



Agricultural and Seasonal Workforce Services Advisory Committee

Meeting details

Date: Thursday, July 23, 2026

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Location: Zoom

Physical address: Employment Security Department

212 Maple Park Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501

Committee members present

- Jon DeVaney
- Michele Besso
- Delia Peña
- Jeff Perrault
- Mike Gempler

Non-voting agency representatives

- Caitlin Gates (LNI)
- Juan Gamez Briceno (DOH)
- Ignacio Marquez (WSDA)

Committee members absent (at the time of role call)

- Elizabeth Strater
- Edgar Franks
- Rosalinda Gullien

ESD presenting staff

- Joy Adams
- Vickie Carlson
- Bertha J. Clayton
- Olivia Gutierrez
- Mago Cabrera
- Tim Probst
- Jenna Argot
- Alberto Isiordia
- Ismalia Maidadi

Summary

Meeting Recorded

This meeting was recorded and is available on [Agricultural and Seasonal Workforce Services Advisory Committee meetings](#)

Public Comment

None

Recording timestamp **00:01:32**

Welcome and Agenda Review & Roll Call

Recording timestamp **00:02:45**

Employment Security Department (ESD) Committee Chair, Joy Adams, welcomed everyone, reviewed the meeting agenda and asked if anyone had any questions. 4 voting members were present at the time of roll call; Quorum was not established.

2026 ASWS Advisory Committee Legislative Report ReviewRecording timestamp **00:05:39**

Bertha J. Clayton, Director, ASWS Office, ESD

Committee Recommendations review:

Tracking of data points:

Bertha Clayton explained that the draft was organized into several broad areas and requested guidance on whether the recommendations accurately reflected the committee's intent.

Measurement, metrics, and equity

Committee discussed the need to distinguish between requesting additional data and developing meaningful methods for measuring qualitative concerns.

Jon DeVaney:

- We really want to understand the data rather than requesting additional data points. What we're looking for is some means of measurement, finding a trackable measuring tool for some of these qualitative issues like equity that we've been discussing.

Michele Besso:

- Requested clarification regarding why wage data collected from workers could not be shared with the committee.

Joy Adams agreed to place the issue on a future agenda or arrange a discussion with Gustavo before or around the August meeting.

House Bill 2226 Data Collection:

Bertha Clayton reviewed ESD's responsibilities to collect point-in-time information about where H-2A workers are; locations and housing; at the time of field checks and site visits.

The committee reviewed draft language **recommending that ESD collect and report additional context** when information differs between a certified ETA-790 job order and information reported by an employer during a field check or site visit.

Bertha Clayton acknowledged employer concerns about duplication are reasonable and asked whether the requirement is meeting the Legislature's intended purpose. Bertha also clarified that the committee has authority under its statutory chapter to evaluate the law and recommend changes.

Michele Besso:

- Stated that the administrative concerns were valid but that the committee did not have sufficient time during the current report cycle to develop a well-considered statutory recommendation.

Jon DeVaney:

- Recalled that employer representatives had raised concerns when the requirement was enacted, arguing that it duplicated existing information and might not produce useful results.

Ignacio Marquez:

- Had similar concerns about the requirement's purpose and usefulness.

Bertha Clayton confirmed that ESD will continue collecting and reporting the information quarterly unless the statute is amended.

Committee Members supported continuing to evaluate the requirement over the next two years, including whether it produces meaningful information and whether resources could be redirected to more effective activities.

Farmworker Conditions and Immigration Enforcement:

The committee reviewed draft language regarding the impact of Department of Homeland Security immigration-enforcement activity since approximately January 2025. The draft section did not include a specific recommendation for ESD.

Bertha Clayton asked whether the language should remain in the recommendation section or be moved elsewhere as contextual information.

Jon DeVaney:

Agreed that the immigration-enforcement discussion was primarily context for the committee's work rather than a stand-alone action item. He noted that:

1. immigration enforcement,
2. deportation,
3. voluntary departures

Could affect:

1. domestic recruitment
2. worker-return rates, and
3. interpretation of employment data.

Members supported moving this discussion earlier in the committee-recommendations section as introductory context.

Jon also noted that any language criticizing federal administration policy should be presented as the committee's position rather than as an agency staff conclusion.

Positive Recruitment and Notification of Workers

Members requested that the applicable regulation be included in the report because notification affects the committee's ability to understand:

1. Whether former workers were aware of job opportunities;
2. Whether they applied;
3. Whether they declined the work;
4. Whether an employer rejected an applicant; and
5. Whether former workers returned in subsequent seasons.

Members concluded that the committee was not prepared to recommend an immediate action but should devote additional time during the next one to two years to evaluating.

Presentation of Withdrawn Applications:

Employer-withdrawn applications had previously been displayed in monthly reporting metrics;

Jon DeVaney:

Recommended ESD remove the ‘withdrawn’ bucket because withdrawals generally occur before certification. Prior presentation could create the impression that withdrawn workers were being subtracted from certified-worker totals.

FLC Staff confirmed that the reporting format had been corrected to prevent that misunderstanding.

Funding and Agency Capacity

Jon DeVaney:

Recommended revising the proposed language so it does not imply that the program is a fee-for-service activity. He emphasized that domestic recruitment and compliance enforcement are public workforce and regulatory responsibilities.

Members also expressed concern that framing the issue as service to a particular user group could invite proposals for user fees, which they did not consider the best way to fund a general public priority.

Jon DeVaney:

(with Committee agreement) Recommended that

1. ESD and state leadership continue requesting proportional increases in federal support, particularly if federal policy promotes greater use of the H-2A program while immigration enforcement increases.
2. Describing compliance and domestic recruitment as state funding priorities and including this point in the committee-recommendations section.

Bertha Clayton also noted that the anticipated addition of dairy-related H-2A activity will increase job orders, compliance work, education, and outreach, however detailed federal implementation guidance has not yet been received.

Domestic Recruitment, Referrals, and Placements:

Ignacio Marquez:

Requested more regular information regarding domestic-worker referrals and placements associated with H-2A job opportunities. The committee currently receives information about outreach and collaboration but lacks a running picture of:

1. How many referrals are made;
2. How many referred workers apply;
3. How many workers are hired;
4. Whether referral numbers are increasing or decreasing; and
5. Whether domestic workers are gaining access to available jobs.

Workforce Services staff indicated that:

- Referral data and trend lines may be available.
- Quarterly reporting was considered more practical than monthly because employment outcomes are verified through quarterly wage data.

Ismalia Maidadi explained that wage records are needed to determine whether a referred individual was ultimately employed. Because wage data are received quarterly, verified placement information cannot be reliably produced monthly.

Jon DeVaney:

Also cautioned against requesting a new report until the committee understands what the available data mean and where gaps remain. He noted that a referral count alone would not explain whether:

- The worker followed up;
- The worker declined the opportunity;
- The employer rejected the worker;
- Another barrier arose; or
- Employment ultimately occurred.

The committee agreed that referral and placement data are an appropriate topic for further discussion.

The committee did not approve the substance of the report at this meeting because several sections require additional development.

Next Steps:

- Bertha Clayton reminded the Committee that the report must be approved at the August meeting to remain on schedule.
- ESD staff to revise draft based on feedback received during the July 23rd meeting and provide to the Committee to review for the August 13th in-person meeting.

Committee Business:

Recording timestamp 01:30:07

July 16, 2026 meeting minutes:

Motion to approve by Jon DeVaney and a 2nd from Mike Gempler, meeting minutes unanimously approved via voice vote.

Good of the Order

Recording timestamp 01:30:38

Joy Adams, Director, Employment System Policy & Integrity Division, ESD

Future agenda requests and ESD action items:

Wage survey submission

- Joy reported that the 2024 agricultural wage survey results were resubmitted to the U.S. Department of Labor on July 10, 2026.

Michele Besso asked about the status of the 2025 agricultural wage survey results. Joy agreed to follow up with Gustavo.

- Joy announced that Commissioner Cami Feek will temporarily serve as interim director of another state agency at the Governor's Office's request
- Chief Operating Officer Martin McMurry will be serving as interim ESD commissioner.
- August in-person committee meeting will include facilitated "recruitment brainstorming"

Adjourned

Joy Adams thanked everyone for their continued active participation and for their commitment to this work, reviewed the next meeting date/time. Public meeting adjourned: 10:31 AM.

2025 Meetings

- The next Agricultural and Seasonal Workforce Services Advisory Committee meeting: Thursday, August 13th, 2026 from 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM, In-person & Zoom

Meeting Slides

ASWS Advisory Committee July 23, 2026



Equal opportunity statement



The Employment Security Department is an equal opportunity employer/ program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. We provide free help in many languages. People who need hearing or speech help can dial 711 for the Washington Relay.

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:

Esta junta está siendo grabada. Por favor tenga en cuenta que su imagen y voz serán capturados y grabados durante la video-conferencia. Su participación en esta video-conferencia significa dar consentimiento de ser grabado.



Agenda

Agricultural and Seasonal Workforce Services Agenda

Thursday, July 23, 2026 9 am – 11:00 am | 212 Maple Park Ave SE Olympia, WA 98501 |

[Zoom](#)

TIME	TOPIC
9:00 am	Call to Order; Welcome Joy Adams, Director, Employment System Policy & Integrity Division, ESD
9:05 am	Public Comment Joy Adams, Director, Employment System Policy & Integrity Division, ESD
9:10 am	Roll call of committee members Vickie Carlson, Management Analyst, ASWS Office, ESD
9:11 am	Agenda review, meeting minute approval - July 16th, 2026 Joy Adams, Director, Employment System Policy & Integrity Division, ESD
10:50 am	2026 Report Bertha J. Clayton, Director, ASWS Office, ESD
11:00 am	Good of the Order Adjournment Joy Adams, Director, Employment System Policy & Integrity Division, ESD

GROUND RULES

No side conversations | Phones on silent | Let people speak without interruption | Respect the opinion of others | Listen for understanding |
Speak your mind | Stay on common ground | Assume good intent | Stay focused on task at hand and be willing to come back to the topic |
Make sure everyone understands |
Look out for each other | Take care of your own comfort | Ask for what you need |

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

2026 ASWS Advisory Committee Legislative report review



**Employment
Security
Department**
WASHINGTON STATE

Bertha J. Clayton, ASWS Director

Committee Business: July 16th, 2026, meeting minutes



Meeting Minutes: July 16, 2026

- Motion to approve: Jon DeVaney;
- Second: Mike Gempler;
- Unanimously approved via voice vote

Good of the Order



- Future Agenda Items
- Adjournment



Agricultural and Seasonal Workforce Services
ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Employment Security Department
WASHINGTON STATE

Next In-Person
ASWS Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, August 13, 2026
11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
212 Maple Park Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501
2nd Floor, Maple Leaf Conference Room

Contact informatio

Joy Adams, Director of Employment System Policy & Integrity Division joy.adams@esd.wa.gov

Employment Security Department • Employment System Policy & Integrity
