

# Agricultural and Seasonal Workforce Services ADVISORY COMMITTEE



# **ASWS Advisory Committee Meeting**

Thursday, September 18, 2025 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

# Housekeeping



#### **RECORDING ANNOUNCEMENT:**

This meeting is being recorded. Please be advised that your image and voice will be captured and recorded during the videoconference. Your participation in this videoconference equals consent to be recorded.

#### **ANUNCIO GRABADO:**

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# Agenda



#### AGENDA

Agricultural and Seasonal Workforce Services (ASWS) Advisory Committee Thursday, September 18, 2025 |9 am - 1 pm| 4th Floor - Perkins Conference Room, 212 Maple Park Ave SE Olympia, WA 98501

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER		
9:00 am	Call to Order; Welcome	Dan Zeitlin, Chief of Staff, Executive Programs, ESD		
9:10 am	Roll call of committee members	Vickie Carlson, Management Analyst, ASWS Office, ESD		
9:15 am	Agenda review, meeting minute approval	Dan Zeitlin, Chief of Staff, Executive Programs, ESD		
9:25 am	ASWS Office update	Bertha J. Clayton, Director, ASWS Office, ESD Petra Meraz, Supervisor, Foreign Labor Certification Program, ASWS Office, ESD Susana Rodriguez, Supervisor, Compliance Team, ASWS Office, ESD		
9:50 am	Workforce Services Division update	Alberto Isiordia, Assistant Director, WSD, ESD Maria Maravilla, Wagner Peyser/MSFW Program Support, WSD, ESD		
10:20 am	Overview of federal rule changes	Bertha J. Clayton, Director, ASWS Office, ESD Petra Meraz, Supervisor, FLC Program, ASWS Office, ESD		
11:15 am	Break			
11:30 am	MB 2226 data collection and reporting     Update: H-2A Temporary Worker     Housing inspections	Bertha J. Clayton, Director, ASWS Office, ESD		
12:15 pm	Potential changes to Field Checks	Arturo Espinoza, MSFW Monitor, Executive Programs, ESD		
12:30 pm	Public Comment	Dan Zeitlin, Chief of Staff, Executive Programs, ESD		
12:50 pm	Good of the Order Adjournment	Dan Zeitlin, Chief of Staff, Executive Programs, ESD		
1:00 pm	Next meeting: Thursday, November 20, 202	25, 9 am – 12 pm, Virtually held on <i>Zoom</i>		

#### **GROUND RULES**

# ASWS Office Update – September 2025



Bertha J. Clayton, ASWS Director, ESD

## Discontinuation of Services



Discontinuation of Services – 20 CFR 658, Subpart F, initiated from 10/1/24-9/1/25

# Interagency Coordination



Inter-agency agreement	Agencies	Status
ESD & National Farmworker Jobs Program Grantee	ESD SMA, ESD WSD – Opportunities Industrialization Center of WA (OIC)	Complete (03/2025)
Field Check Coordination	ESD-LNI-DOH-WSDA	Complete (09/2025)
H-2A Temporary Worker Housing Inspections, Licensing & Certification	ESD-DOH-LNI	Paused- Pending operational changes
H-2A Complaint Data Sharing Agreement (Statement of Work)	ESD-LNI	ESD SOW Complete (04/2025)

# H-2A litigation & federal rule changes



#### **FUJ litigation\***

June 19, 2025:

- Washington state's updated prevailing piece rates wages published.
- Updated prevailing piece rate wages available on WorkSource's <u>agricultural services</u> webpage.

Туре	Prevailing Piece Rate
Cherries, Bing, Harvesting	\$0.24 Per Pound
Cherries, Dark Red, Harvesting	\$0.27 Per Pound
Pears, Bartlett, Harvesting	\$25.90 per bin (47"x47"x24.5")
Pears, Harvesting	\$26.42 per bin (47"x47"x24.5")

Source: Agricultural Online Wage Library | U.S. Department of Labor

As a result of *FUJ* litigation, Washington State employers must offer and pay the prevailing piece rates on AEWR only job orders as of the date they are published. This order precludes the employer from paying hourly for these crops and tasks. The current prevailing piece rates are above and were published on 6/19/25.

<sup>\*</sup>ESD is not a party to FUJ litigation.

# Update on "old business"



- ASWS webpage status
- Written resources for employers and workers
- ASWS "in the news":
  - <u>Immigration policies and labor: A look at the growing reliance on H-2A workers in the Pacific NW</u> (9/7/25, NWPB)
- USDOL WHD coordination

# Winding up PY 2025 and looking forward to 2026



- ASWS PY 2025 ends 9/30/25.
- Data "round-up" at November 2025 meeting
- PY 2026 begins 2026. As of 10/1/25:
  - Improved data collection and reporting
  - Changes to field checks (compliance team)

- 2026 ASWS Focus Areas
  - Intra-agency domestic recruitment processes
  - Inter-agency coordination and alignment regarding H-2A TWH inspections and housing certification
  - Employer education and technical assistance regarding federal rule changes
  - Employer supervisor training
  - Improving HB2226 data collection and reporting processes

# Processing and adjudicating Foreign Labor Certification applications

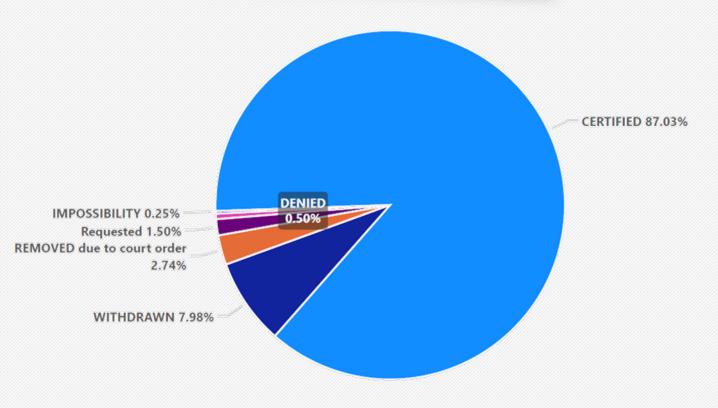


Petra Meraz, Foreign Labor Certification Program Supervisor, ASWS, ESD

# Application status report October 1, 2024 – August 31, 2025



Status	Applications	Workers
CERTIFIED	397	34186
DENIED	2	9
IMPOSSIBILITY	1	100
REMOVED due to court order	17	1346
Requested	13	526
WITHDRAWN	38	2540
Total	468	38707



# Number of active contracts & workers Started by and ended after August 31, 2025.



#### Active contracts & number of workers

Started by and ended after August 31, 2025.

31275

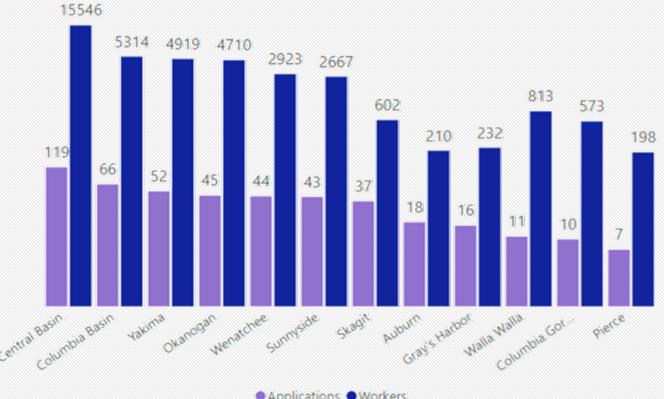
349

Contracts Workers

### Number of applications & workers requested by AHO



AHO	Applications	Workers
Central Basin	119	15546
Columbia Basin	66	5314
Yakima	52	4919
Okanogan	45	4710
Wenatchee	44	2923
Sunnyside	43	2667
Skagit	37	602
Auburn	18	210
Gray's Harbor	16	232
Walla Walla	11	813
Columbia Gorge	10	573
Pierce	7	198
Total	468	38707



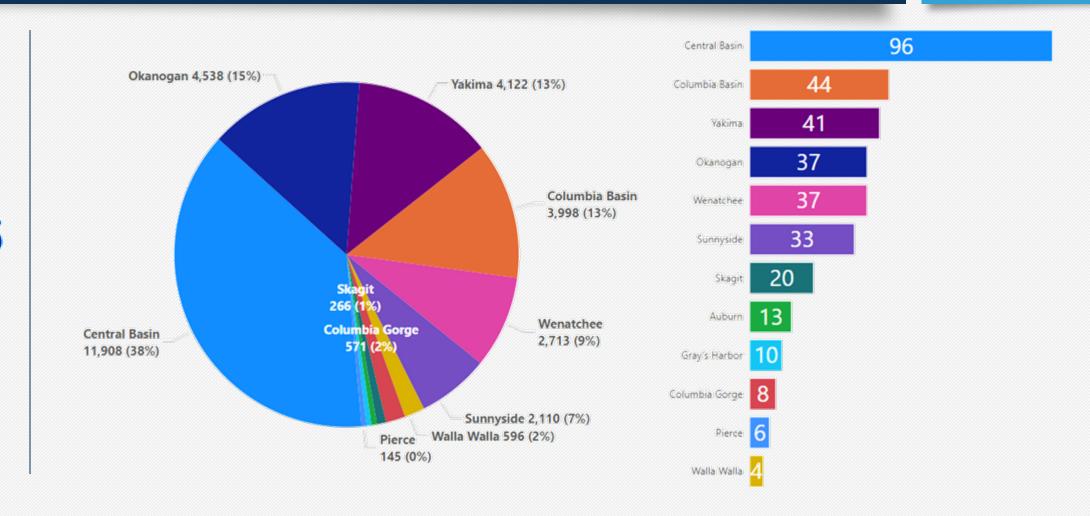
# Number of active contracts & workers; by AHO Started by and ended after August 31, 2025.



349

Contracts

31275 Workers



# Compliance Reporting: Site visits (field visits), field checks & complaints

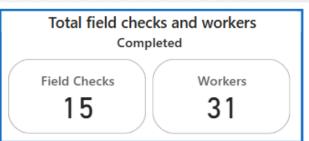


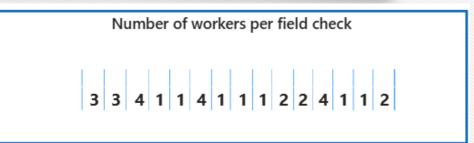
Susana Rodriguez, Compliance Unit Supervisor, ASWS, ESD

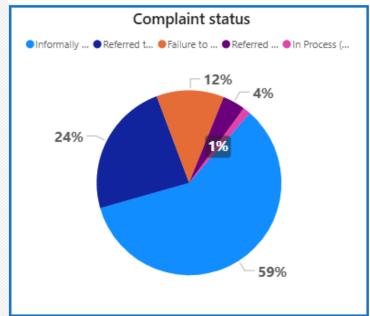
# ASWS Compliance updates















# ASWS quarterly report – 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr. PY2025

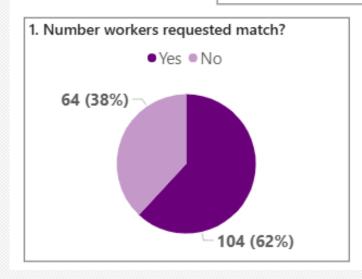


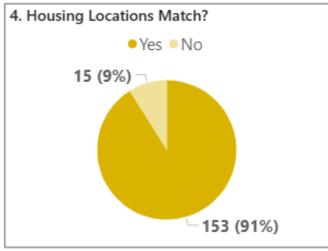
2. Total Workers Requested

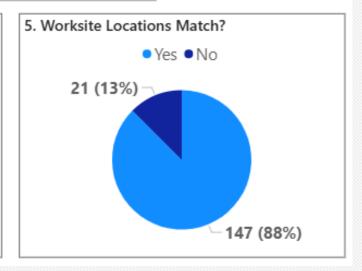
21,911

3. Total Workers Received

15,915







# Workforce Services Division Updates September 2025



Alberto Isiordia, Assistant Director of Operations, ESD Maria Maravilla, Wagner-Peyser Program Support Specialist, ESD

### MSFW Outreach Performance



## Workforce Services Division (WSD)

October 1, 2024, through August 31, 2025

Program Year	2023	2024
Total FTEs *	11	11
Total Outreach Days	1,470	1,455
Total Number of MSFWs Contacted	25,564	24,644

<sup>\*9</sup> dedicated FTEs (MSFW Staff) and 2 FTEs allocated to non-Ag. significant areas. MSFW staffing changes to be reflected in PY 2025.





## Workforce Services Division (WSD)

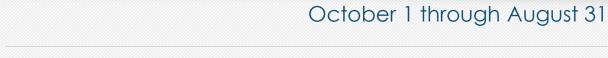
October 1, 2024, through August 31, 2025

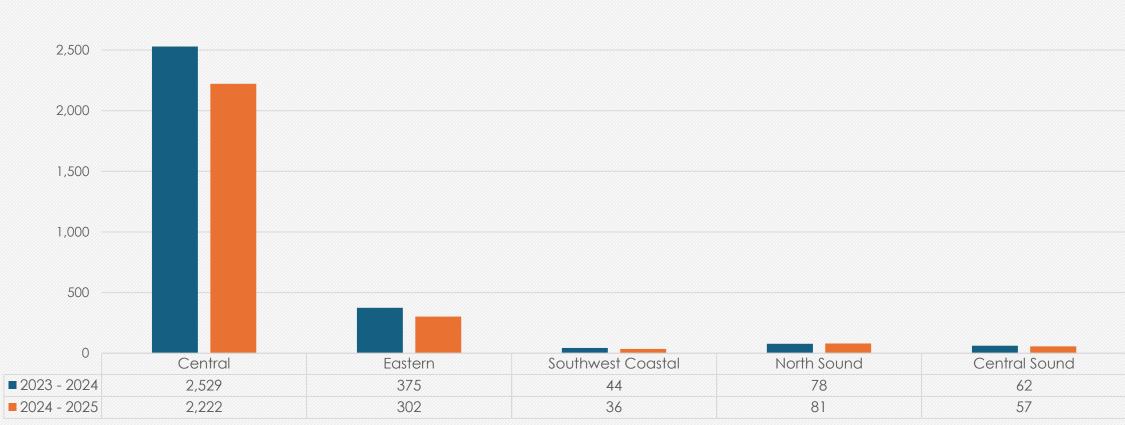
Total Number of Complaints	45
Total Number of Apparent Violations	3
Total Referred (14 H-2A related)	44
Total Resolved (at local level)	4

# MSFWs Served by Region

3,000







# MSFWs Served by Significant Office





# Ag Clearance Order Waiver Update



Submitted: Clearance Order Waiver to Department of Labor

#### Request:

On August 18, 2025, the Employment Security Department (ESD) submitted a request to waive subsection (b) (2) of the Wagner-Peyser Act regulation at 20 CFR 653.50.

"(if) the job order for the ES office incorporates offices beyond the local office commuting area, the ES Office **must suppress the employer information** in order to facilitate the orderly movement of workers within the ES."

#### Change:

If approved, this waiver would allow ESD to disclose the employer's name and location—while continuing to withhold direct contact information—to facilitate a more informed and orderly referral process.

# Overview of selected federal rule changes



Bertha J. Clayton, ASWS Director, ESD

Petra Meraz, Foreign Labor Certification Program Supervisor, ASWS, ESD

July 8, 2025. Department of Labor Publishes Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to Rescind the Final Rule, *Improving Protections for Workers in Temporary Agricultural Employment in the United States* 



July 11, 2025. Office of Foreign Labor Certification Provides Additional Information on New 2025 H-2A Hourly Adverse Effect Wage Rates (AEWR) for Non-Range Occupations Using the Occupational Employment and Statistics Survey (OEWS)

August 25, 2025. Office of Foreign Labor Certification Announces Rescission of 2011 Frequently Asked Question Prohibiting the Staggered Entry of H-2A Workers

August 28, 2025. OFLC Announces Update to Implementation of the 2023 H-2A AEWR Final Rule; District Court's Order Vacating the Final Rule

September 10, 2025. Office of Foreign Labor Certification Announces 60-Day Public Comment Period on Proposed Revisions to H-2A Temporary Agricultural Labor Certification Program (OMB 1205-0466) July 8, 2025. Department of Labor Publishes Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to Rescind the Final Rule, *Improving Protections for Workers in Temporary Agricultural Employment in the United States* 



- Multiple suits in numerous states asking to enjoin parts or all of 2024 Worker Protection rule
- 6/20/25: USDOL announces it will no longer enforce the 2024 Worker Protection Rule
- 7/8/25: USDOL rescinds final rule and gives NPRM
- 8/27/25: ESD submits comments to USDOL

#### **ASWS** Response

- Awaiting final outcome from USDOL
- Staff training
- Technical guidance to employers
- Shift from presenting rule as "requirements" to "best practices"





# 2023 AEWR Rule No longer in effect

#### 2023 AEWR Rule required:

- Bifurcating certain job codes out of traditional "Big 6" farmworker SOCs which are paid at AEWR
- 2. Filing separate applications to separate higher paying duties
- 3. Example: Farmworker + Shuttle driver duties.
  - 1. Farmworker (45-2092): \$19.82
  - 2. <u>Shuttle Driver</u> (53-3053): \$22.20

Employer obligated to pay the higher SOC to all workers in the job order, even when those duties were not being performed.

# USDOL implements the District Court's vacation of rule in all states

#### Impact:

- 1. USDOL can no longer require employers to separate out job duties and offer and pay the higher rate;
- 2. All farmwork tasks described can be paid the AEWR (or applicable prevailing wage (WA)).
- Employers can include all job duties in one application and pay the highest applicable wage.
- 4. Description of duties does not as critical to determine wage.

#### **Applicability**

- Does <u>not</u> apply to contracts certified before 8/28/25 and employers must still pay the wages certified in the job order.
- New job orders filed SWA must process according to pre-2023 AEWR rule.

#### What doesn't change:

Employer still must pay the highest of the AEWR, the prevailing hourly wage rate, the prevailing piece rate, the agreed-upon collective bargaining rate, or the Federal or State minimum wage rate.

# August 25, 2025. Office of Foreign Labor Certification Announces Rescission of 2011 Frequently Asked Question Prohibiting the Staggered Entry of H-2A Workers



- USDOL FAQ guidance rescinded. <u>Federal Register :: Notification of Rescission of Frequently Asked Question Issued on July 22, 2011</u>
- Action: Rescinds informal guidance requiring a separate application(s) when the only difference among positions was the start "date of need" (same crops, duties, areas of intended employment).
- Impact: Employers can file <u>one</u> application indicating different dates of need and stagger worker arrival dates.

OMB Approval: 1205-0466 Expiration Date: 08/31/2022

#### Agricultural Clearance Order Form ETA-790 U.S. Department of Labor



IMPORTANT: In accordance with 20 CFR 653.500, all employers seeking U.S. workers to perform agricultural services or labor on a temporary, less than year-round basis through the Agricultural Recruitment System for U.S. Workers, must submit a completed job clearance order (Form ETA-790) to the State Workforce Agency (SWA) for placement on its intrastate and interstate job clearance systems. Employers submitting a job order in connection with an H-2A Application for Temporary Employment Certification (Form ETA-9142A) must complete the Form ETA-790 and attach a completed 790A. All other employers submitting agricultural clearance orders must complete the Form ETA-790 and attach a completed 790B. Employers and authorized preparers must read the general instructions carefully, complete ALL required fields/items containing an asterisk (\*), and any fields/items where a response is conditional as indicated by the section (§) symbol.

#### I. Clearance Order Information

FOR STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY (SWA) USE ONLY  Questions 1 through 17				
Clearance Order Number *	Clearance Order Issue Date *	Clearance Order Expiration Date *		
SOC Occupation Code *	SOC Occupation Title *			

Area: Washington				
Period: May 2024				
Occupation (SOC code)	Hourly mean wage			
Pesticide Handlers, Sprayers, and Applicators, Vegetation (37-3012)	\$24.58			
First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers (45-1011)	\$31.14			
Graders and Sorters, Agricultural Products (45-2041)	\$17.29			
Agricultural Equipment Operators (45-2091)	\$21.13			
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse (45-2092)	\$19.38			
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals (45-2093)	\$22.01			
Forest and Conservation Workers (45-4011)	\$21.68			
Fence Erectors (47-4031)	\$28.03			
Farm Equipment Mechanics and Service Technicians (49-3041)	\$28.46			
Airline Pilots, Copilots, and Flight Engineers (53-2011)	(4) -			
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (53-3032)	\$32.24			
Light Truck Drivers (53-3033)	\$25.44			
Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity (53-3052)	\$34.46			
Shuttle Drivers and Chauffeurs (53-3053)	\$22.20			
Packers and Packagers, Hand (53-7064)	\$18.94			

Example of how rule changes impact ETA-790 processing:

- 1. Vacation of 2023 AEWR Rule
- 2. "Staggering" of worker arrivals



OMB Approval: 1205-0466 Expiration Date: 10/31/2025

#### H-2A Agricultural Clearance Order Form ETA-790A U.S. Department of Labor



#### A. Job Offer Information

Job Offer Into	ormation							
. Job Title *								
. Workers	a. Total	b. H-2A						
Needed *		3. Begin Date * 4. End			4. End Da	ate *		
	generally require eed to question					ek? *	☐ Yes	□ No
. Anticipated d	ays and hours o	of work per weel	k *	_			7. Hourly v	vork schedule
	a. Total Hours	c. Mo	onday	e. Wednesday		g. Friday	a:_	□ AM □ PM
t	b. Sunday	d. Tu	iesday	f. Thursday		h. Saturday	b:_	— □ AM □ PM
a. Job Duties -	Description of	the specific serv	vices or labor to	be performed	*			
(Prease begin r	esponse on this form	n and use Addendul	m C ir additional spa	ice is needed.)				
b. Wage Offer '	* 8c. P	er * 8d. Pie	ece Rate Offer	§ 8e. Piece	Rate Unit	s/Special Pa	y Informatio	n §
	□н							
\$		IONTH \$						
	ed Addendum A	nroviding addi		on on the crops	or agricultu	ıral	☐ Yes	□No
0. Frequency of	_	Weekly 🔲		Monthly	☐ Othe	er (specify):		
	duction(s) from personner on this form							





## On Break until 11:15 am

# Housekeeping



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# Committee information & feedback:



Bertha J. Clayton, ASWS Director, ESD

## Committee information & feedback:



#### HB 2226 data collection and reporting

- RCW 50.75.060
- Using standard form developed by ESD ASWS and Communications
- Quarterly reporting obligation to ASWS Committee
  - Number of workers arrived on farm their worker location and housing location as of date of site visit or field check

<u>Issues</u>: Inconsistency in capturing data for multiple visits to one job order.

- ☐ How we "count" site visits/how many forms are required
- ☐ How does committee want to see this data?

#### 25-081 - Saved

Data Collection (HB2226)

#### **Data Collection Form**

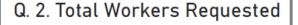
SV or FC # *	25-081
Date Data Collection Form Received	6/27/2025
1. Workers Requested: Does ETA790 match # report	No
2. What is reported for # Workers REQUESTED?	25
3. What is reported for # Workers RECEIVED?	19
4. Do HOUSING Locations match?	Yes
5. Do WORKSITE Locations match?	Yes
6. Data Collection Notes:	
7. Who completed the form,	Facelouse
Employer or Compliance	Employer



## Prior Reporting Example:

Quarterly Report of HB2226 Data: 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr. Jan 1, 2025 - March 31, 2025

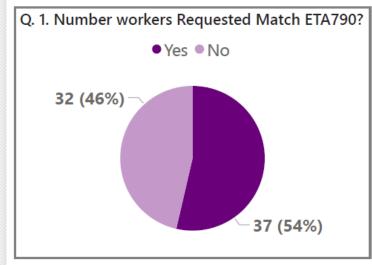


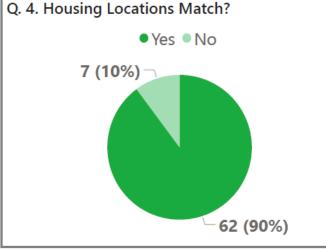


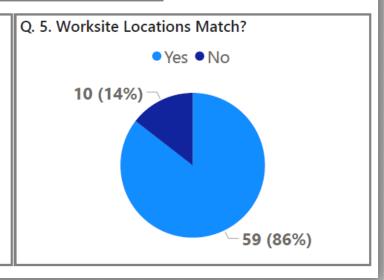
**7970** 



7115







# RCW 50.75.060 Data collection



- (1) Whenever the department conducts a field check or field visit of an employer, the department must collect the following information:
  - (a) The number of H-2A workers the employer has at each work site; and
  - (b) The actual geographic location of where the H-2A workers are living during their employment with the employer.
- (2) The department must compile the information and compare the number of workers sought by an employer on the employer's H-2A application with the number of H-2A workers actually working for the employer.
- (3) The department must make the information available to the advisory committee appointed under RCW **50.75.040** on a quarterly basis.
- 1. Does the data as presented by ESD answer the committee's questions?
- 2. Does it meet the legislative intent of HB2226?

# H-2A Temporary Worker Housing



Mobile Range (herders, beekeepers)



"9 and Under" TWH



Temporary Worker Housing (10+ occupants)



# Changes to H-2A TWH



- "9 and under", <60
  - As of 2024, L&I no longer performing pre-occupancy inspections for purpose of ESD housing certification
  - DOH assumed these (H-2A TWH, only) inspections for purpose of ESD's housing certification
  - ESD will require all H-2A TWH to have a DOH TWH license to certify (approve to USDOL) "9 and under" H-2A TWH housing
    - State regulations do not require DOH to inspect "9 and under" H-2A TWH
    - DOH licensing processes
      - ☐ Application/Fee
      - ☐ Construction Review Services (CRS) approval
      - □ DOH license pre-occupancy inspections
      - □ DOH Grace period for CRS approval letter: 2/28/2026
- Exception: Mobile range housing (herders); <15</p>
  - ESD will inspect according to federal mobile range housing standards.

# H-2A Temporary Worker Housing 2026 inspecting agencies



Mobile Range (herders, beekeepers)



H-2A Inspection: ESD (federal range housing standards)

License: None

"9 and Under" TWH



H-2A Inspection: DOH

License: DOH TWH (req. By ESD)

Temporary Worker Housing (10+ occupants)



Inspection: DOH

License: DOH TWH (Reg. By RCW)

# H-2A Temporary Worker Housing information for TWH operators and H-2A employers





 Department of Health Temporary Worker Housing webpage

# Potential changes to field checks:



Arturo Espinoza, MSFW Monitor, Executive Programs, ESD

# What is happening?



- Why Art and not Bertha?
- Change in field check process concern.

### Possible result



If placement is not working as of the date of field check, USDOL suggests ESD may lose the connection to the employer

# Potential Impact - less field checks conducted:

- Contract abandonment
- Turn around time

#### **Next Steps:**

- ESD plans to send a letter seeking to confirm whether we could still perform the field check
- We may know more next week after our NMA office meeting

### Public Comment



#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

If you would like to make public comment, including any suggested future agenda items, please state your name and spell it so we can capture it correctly for the minutes, as well as the organization you represent if any. Your comments are being recorded. However, if you would like your comments to be included in the meeting minutes, please submit them in writing via email to Vickie Carlson at Vickie.Carlson@esd.wa.gov. Please limit your comments to two minutes.

#### **COMENTARIO PUBLICO:**

Si desea hacer un cometario público, incluyendo temas ó elementos de segurencia para agendas futuras, por favor indique su nombre y deletréelo para poder capturarlo correctamente en los apuntes de la junta, también indique la organización a la que representa si hay alguna. Sus comentarios estan siendo grabados. Sin embargo, si desea que sus comentarios sean incluidos en los apuntes de la junta, por favor envielos por escrito por correo electrónico a Vickie Carlson a vickie.carlson@esd.wa.gov. Por favor limite sus comentarios a dos minutos.

# Good of the Order



- Future Agenda Items
- Adjournment



# Agricultural and Seasonal Workforce Services ADVISORY COMMITTEE



## **ASWS Advisory Committee Meeting**

Thursday, November 20, 2025

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Zoom