Local service delivery provided by community based organizations such as Workforce Boards, Community Action Agencies, local non-profit agencies, etc.
  - Pay points tied to participation benchmarks and unsubsidized employment outcomes
    - Emphasis on engagement, placement, continued participation and employment
  - Contracts provide reimbursement for payroll and support service expenses
  - Provide direct case management, worksite development, a paycheck and support services
  - Performance based pay points structured to support desired outcomes

# Eligibility & Referrals

- DSHS refers TANF recipients who meet eligibility requirements
  - Participants must have employment barriers
  - Previously unsuccessful obtaining employment through typical job search programs
  - Able to accept employment within 6 months of enrollment
- Referrals are created and maintained through a jointly accessed data base system shared by all partners
- Contractors work with referred participants to create a full time individualized program

# Program Services

- Contractors have over 2600 worksites established statewide
  - Common types of employment include: Clerical, retail, childcare, construction/production, food service, warehouse & maintenance
  - Worksites customized based on career goals and training needs
- Goal focused – Individual Development Plan
  - Program focus on barrier management through intensive case management
- Assistance establishing childcare and transportation
- Monthly worksite evaluations to build skills
- Qualify for the Advanced Earned Income Tax Credit & Work Opportunity Tax Credit
- Education and training
- Support services

# Successful Services = Employment

- Service delivery is critical to successful outcomes
  - Worksite placement/training options based on participant career goals
  - Teaching participants how to “network” at a job
  - Barrier management as a partner effort – contractors establish “our role” and “your role” with participants for issue resolution
  - Individually designed job search efforts provide support
    - TANF population often struggles with independent Job Search

# Employer Incentives

- Consciously market your employers
  - Research businesses to target your marketing strategy
  - Create marketing material for an employer not a social worker
  - Identify all available tax incentives in your state
  - Sell “Job Coach” services as a tool for the employer
  - Present your program as an employment service
    - Prescreened candidates based on employer needs

# Advantages of Partnership

- Collective design and operations by 6 state agencies
  - Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) (HHS)
  - Employment Security Department (ESD)
  - Community and Technical Colleges (CTC)
  - Department of Commerce (Commerce)
  - Office of Financial Management (OFM)
  - Department of Early Learning (DEL)
- All partners share an Electronic Data System
- Links to other state programs/partners report actual hours
  - Community College and other education opportunities
  - Job Search Services
  - Career Services
- 33 Local Area Planning Teams work together to address local issues and resources
- Closing the gaps to increase participation
- Moving participants off TANF by increasing employability



# Boast About Your Successes!

- Share your success stories widely!
  - Political support is based on solid outcomes
    - Notify and involve local and state politicians
    - Create media releases that highlight your partnership, employment outcomes, employer involvement
    - Host Employer Appreciation Events

**Buy a really big bell and celebrate every job!**

# Community Jobs Program Contact

Department of Commerce

Eva Greenwalt

Washington State WorkFirst Program Manager

Community Jobs/Supported Work Programs

(360) 725-4145

[eva.greenwalt@commerce.wa.gov](mailto:eva.greenwalt@commerce.wa.gov)

[www.workfirst.wa.gov](http://www.workfirst.wa.gov)