

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

# Economic Security for All

DECEMBER 2024

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# Executive summary

In 2022, the Legislature appropriated state funds for Economic Security for All (EcSA) in proviso, expanding its capacity to deliver comprehensive and coordinated services to the 26% of Washingtonians who live in poverty.<sup>1</sup> EcSA is a poverty reduction model that coordinates existing programs, using their collective support for low-income Washingtonians pursuing equity, dignity and sustained self-sufficiency. A combination of intensive program navigation, local innovation and flexible support fills gaps and meets needs within existing programs and regulations.

At the local level, EcSA is run by partnerships of community service providers, including the voices of people who have experienced poverty. Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) coordinate EcSA workgroups and activities. EcSA takes an innovative approach to equitably reduce poverty, focusing on historically marginalized populations and people with multiple obstacles to self-sufficiency.

In 2019, Governor Inslee designated Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds to launch EcSA in four pilot areas. These areas were based on recommendations from the Poverty Reduction Work Group to provide a more human-centered approach to poverty reduction. In 2020 and 2021, Governor Inslee designated additional WIOA funding, bringing services to communities throughout Washington. This led to the statewide expansion of the program.

In July 2022, EcSA began receiving state funding. Employment Security and LWDB partners committed to serving 925 more customers by June 2023, and in fact served 1,285 customers by that date. In the following year, July 2023 through June 2024, Employment Security committed to serving 1,306 customers, and again, exceeded this goal by serving 3,050 customers. During this same period program performance exceeded targets for enrollments, training, people reaching self-sufficiency and spending.

EcSA became codified in state law through the passage of Substitute House Bill (SHB) 2230<sup>2</sup> in the 2024 legislative session. The law requires Employment Security and LWDBs collaborate to implement the program in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025.

[RCW 43.164](#) requires Employment Security to report on the program annually. By Dec. 1, Employment Security will publish and send the report to the Governor, legislative committees, the Workforce Training and Education Coordination Board and the WorkFirst Poverty Reduction Oversight Taskforce. This year's report builds on the June 2024 EcSA report, sharing activities and accomplishments for FY 2024.

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<sup>1</sup> [Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5693\(225\) \(25\), ch. 297, Laws of 2022](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Substitute House Bill 2230](#)

## Highlights for July 2023 through June 2024

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- Enrolled and established personalized self-sufficiency wage goals for 3,050 customers, compared to a goal of 1,306.
- Increased outreach to and participation of marginalized populations and unhoused individuals. Through June 2024, over half of EcSA participants were people of color and 11% were unhoused.
- Placed 953 customers in training that leads to employment at self-sufficiency earnings.
- 661 customers have obtained employment at self-sufficiency earnings.
- Median annualized earnings for those exiting the program with employment is \$49,296. This is for a population starting in poverty, 69% of whom were unemployed or had income below \$10,000 at the time of enrollment.
- Employment Security is still developing data strategy for gathering long term data. The current sample sizes are too small for accurate measurement. The December 2025 report will include this information.
- As this model has matured, partners leverage other funding to grow and expand our network of providers. Employment Security received \$48.25<sup>3</sup> million in grant funding from the Washington State Department of Commerce. The EcSA program used this funding to expand Career Accelerator Incentives, matching savings accounts to program participants. The grant also funded more business services with a focus on Black, Latino and Indigenous populations.
- Employment Security and the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) finalized a partnership between EcSA and Washington College Grant – Connect. This gives automatic income eligibility for the Washington College Grant, allowing EcSA participants to begin pursuing their training and academic pathways without completing a Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA) or Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- The U. S. Department of Labor has recognized EcSA as a best practice.

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<sup>3</sup> The June report stated that the award was for \$50 million due to the timing of the negotiations. The final award of \$48.25 million was settled during the writing of the June report.

# Background

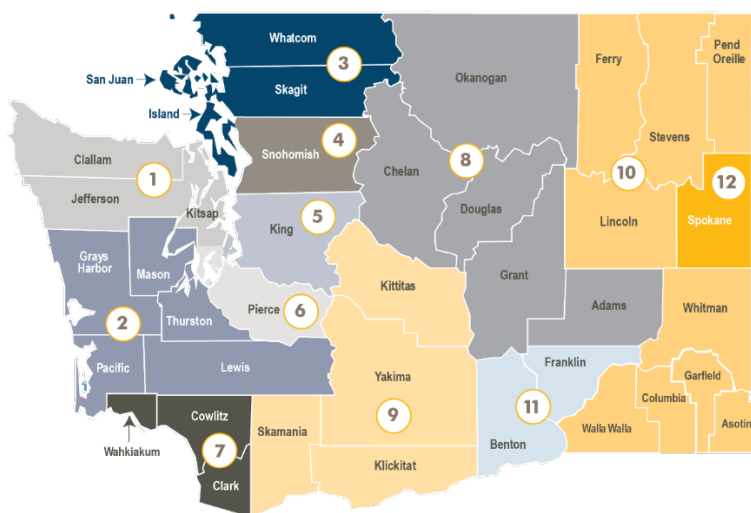
EcSA is a poverty reduction model that coordinates existing programs, using their collective support for low-income Washingtonians pursuing equity, dignity and sustained self-sufficiency. Providers are required to:

- Build career plans around individualized self-sufficiency goals.
- Bundle services for each participant based on their individual needs.
- Focus efforts based on equity outcomes, in particular services to individuals who are BIPOC or unhoused.
- Coordinate services via local teams across all partner programs.
- Include voices of those with lived experience.

Within that framework, communities are empowered to innovate based on local opportunities and needs. At the local level, EcSA is run by partnerships of community service providers, including the voices of those who have experienced poverty. Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) coordinate EcSA workgroups and activities

## Geographical distribution of services

EcSA supports participants throughout the state. The LWDB areas include between one and nine counties. EcSA is not currently offered in every county but is offered in at least one county in each area.

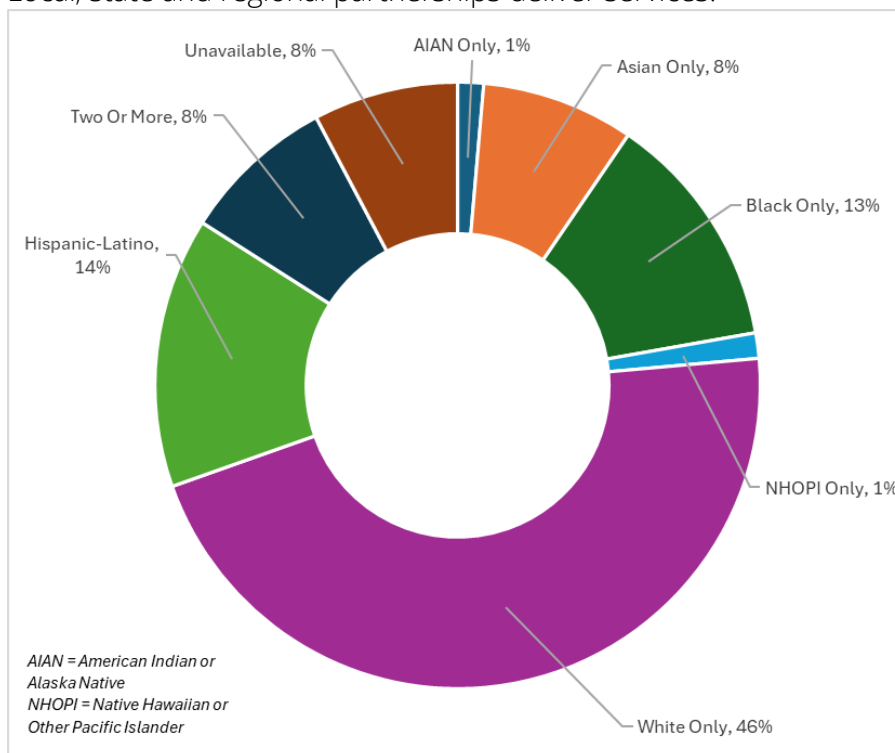


## Low-income services with an equity focus

Over 1.8 million Washingtonians, 26% of the state's population, are currently living in households that earn less than 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). Of those, more than 500,000 are children, a number greater than the populations of the cities of Spokane and Tacoma combined.<sup>4</sup>

Local EcSA partnerships are implementing new models to increase their collective impact for Washingtonians experiencing poverty, with a strong focus on equity. The model's commitment to equity and inclusion is reflected in customer demographics.

- EcSA serves significantly more people of color compared to 22% of the statewide population as illustrated in the below Race/Ethnicity graphic.
- About 11% of EcSA customers are unhoused, and all are in poverty, with income below the eligibility threshold for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- EcSA serves customers in rural and urban areas of the state.
- Local, state and regional partnerships deliver services.



<sup>4</sup> DSHS analysis of 2020 American Community Survey data, using the SNAP threshold of 200% FPL as the poverty line.

Employment Security and local teams have engaged over 200 local partner organizations to ensure customers get all the services for which they are eligible, with as few barriers as possible. This requires intentionality at the local, regional and state levels.

**Local.** LWDBs and their subcontractors consider how best to leverage local programs and resources to coordinate delivery of the following services:

- Bundling multiple benefits to stabilize customers' households.
- Creating career plans for customers to reach a self-sufficiency earnings goal.
- Coordinating wrap-around support across programs to fill gaps in benefits.
- Connecting to training or education, with supports to cover living expenses.
- Supporting customers until they achieve self-sufficiency.

**Regional.** LWDBs lead local partnerships with community organizations as well as people experiencing poverty. Depending on local need, partnerships include housing insecurity programs, workforce development programs, local Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) service providers and other community-based organizations. The LWDBs also manage subcontractors, ensuring all applicable rules are followed and sharing best practices across programs.

**State.** EcSA has a technical advisory committee, comprising representatives from state agency partners, labor unions, nonprofit organizations, and local implementation leaders. The committee advises Employment Security, providing guidance on programmatic decisions related to required elements, service delivery, program alignment and policy.

## Including people who have experienced poverty

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People experiencing poverty have often been treated as the greatest barrier to their own advancement. The EcSA program recognizes the best expertise comes from people who have lived that experience. Human-centered design is foundational to EcSA. Many of EcSA's staff and partners have lived experience of poverty. Local programs partner with others who have escaped poverty. EcSA programs place their experience at the center of the work.

## Goals, outcomes and expenditures

The EcSA program is dedicated to accomplishing the following goals:

- Help people move all the way out of poverty to a self-sufficiency wage, with a strong focus on equity.

- Bundle workforce, education and social services to stabilize customer's lives.
- Establish and implement customized career plans to reach self-sufficiency.
- Remove barriers at the local, state, and federal levels that prevent coordinated delivery of multiple benefits.

## Bundling services

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Cycles of poverty are reinforced and maintained by the complexity of program requirements and by a lack of awareness of available resources. Even when people in need are aware of programs, accessing them often becomes a full-time job. EcSA combats this challenge by having experienced staff navigate and leverage all available services. This support allows customers to maintain focus on the details of their plan.

## Using career plans to achieve self-sufficiency

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People experience poverty for different reasons. A one-size-fits-all program is not sufficient to address their needs. Differences in personal circumstances, individual needs and regional requirements all demand that each customer be assessed based on their own individual need. To accomplish this, EcSA has partnered with the University of Washington Self-Sufficiency Standard and Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council to assess customers using a *self-sufficiency calculator*. Each customer's self-sufficiency goal varies depending on family composition, geographic location, and individual economic factors. The self-sufficiency assessment establishes the goal that case managers and customers use to co-create career plans, which are designed to stabilize and move customers and their households out of poverty permanently.

Beginning on July 1, 2024, EcSA will switch from using the Self-Sufficiency Calculator's Income Adequacy Goal to set individual goals, to the Self-Sufficiency Calculator's higher Self-Sufficiency Standard and 200% of FPL. The program's intent is to help people move to even higher income levels by using this two-tiered approach and a higher end goal. Employment Security will continue to track outcomes to see if this change results in higher earnings for EcSA participants over time.

## Coordinated wrap-around services provide stability

During the process of exiting poverty, instability often occurs when people take the first steps to improve their situation. These steps often make them ineligible for the services they previously relied on for survival. For this reason, stability is one of the most vital parts of the process. The program uses a comprehensive approach to ensure unexpected issues are



avoided when possible — and addressed quickly when not. State EcSA funding is less restrictive than many federal support-service resources and allows local programs the flexibility to cover an unexpected change in childcare costs, a heating bill, help with a rent payment, and other obstacles that often knock people off their path to self-sufficiency.

## Removing barriers at local, state and federal levels

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Many programs designed to serve people experiencing poverty have been developed and implemented independently of one another. As a result, eligibility, enrollment and outcome requirements often don't align across programs. Customers must go through multiple cumbersome application processes to secure the supports and services they need to be successful. This burden often discourages them from accessing services. It can also lead them to lose one benefit to receive another. The EcSA program is designed to address these risks wherever possible. At the service delivery level, case managers and staff must understand the rules of various programs and carefully plan to prevent unexpected loss of benefits and hardship. At the program level, EcSA is partnering with local front-line service providers, state agencies — including DSHS — and partners at the federal level to identify and remove structural policy and process barriers, where possible, to improve cross-program partnerships.

### **Washington College Grant: Removing a barrier to access**

Employment Security and WSAC have entered an agreement to provide EcSA participants with automatic income eligibility for the Washington College Grant. This eliminates the requirement to complete state or federal financial aid applications for the first year of training enrollment. Both agencies are collaborating with local partners to implement this agreement in coordination with local EcSA teams and financial aid offices at postsecondary schools across the state.

## Measuring outcomes

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### **Methodology**

The targets for each measure and each LWDB were established during contract development utilizing a cost per range to determine specific local targets in proportion to their funding. Employment Security monitors the variation between targets and actuals each quarter. EcSA sets goals for the number of people reaching self-sufficiency and tracks quarterly.

## Highlights

Employment Security and LWDB partners committed to serving an additional 1,306 combined customers at or below 200% and at or above 200% of FPL with EcSA funding for FY2024. Through the end of June, EcSA exceeded enrollment, training and attaining self-sufficiency commitments. Below is a summary of key program indicators for FY2024

- Enrolled and established personalized self-sufficiency wage goals for 3,050 customers.
- Focused on historically marginalized populations for customer recruitment.
- Served a higher percentage of people of color than statewide totals and 11% unhoused.
- Placed 953 customers in training that leads to employment at self-sufficiency earnings.
- Helped 661 customers obtain employment at self-sufficiency earnings.
- 88% of participants completing the program attain their self-sufficiency goal.
- Customers stay enrolled in the program for an average of five months.
- The median annualized earnings for those exiting the program with employment is \$49,296. This is for a population starting in poverty, 69% of whom were either unemployed or had income below \$10,000 during the quarter of enrollment.

Employment Security is still developing a strategy for gathering long term data. The current sample sizes are too small for accurate measurement. The December 2025 report will include this information. Program Enrollments

Through June 2024, a total of 2,693 customers have been enrolled into EcSA People Experiencing Poverty (previously below 200%FPL), compared to a target of 988. Collaboration between partners has led to an extensive referral system that has increased the rate of enrollments. In addition, the LWDBs have increased outreach to communities in their service areas to reach more participants.

EcSA has continued to increase its success serving vulnerable populations and enroll far more participants than planned. As the program develops and matures, enrollment goals will be adjusted in future contracts to closer match the scale of the need being served.

Enrollments over life of the program.

LWDB	Year 1 Target	Year 1 Actual	Year 2 Target	Year 2 Actual	Total actual July 2022 – June 2024
Olympic	57	95	73	169	264
Pacific Mountain	79	128	83	307	435

LWDB	Year 1 Target	Year 1 Actual	Year 2 Target	Year 2 Actual	Total actual July 2022 – June 2024
Northwest	7	88	121	164	252
Snohomish	72	80	73	140	220
Seattle-King	136	259	203	586	845
Tacoma-Pierce	155	162	102	349	511
Southwest	156	189	72	365	554
North Central	40	42	49	122	164
South Central	64	64	68	126	190
Eastern <sup>5</sup>	N/A	N/A	25	53	53
Benton-Franklin	59	72	39	170	242
Spokane	106	123*	80	142	265
<b>Statewide Total<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>931</b>	<b>1,302</b>	<b>988</b>	<b>2,693</b>	<b>3,995</b>

\*Spokane LWDB figure corrected, resulting in adjustment to Year 1 Actual statewide total.

## Training services

Training services are connections to training offered at community colleges or other local training providers to provide specific vocational skills that lead to employment with self-sufficiency earnings. Training services include training funded through partner resources, including Pell Grant, Washington College Grant, DSHS (Basic Food Employment & Training (BFET), WorkFirst or WIOA programs. EcSA training funding is used to fill the gap when there is an unmet need or when a training does not qualify for other resources.

Through June 2024, a total of 953 customers in the People Experiencing Poverty program (previously below 200% FPL) have entered training that leads to employment with self-sufficiency earnings. Employment Security is finding that customers need longer to complete training programs, which results in delays for people obtaining jobs that pay self-sufficient wages.

Customers receiving training over life of the program.

LWDB	Year 1 Target	Year 1 Actual	Year 2 Target	Year 2 Actual	Total Actual July 2022- June 2024*
Olympic	9	51	19	69	120
Pacific Mountain	41	49	28	181	230
Northwest	3	32	64	72	104
Snohomish	21	21	9	31	52

<sup>5</sup> Eastern did not participate in the state EcSA program the first year.

<sup>6</sup> The totals in this column are not a sum of the columns because a few participants are enrolled in multiple areas. The variation is very small.

LWDB	Year 1 Target	Year 1 Actual	Year 2 Target	Year 2 Actual	Total Actual July 2022-June 2024*
Seattle-King	51	138	30	202	340
Tacoma-Pierce	117	54	52	90	144
Southwest	96	9	25	57	66
North Central	40	36	49	76	112
South Central	40	45	62	67	112
Eastern	N/A	N/A	7	26	26
Benton-Franklin	25	32	16	39	71
Spokane	29	38**	17	43	83
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>505**</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>1,460</b>

\*Includes training from the inception of the program on July 1, 2022.

\*\*Spokane LWDB figure corrected, resulting in adjustment to Year 1 Actual statewide total.

## Placements in employment with self-sufficiency earnings

Through June 2024, local EcSA models have helped 608 customers obtain jobs that pay self-sufficient wages in the People Experiencing Poverty (previously below 200%FPL) program. This is 138% of the statewide target of 442. Some of the local areas, however, that remain below target on this indicator have a high number of customers currently engaged in training with anticipated end dates in summer 2024.

### Customers reaching self-sufficiency

LWDB	Year 1 Target	Year 1 Actual	Year 2 Target	Year 2 Actual	Total Actual July 2022-June 2024
Olympic	14	37	68	48	85
Pacific Mountain	34	55	41	39	94
Northwest	3	12	32	44	56
Snohomish	51	19	33	39	58
Seattle-King	34	106	40	127	233
Tacoma-Pierce	69	43	60	75	118
Southwest	86	50	43	96	146
North Central	20	11	25	27	38
South Central	22	21	35	26	47
Eastern	N/A	N/A	17	6	6
Benton-Franklin	36	36	25	25	61
Spokane	8	34	123	56	90
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>1,032</b>

## Career and support services

**Career services.** Case managers help customers navigate career services, which include customer assessments, referrals to partner resources, career counseling and plan development, mentorship, financial literacy, workforce preparation activities, and job search and placement assistance. The table below includes only those career services provided directly with EcSA funding. The table does not include career services provided through partner resources.

**Support services.** Services include only those supports directly provided with EcSA funds: rental assistance, childcare, healthcare, transportation, incentive payments and other work and training related expenses. The table does not include supports provided to customers through partner resources.

### Career and support services over the life of the program

LWDB	Career Services Year 1	Career Services Year 2	Total Career Services Actual July 2022-June 2024	Support Services Year 1	Support Services Year 2	Total Support Services Actual July 2022-June 2024
Olympic	156	472	628	188	148	336
Pacific Mountain	136	492	628	135	11	146
Northwest	77	100	177	143	22	165
Snohomish	107	388	495	3	44	47
Seattle-King	704	1063	1,767	99	224	323
Tacoma-Pierce	430	690	1,120	57	201	258
Southwest	261	1071	1,332	19	126	145
North Central	34	66	100	147	61	208
South Central	316	736	1,052	137	104	241
Eastern	N/A	150	150	N/A	75	75
Benton-Franklin	336	371	707	70	65	135
Spokane	614*	632	1,246	83	29	112
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>3,171</b>	<b>6,231</b>	<b>9,402</b>	<b>1,081</b>	<b>1,110</b>	<b>2,191*</b>

\*Spokane LWDB figure corrected, resulting in adjustment to Year 1 Actual statewide total.

\*\* The June 2024 report statewide total was incorrect; the formula error has been corrected and this report is now accurate.

# Expenditures

Total life of program (July 2022 – June 2024) and FY24 expenditures (July 2023 - June 2024)

LWDB	Year 1 Total Contract	Year 1 Total Expenditures	Year 2 Spending Target	Year 2 Spending Actual	Total Actual Spending July 2022-June 2024
Olympic	\$343,207	\$339,601	\$319,503	\$309,706	\$649,307
Pacific Mountain	\$522,444	\$522,430	\$436,890	\$436,844	\$959,274
Northwest	\$69,694	\$69,694	\$251,287	\$251,287	\$320,981
Snohomish	\$591,165	\$570,541	\$589,304	\$589,303	\$1,159,844
Seattle-King	\$1,039,448	\$1,020,825	\$1,351,568	\$1,351,568	\$2,372,393
Tacoma-Pierce	\$745,364	\$745,364	\$692,453	\$692,453	\$1,437,817
Southwest	\$557,764	\$557,764	\$532,269	\$532,269	\$1,090,033
North Central	\$518,711	\$518,711	\$389,445	\$389,445	\$908,156
South Central	\$552,518	\$542,731	\$475,926	\$475,546	\$1,018,277
Eastern	N/A	N/A	\$177,312	\$177,312	\$177,312
Benton-Franklin	\$459,166	\$443,123	\$307,249	\$301,468	\$744,591
Spokane	\$613,519	\$613,519	\$489,794	\$488,897	\$1,102,416
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>\$6,013,000</b>	<b>\$5,944,303</b>	<b>\$6,013,000</b>	<b>\$5,996,098</b>	<b>\$11,940,401</b>

Breakdown of direct service expenditures for participants: (Year 2, July 2023-June 2024)

LWDB	Career Services	Training	Incentive	Transportation	Housing	Auto Repair	Other <sup>7</sup>	Total
Olympic	\$39,424	\$34,171	\$58,701	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,938	\$132,295
Pac Mtn	\$274,623	\$59,174	\$100,400	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,648	\$436,845
Northwest	\$88,543	\$39,672	\$91,228	\$469	\$9,137	\$3,568	\$3,489	\$236,017
Snohomish	\$323,013	\$30,889	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$30,406	\$384,307
Seattle-King	\$0	\$0	\$262,272	\$4,781	\$5,992	\$0	\$24,185	\$297,230
Tacoma-Pierce	\$229,998	\$272,399	\$0	\$4,474	\$53,253	\$0	\$15,865	\$575,989
Southwest	\$257,808	\$20,623	\$0	\$4,110	\$1,300	\$4,800	\$33,586	\$322,227
North Central	\$155,772	\$27,556	\$163,000	\$3,610	\$4,355	\$0	\$6,240	\$360,532
South Central	\$998	\$79,700	\$0	\$2,480	\$3,340	\$1,595	\$8,124	\$96,236
Eastern	\$72,842	\$87,649	\$0	\$1,653	\$12,570	\$231	\$2,366	\$177,312
Benton Franklin	\$850	\$65,068	\$0	\$1,426	\$6,000	\$249	\$13,521	\$87,115
Spokane	\$425,550	\$59,278	\$0	\$50	\$15,000	\$0	\$3,416	\$488,244
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>\$1,869,420</b>	<b>\$776,179</b>	<b>\$675,601</b>	<b>\$23,003</b>	<b>\$95,946</b>	<b>\$10,443</b>	<b>\$143,845</b>	<b>\$3,594,438</b>

<sup>7</sup> Additional support services costs that may be less frequent, smaller dollar items, and/or are not consistent across the LWDBs. Includes items such as tools, work clothes, and relevant fees. Note: \$0 reported in childcare costs, so not included in this table.

## Above 200% of the federal poverty level

In 2023, the Legislature appropriated additional state funds for EcSA in proviso, providing a new opportunity to serve participants that have incomes above 200% FPL<sup>8</sup>. This new funding stream posed challenges for many of the LWDBs as they pivoted to reach this new demographic while still serving those participants below 200% FPL. Throughout the year and into the fourth quarter, momentum accelerated and LWDBs began surpassing their enrollment targets. Below is the performance and spending for FY24.

Enrollments from July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

LWDB	Year 2 Target	Year 2 Actual
Olympic	15	5
Pacific Mountain	21	19
Northwest	9	8
Snohomish	28	43
Seattle-King	57	77
Tacoma-Pierce	35	63
Southwest	39	64
North Central	23	15
South Central	24	14
Eastern	14	3
Benton-Franklin	16	12
Spokane	37	34
Statewide Total	318	357

Trainings from July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

LWDB	Year 2 Target	Year 2 Actual
Olympic	13	1
Pacific Mountain	15	10
Northwest	9	3
Snohomish	10	13
Seattle-King	15	12
Tacoma-Pierce	1	17
Southwest	9	10
North Central	25	15
South Central	21	12

<sup>8</sup> [Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5187 \(225\) \(13\) \(a\), ch 475, Laws of 2023](#)

LWDB	Year 2 Target	Year 2 Actual
Eastern	4	1
Benton-Franklin	2	7
Spokane	16	15
Statewide Total	140	116

Reaching self-sufficiency from July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

LWDB	Year 2 Target	Year 2 Actual
Olympic	13	0
Pacific Mountain	11	2
Northwest	5	0
Snohomish	6	3
Seattle-King	15	6
Tacoma-Pierce	17	7
Southwest	21	22
North Central	10	0
South Central	10	0
Eastern	9	3
Benton-Franklin	10	4
Spokane	11	6
Statewide Total	138	53

Total expenditures from July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

LWDB	Year 2 Spending Target	Year 2 Spending Actual
Olympic	\$109,288	\$97,876
Pacific Mountain	\$156,761	\$156,625
Northwest	\$26,008	\$26,008
Snohomish	\$221,547	\$221,527
Seattle-King	\$488,131	\$461,917
Tacoma-Pierce	\$260,023	\$260,023
Southwest	\$337,611	\$337,611
North Central	\$204,035	\$204,035
South Central	\$171,538	\$171,390
Eastern	\$95,774	\$95,771
Benton-Franklin	\$138,624	\$105,004
Spokane	\$290,750	\$281,370
Statewide Total	\$2,500,090	\$2,419,156



## Breakdown of direct service expenditures for participants: (Year 2, July 2023-June 2024)

LWDB	Career Services	Training	Incentive	Transportation	Housing	Auto Repair	Other <sup>9</sup>	Total
Olympic	\$20,070	\$16,105	\$49,250	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$85,425
Pac Mtn	\$127,772	\$8,230	\$19,900	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$724	\$156,625
Northwest	\$5,996	\$2,625	\$12,306	\$0	\$4,170	\$0	\$124	\$25,221
Snohomish	\$37,409	\$0	\$0-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$12,217	\$49,625
Seattle-King	\$0	\$32,116	\$81,366	\$150	\$2,794	\$2,442	\$2,712	\$121,579
Tacoma-Pierce	\$83,808	\$113,156	\$0	\$232	\$9,640	\$0	\$5,161	\$211,998
Southwest	\$204,031	\$3,499	\$0	\$1,325	\$3,280	\$2,000	\$3,452	\$217,587
North Central	\$95,323	\$40,471	\$55,500	\$1,625	\$0	\$0	\$633	\$139,552
South Central	\$88	\$40,016	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$40,104
Eastern	\$94,569	\$14,185	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$17	\$108,771
Benton Franklin	\$0	\$19,547	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,140	\$20,687
Spokane	\$224,287	\$56,635	\$0	\$0	88	\$0	\$612	\$281,622
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>\$893,353</b>	<b>\$346,585</b>	<b>\$218,322</b>	<b>\$3,332</b>	<b>\$19,972</b>	<b>\$4,442</b>	<b>\$26,791</b>	<b>\$1,512,797</b>

Note: \$0 reported in childcare costs, so not included in this table.

## Participant Stories

### Katrina – Southwest Washington

Katrina was referred to WorkSource services from her Cowlitz Tribe case manager last September (2023). Katrina had experienced multiple barriers prior to being referred to WorkSource, and it took time to build trust with her case manager. Katrina did not have access to reliable transportation, had experienced homelessness and was in recovery. With all these barriers Katrina was unsure of where to start. Her case manager helped her map out ways to overcome each of barrier she faced.

The first barrier was housing, which led to a referral to Hope Village and other community housing programs. Next, they created a plan for transportation, which included walking to appointments that were within walking distance, taking public transportation and getting rides from people she trusted. Because transportation was a barrier, Katrina benefited from

<sup>9</sup> Additional support services costs that may be less frequent, smaller dollar items, and/or are not consistent across the LWDBs. Includes items such as tools, work clothes, and relevant fees. Note: \$0 reported in childcare costs, so not included in this table.

receiving WorkSource services at a site co-located with the Cowlitz Tribe. Katrina valued being able to access both Cowlitz Tribe and WorkSource services in the same place.

Katrina received money from the Cowlitz Tribe, which allowed her to purchase a van. While it wasn't the ideal situation, she used this vehicle to temporarily house herself and have a safer space to sleep. Her case manager helped her find hot meals and places to shower so she could maintain a sense of dignity. The case manager also gave hygiene vouchers on two occasions through the BFET program. Soon after Katrina purchased her van, she learned that she was next to receive housing from the Salvation Army's Hope Village. Thankfully, Katrina now has a warm and safe place to stay, access to three meals a day, and showers whenever needed. While at Hope Village, Katrina also began working with another case manager to find permanent housing.

With her housing and transportation needs met, Katrina was ready to begin searching for work. She worked with her case manager to create a targeted resume for retail and customer service positions. She completed the job readiness workshops and learned how to do a more effective job search. Katrina also signed up for the new incentive program and received a clothing voucher to purchase interview clothing. With these supports, Katrina soon received a job offer from Walmart and she accepted.

Katrina has held her job with Walmart since April 11th. When she got an extra 2 months of incentive money to help support job retention, Katrina used it to secure an apartment the Cowlitz Tribe had found for her. Katrina achieved her goals with help and resources from EcSA and her community.

## Michael - SeaKing

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Michael was referred to the EcSA program by the DSHS Employment Pipeline Team. He'd been laid off from a full-time maintenance job where he'd worked for almost a year, making \$26/hour with full benefits.

As a reentry job seeker, Michael was concerned that his options were limited. He expressed anxiety about both interviews and applications, specifically relating to his background. His case manager worked closely with him to refine his answers.

Michael and his case manager worked together to develop a self-sufficiency goal and a career plan.

He requested help with food and gas cards to supplement his basic food support and get to interviews. Michael uses his stipends to pay down considerable debt and has now enrolled in the Money Mechanics program to learn how to develop budgets and get control of his finances. He requested, and received, a new laptop so he could attend the classes online.

Michael was offered a position at Amazon, which was a target company for him, and he wants to get his foot in the door at a good company with possibilities for growth. He's excited to start the job, get his finances in order and get back on track.

## Jennifer - Olympic

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The EcSA and Incentives program was an indispensable resource on Jennifer's journey to self-sufficiency. When she entered the program, she was a displaced homemaker, single mom and full-time student working a part-time job in housekeeping. Jennifer wanted to work more hours but didn't have access to childcare because of the cost. She fell behind on rent and bills and was close to losing housing. Her mental health was suffering, and she was overwhelmed.

While participating in EcSA, Jennifer secured a full-time position with good benefits. This allowed her to focus on doing well in school. Jennifer made the dean's list each quarter and was invited to join Tacoma Community College's honor society as a student who is performing within the top 10% of the student body. She will finish her degree requirements this fall and is graduating with honors.

Jennifer was able to secure childcare through a subsidy program, which gave her the time she needed to work and go to school. The incentives have been great for not only motivation, but to catch up financially while transitioning into a better job.

## Recommendations

Based on results from the first two years of EcSA, along with feedback from local implementation leaders, Employment Security has three recommendations.

- Maintain high outcome standards as contractual requirements and work with an evaluator to assess their impact.
- Continue to support innovative local incentive payment models and evaluate their effectiveness.
- Continue pursuing data-sharing and federal reform requests.

**Maintain high outcome standards as contractual requirements of EcSA and work with an evaluator to assess their impact.** EcSA adheres to the highest outcome standards for poverty reduction programs. These include:

- Achieving a full self-sufficiency wage.
- Bundling workforce, education and human services.

- Recruiting customers from demographics who have historically been marginalized.

Most poverty reduction programs do not require self-sufficiency wages as a customer outcome. They also rarely require a coordinated approach to bundling services or recruiting for equity. EcSA makes self-sufficiency, bundled services and equity contractual requirements that are measured, tracked and regularly reviewed with local partners.

Employment Security's Data Architecture Transformation & Analysis division (DATA) is conducting a comprehensive evaluation of EcSA through June 2025. Developing and implementing a rigorous evaluation will help Employment Security understand EcSA's impact on equity and poverty reduction. It will also provide information about the impact of EcSA's strong accountability standards, which require providers to recruit for equity, to bundle multiple programs, and to help customers reach full self-sufficiency wages.

**Continue to support innovative local incentive payment models and evaluate their effectiveness.** Incentive payment models are still early in implementation and being tested, but initial data indicate they have potential. Employment Security's DATA division is conducting a formal evaluation of EcSA incentive models to assess their effectiveness and compare outcomes for customers receiving incentives against similar populations. These evaluations will be made available to all EcSA partners for learning and development. The results will also help inform which models get funded in the future.

**Continue pursuing data-sharing and waiver requests.** Employment Security should continue to work with federal, state and local partners to identify and remove barriers that hinder the ability of local programs to streamline access to services and benefits and identify federal reforms. Specifically:

- Employment Security and DSHS should continue working together to identify and address partnership barriers and unintended negative impacts to customers' SNAP, TANF and other benefits.
- Consistent with the language in the state law, shown below, Employment Security should continue to work with local, state, and federal partners to pursue federal reforms that would improve Washington's ability to help people move out of poverty with equity. To date, local and state-level partners, including state agencies and the Governor's Washington DC office, proposed reforms to streamline and improve federal programs. Congressman Derek Kilmer, in consultation with both U.S. Senators' offices, developed draft federal bill language to implement Washington's proposals. This work is nearing completion and may be ready to be introduced as a federal bill or federal amendment in the future.

- Employment Security
  - *(a) Shall identify federal reforms that would help persons served by economic security for all grants access the federal benefits they need more efficiently, avoid sudden benefit cuts as their earned income increases, and move from poverty to self-sufficiency more effectively; and*
  - *(b) May apply for federal waivers and propose federal law changes to make the authorizing environment better support coordinated service delivery across programs.*

## Customer Feedback

Employment Security has convened stakeholders for collaboration on a statewide tool to track participant input and methods for implementing feedback. This is a work in progress. As of the writing of this report, actions taken include:

- Asking LWDBs on existing tools and methods for tracking feedback.
- Identifying that multiple LWDBs currently track customer feedback in a universal program survey upon program completion, and that they use the feedback to improve program design and implementation.
- Convening the EcSA Technical Advisory Committee to discuss options for a statewide tracking tool.
- Researching best practices for tracking participant feedback and reporting back to the EcSA Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The discussions will continue monthly.
- Depending on funding for Employment Security, having statewide customer feedback tool in place by spring of 2025.