

COMMUNITY*JOBS

Your Partner for Success

A Washington State WorkFirst Initiative

WASHINGTON

WorkFirst

**Washington State
Department of Community, Trade and
Economic Development**

*CTED invests in Washington's communities,
businesses and families to build a healthy and
prosperous future*

Welfare Reform in Washington State

- WorkFirst began August 1997
- 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)
 - Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED)
 - Office of Financial Management (OFM)
 - Department of Early Learning (DEL)
- **CTED Administers Community Jobs**
- All partners share an electronic client database tracking system

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.

History

- CJ operations began in 1998 – TANF funded
- Political support of legislators, Governor, as well as national and local research and policy institutes and foundations
- National Transitional Jobs Network
- Designed to advance WorkFirst participants who are unsuccessful in the labor market and exhibit significant barriers to employment

Partnership Operations

- 17 Community based partners under contract (18 sub-contractors) serving all counties in Washington
 - Local control
 - Performance-based contracts - tied to participant outcomes of unsubsidized employment
- Examples of Contracts:
 - Workforce Boards, Community Action Agencies, Goodwill, etc.
 - Provide direct case management, worksite development, a paycheck and support services
 - Employment related activities from day one:
 - Résumé development
 - Mock interviews
- State Level - strong communications and continuous improvement focus

Annual Budget

- FY09 - \$24,811,000* WorkFirst Programs
- FY10 - \$23,570,000* WorkFirst Programs
- FY10 - \$1,962,000 TANF Emergency
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
funds specifically for Community Jobs

*Federal dollars with State MOE match

Participants

- 6 month program – average 4.5 months
- Serve approx. 3,500 participants per year
- Paid \$8.55 state minimum wage
- Typical program is 20 hrs per week paid job plus at least 10 hours of training per week, building personal and economic success
- Educational activities include GED, Basic Ed, LEP, Job Skills Training, and Life Skills
- 50% wage disregard against the TANF grant
- Over 25,000 participants served

Participant Services

Worksites in educational institutions, government agencies, tribal, nonprofit organizations & private sector

- Worksites customized to participant goals and needs
- Worksites include: Goodwill Industries, Habitat for Humanity, state agencies, school districts, etc.
- Goal focused – Individual Development Plan
- Work ethics and life/soft skills are woven into the program
- Connections to ensure childcare and transportation are established; create opportunities for success
- Advanced Earned Income Tax Credit
- Support services provided
- Bi-weekly/monthly worksite evaluations to build skills

CJ Program Delivery

- Flexibility & continuous improvement philosophy
- Local resources program design
- Intensive technical assistance
- Contractor training and sharing best practices
- Paid wage and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
- Participant support services provided by contractors, i.e.: personal hygiene, transportation, work clothing, testing fees, work tools, education

Barrier Removal

- Co-enrollment with services to address issues such as domestic violence, limited English, housing, drug/alcohol abuse, mental health, drivers license, and childcare
- Promote training opportunities with Community Colleges - Basic Ed, GED, vocational, LEP and family skills (non-core activities)
- Raises skills, marketability and self-esteem of program participants

Deficit Reduction Act Impact

- Considerably changed the way we do business
- Participation and verification of actual hours
- Quarterly reporting to the federal government – electronically
- WorkFirst program modification/policy redesign
- Partnerships strengthened

Washington's Response to DRA

- CJ grew as the core work pathway for hardest to employ
- Additional programs for participants earning their TANF grant based on Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) calculation of hours

Washington's Response to DRA

- Challenge with supporting the Transitional Jobs philosophy
- Progression to Community Jobs/Transitional Jobs – continues to grow as a core work pathway for the hardest to employ
- CJ contractors also manage Community Service, Community Works and WorkFirst Experience Internship programs

Washington's Response to DRA

- **Community Service**
 - Unpaid jobs per FLSA hours
 - Countable core activity
 - Stacking options– part-time work, school, etc
- **Community Works**
 - Unpaid jobs for those resolving crisis issues with DSHS social worker
 - Increase participation/transition to CJ
- **Community Work Experience**
 - Build résumé, work experience focused
 - Move to Job Search or Employment

Stackable Non-Core Activities

- Education critical to the CJ program, we stack CJ with Job Skills Training (JT), Basic Ed, GED, and Limited English classes to meet participation regulations
- JT is a hard skill course directly related to the employment pathway for the individual parent
- Challenges with offering open entry/open exit
- Coordinating schedules around worksite hours

Program Success

- April 2009 - over 3000 participants in CJ this program year
- CJ averages a 65% unsubsidized employment rate
- April 2009 - over 3000 participants in core activities in the Supported Work Programs
- Participants in the Supported Work Programs Transition to Community Jobs, Job Search, Employment and Education
- Increased participation leads to unsubsidized employment

Washington WorkFirst Partnership

- Statewide Partnership Trainings
- Shares Electronic Data System
- Reporting of Actual Hours
- Local Area Planning Teams
- Closing the Gaps to Increase Participation
- Moving Participants off TANF by Increasing Employability
- Career Services – Washington Retention Model Began in Spring of 2008

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