

Workforce & Career Development Division

Director's Corner

Spring is in the air, and with it, staff are very busy all across our system in every area of the state. Projects are underway in WorkFirst, the Re-employment Assistance grant, Common Measures policy and SKIES changes, and, of course, next month marks the busiest season of the year for our Migrant Seasonal Farmworker staff throughout the state.

You can read about some of these activities and projects in this month's newsletter. If you have suggestions or stories for future issues, please do not hesitate to let us know!

~Sandy Miller

DOL Secretary to Visit Washington

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Secretary Thomas Perez will visit Washington on Monday, March 3rd. His day will begin in Olympia with Governor Inslee and Washington CEOs in a roundtable discussion of strategies that private employers can undertake to lower barriers to hiring the long-term unemployed. He will then head to Boeing's Renton facility to tout the Air Washington grant to community and technical colleges training aerospace workers, followed by a meeting with Seattle Mayor Ed Murray. Finally, the secretary will meet with the CEO of Costco and tour a Costco warehouse distribution center.

Statewide Ag/MSFW Training Dates Set

Ag and H-2A staff across the state have been invited to this year's statewide training, to be held March 13-14 at WorkSource Central Basin in Moses Lake. Both staff who serve farmworkers or ag employers at ag significant offices (including administrators and supervisors) and staff responsible for H-2A referrals in non-ag significant offices should plan to attend. Goals of the training include increasing knowledge of and answering questions about roles and responsibilities and requirements of the H-2A and MSFW programs, and introducing the new H-2A and MSFW program handbooks. For questions or more information, please contact [Alberto Isiordia](#) or [Daniel Valdez](#).

System Policy Update: Common Measures

The Employment System Policy & Integrity division continues to work on the revision to Policy 1002 (Common Measures), including the development of a comprehensive handbook that will be attached to the policy. This handbook consolidates and updates all data integrity, performance and reporting policies previously issued to local areas. All requirements in the handbook align with TEG 17-05 and will also serve as the foundation for future changes (e.g., reporting and SKIES application changes). The content of the handbook will align with and support future training to be provided to local areas. The Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) will discuss the WWA vetting and public comment processes, among other policy topics, during the March 4th conference call. The policy unit anticipates issuing the policy and handbook for comment by the end of March. Please email SystemPolicy@esd.wa.gov with any questions.

Update on Shared Work Grants

Washington was awarded \$2,136,749 by the U.S. DOL to enhance its short-time compensation layoff prevention program, called Shared Work in Washington. The funding was made available through the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012. The state's Shared Work program provides employers greater flexibility in retaining workers at reduced hours instead of completely laying them off by reducing employee hours 10 to 50 percent while qualified affected employees receive partial unemployment benefits to replace a portion of their lost wages. Now that the funds have been secured, WCDD will communicate, follow-up and coordinate with WorkSource system partners, particularly Business Service teams, as grant implementation begins. You can view the [DOL news release](http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/eta/ETA20140209.htm) at <http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/eta/ETA20140209.htm>.

Dislocated Worker Training National Emergency Grant Update

Employment Security Department (ESD) coordinators recently participated in a regularly scheduled webinar hosted by U.S. DOL's Employment and Training Region 6 office to discuss performance of the Dislocated Worker Training National Emergency Grant (DWT NEG). Here in Washington, that grant represents a \$2.6 million investment in getting long-term unemployed individuals back to work through work-based learning and training opportunities. On the upside, ESD was able to share that participant enrollment into the program exceeded the state target for the quarter ending December 31, 2013. Conversely, expenditures were only around a third of the quarter-ending target, but that is expected to pick up this quarter. The next check-in with Region 6 will be in May.

Ready to Work Grant Opportunity

Continuing the federal administration's focus on addressing the problem of long-term unemployment, DOL recently released a Solicitation for Grant Application (SGA) for the H-1B Ready to Work Partnership Grants (SGA-DFA-PY-13-07). This grant is funded to the tune of \$150 million through fees paid by U.S. employers who use the H-1B non-immigrant temporary visa program to hire foreign workers when those with the skills and abilities they seek—in this case, highly skilled workers in professional and specialty occupations—cannot be found in the domestic workforce. The goal of the grant is to reduce usage of the H-1B program by preparing those who are long-term unemployed (unemployed 27 weeks or longer) to enter into occupations that might otherwise be filled by foreign workers using the H-1B program. One unique facet of this grant opportunity is the requirement to have three employers, or a regional association consisting of three employers, actively engage in the project and commit to hiring long-term unemployed who successfully complete the program. Employment Security, the Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) and Washington Workforce Association (WWA) will convene soon to explore this opportunity. The full SGA can be viewed at http://www.doleta.gov/grants/find_grants.cfm.

Noteworthy WorkSource Online Events Calendar Stats

The WorkSource Online Statewide Job Fairs calendar (Trumba) was viewed 39,110 times in the past 33 days. That's 1,185 times per day!



New Policy Guidance

None this month.

March 2014 Featured Events

LEAN: Getting Started
Module 2—Standardized
Work and Visual Controls

March 6, 9:00 a.m.
March 19, 1:00 p.m.

[Staff Development Calendar](#)



Send us your feedback!

We want this newsletter to reflect our system and welcome your suggestions for future articles. Let us know what you'd like to see! Send us an e-mail (ESDGPWCDDTST@esd.wa.gov).