

Rationale for Provision of Business Services

December 8, 2021

Workforce Snohomish (WFS) requests the Future Workforce Alliance Board (FWA) designate Workforce Snohomish as the provider of WIOA Title I Business Services in Snohomish County.

Statutory requirements for provision of business services:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), requires the following activities to be conducted at a minimum as the provision of business services, the new focus will exceed these requirements:

- Basic services to business called Labor Exchange – which entails job matching services; supporting businesses in a host of ways to help them hire and retain the right talent.
- Individualized business services that focus on industry sectors that are growing or have a high demand for employees; this focus is on development of career pathways to help people gain access to and progress in jobs in those industries.

Rationale:

Authorization of this migration is required to enable Workforce Snohomish to actively engage with Future Workforce Alliance, Economic Alliance Snohomish County, Snohomish County and regional efforts to plan, and implement strategic business services, including business retention and expansion efforts; as well as add capacity to respond to the demand for business services that surpasses current subcontractor capacity.

The intent of this pivot from contracted to in-house services is to: 1) transition services from transactional to relational, 2) strengthen the focus of business services to improve outcomes for both job seekers and employers; and 3) pivot, overtime workforce development from reactive to proactive. In addition to changing the method in which business services are delivered and strengthening the connection to job seeker outcomes, this migration seeks to support the advancement of workforce strategy in Snohomish County, including:

- Develop a strong talent pool through a nimble and responsive workforce system;
- Provide opportunity for all residents in the County with a focus on historically underserved communities, businesses and workers;
- Establish an innovation economy that supports growing industries, startups, and attracts talent;
- Support existing industries and strengthen growing industries; and
- Enhance collaboration among partner staff to support economic and workforce development and shared goals.

Moving the provision of business services in-house will accelerate collaboration and coordination between WFS and Snohomish County, Economic Alliance Snohomish County and complement and build upon existing work by each organization. Under this new model, Workforce Snohomish Business Services will also jointly develop and implement a Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) model that encompasses:

- Mining for business intelligence (data) from Workforce Snohomish, Employment Security Department, and site selection software to identify growth potential for local businesses and target for outreach and technical assistance.
- Identification and support of outreach to growing and distressed industries to include women-owned businesses and businesses of color.
- Utilization of BRE visits and industry data and trends to provide a comprehensive business intelligence to the Future Workforce Alliance Board to inform policy and strategy decisions.

Workforce Snohomish thanks the board for its consideration of this request for authorization.