

Report to the Snohomish County Executive and Future Workforce Alliance Summary of Activities May - June 2020

The month of May and June, continued the trend of being very busy months across all WFS departments. The below report provides highlights of key activities and outputs in the months of May and June.

- The Transition Team worked to finalize a 3-party WIOA designation agreement, articulating the roles and responsibilities of the County Executive, Future Workforce Alliance (as Local Workforce Development Board) and Workforce Snohomish (as Fiscal Agent and Local Grant Subrecipient).
- Work continued on defining the scope of work and budgets for the Disaster Dislocated Worker Grant at a state and a local level. Agreement was reached among all parties in early June and contracts will be issued in early July. Snohomish received \$1,069,862 in funding to support 1) Twenty-five subsidized jobs directly linked to disaster response/humanitarian efforts related to COVID-19 for dislocated workers, to be coordinated with County Emergency Management and 2) Career and Training Services to support job placement of dislocated work in essential industries.
- A \$12 million Employment Recovery Dislocated Worker grant was awarded to the state in late May. Negotiations on funding reductions are beginning with partner state agencies (WA State Employment Security Department, DSHS and the State Workforce Board) and all 12 local areas. The scope of work will also be revised and negotiated along with local performance metrics in the next ~30 days.
- Planning for re-opening WorkSource Centers in Snohomish County has commenced at the end of June, following the completion of statewide work focused on WorkSource facilities. While Title I subrecipients continue to delivery services virtually, Workforce Snohomish will begin to convene partners to discuss re-opening plans, space adaptations and other safety measures.

Future Workforce Alliance – Workforce Snohomish

The Transition Team, including staff from the County (Lacey Harper, Mary Jane Brell-Vujovic and James Henderson) and Workforce Snohomish (Joy Emory, Mary Houston, Cameron Cassidy and Debbie Little) continue to meet weekly via phone to support our collaborative work.

Transition team calls have continued to focused on keeping lines of communication open as all parties have been busy with essential work, including ensuring that resources are secured or deployed in the community. Over the summer, the transition team, in collaboration with the Board will need to work to complete the Local Area Plan narrative and attachments.

- Initial/required documents were submitted to Employment Security Department and the Workforce Training and Education and Coordinating Board on May 15th, as per the modified requirements.

- We expect that the full plan, encompassing the narrative will be due to the State Workforce Board in September-October timeframe. Therefore, work on the narrative and remaining attachments will be needed throughout the summer months.
- The Local Area Plan will require a Board vote prior to submission to the State Workforce Board this fall.

Grant Development

Two statewide National Dislocated Worker grants have been awarded to-date. An update on the status of these awards are articulated below:

- **Disaster Dislocated Worker Grant:** Statewide application, submitted by Employment Security Department was awarded at \$12 million. Snohomish County will receive \$1,069,862. Anticipated contract from ESD by 7/2/20.
- **Employment Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant:** Workforce Snohomish requested \$7 million of the approximately \$57 million Employment Recovery project budget. The state was awarded \$12 million in funds (~20% of request). Funding levels for each partner agency and local areas is underway.
- **Still Pending:** US Department of Labor, Support to Communities: Local Workforce Development and Opioid Recovery Project (\$2.2 million over 4 years).

Finance

Finance has been focused on year-end close-out, completing the PY20 budget over the past several months, including confirming carry-over from PY19 and incoming revenue from WIOA Title I formula funds.

- WIOA Title I funding allocations were announced and Snohomish County will receive 1.5% increase in Youth funds, a 1.9% increase in Adult funds and a 1.9% decrease in Dislocated Worker funds. The funding levels are based on a previously negotiated methodology formula which cannot be amended until Fall 2020. Staff and leadership conducted a thorough analysis and brought concerns to both the State Workforce Board and Employment Security Department, and the funding levels remain unchanged. Renegotiation of the formula for WIOA Allocations will begin in late August.
- National Disaster and Employment Recovery Dislocated Worker Grants funding opportunities will help augment services we are able to provide for the community in PY20.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act & WorkSource Snohomish County

Service Delivery staff are in the process of finalizing partial PY 20 contracts with subrecipients to ensure continuity of services for the program year starting July 1, 2020. The goal is to develop statements of work documents over the next few weeks that include priorities and metrics for PY20 for the full year contracts.

Workforce Snohomish received the Management Letter from Washington State Employment Security Department. There were no findings reported. All requested follow-up in on target to be addressed by stated deadline, with the exception of file review. Workforce Snohomish will be requesting an extension of this deadline, due to required on-site work.

Virtualized Service Delivery to Job-Seeking Customers:

WorkSource Centers are fully virtualized for participants being served. In May, procedural changes and policy adaptations were amended and our teams continue to work with state policy makers, and compliance teams to ensure smooth implementation. The WIOA Adult, DW, Youth, and National Health Emergency subrecipients are now able to fully enroll customers virtually using customized tools our teams developed in the secure online platform, Cognito. Subrecipients are also able to provide all services including training services, and transitional jobs services, and nearly all support services.

We are exploring the cost and feasibility of installing drop boxes at WorkSource Everett and Lynnwood for customer use. This would allow our subrecipients to receive documents physically from customers who do not have access to computing equipment while COVID-19 restrictions limit face-to-face interaction, and impact access to the WorkSource offices.

Planning for re-opening WorkSource has commenced, examining the possibility of aligning with Phase 3. A report will be issued to the County and Future Workforce Alliance upon completion, and articulating factors within and outside of our control. Encompassed in this process will be plans to continually assess customer needs and/or barriers to accessing virtual services and/or centers (Everett and Lynnwood), plans to increase access and scale service delivery via virtual service delivery, as well as mobile/field-based deployments.

Services to Business Customers:

The Business Solutions team conducts proactive outreach to businesses to assist with hiring needs by connecting them to qualified WIOA participants, consulting on hiring practices and providing information to laid off employees during Rapid Response events. The team also publishes a newsletter twice weekly and highlights high demand jobs for employers with urgent hiring needs at <http://www.worksourceonline.com/jobs/> and at WorkSourceWa.com. More work is needed to fully virtualize job fairs. Virtual platforms are being developed in pilot areas in the state and are expected to be rolled out for broad use in the coming months.

Rapid Response Services are being provided to effected businesses and workers experiencing temporary or permanent layoffs and closures. Local staff are working in partnership with neighboring Workforce Development Councils to serve those businesses where appropriate.