

Monitor Advocate System

(Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Services) fact sheet

Migrant seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs) are vital to Washington's agricultural production, especially during the peak harvest months of June through October.

System strives to ensure MSFWs equitable access to WorkSource centers and services

Employment Security Department's Monitor Advocate System is aimed at increasing MSFW access to employment services and helping them acquire new skills for jobs that offer higher wages and more stability than seasonal agricultural work.

Federal requirement ensures MSFWs have access to equivalent, proportionate services

A federal mandate (20 CFR 653.100) requires the Employment Security Department (ESD) to ensure that the workforce development system delivers employment services to MSFWs that are equivalent and proportionate to those provided to non-MSFWs. The federal mandate also ensures that MSFWs can access services in a way that meets their unique needs.

Because MSFWs experience barriers that often prevent them from being reached through normal office procedures, federal regulations require state workforce agencies to operate and oversee an outreach program aimed at serving MSFWs where they live, work and gather.

ESD must monitor its own compliance with these U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) regulations and report its performance quarterly.

Key components of the Monitor Advocate System

- Conducting outreach to MSFWs at their working, living, and gathering places
- Monitoring services provided to MSFWs at WorkSource Centers
- Facilitating the Employment Service and Employment-Related Law Complaint System, which helps resolve labor-related complaints
- Promoting the Agricultural Recruitment System for U.S. workers, which connects job seekers who need employment to employers who need workers

Washington has 9 'significant' MSFW offices

Washington is traditionally one of the top five states in the U.S. with the highest number of MSFW customers. We have nine “significant” MSFW WorkSource offices, defined by the USDOL as offices where at least 10% of its customers are MSFWs. Each significant MSFW office must employ full-time, year-round, bilingual staff who conduct outreach to MSFWs.

Table 1: Significant MSFW WorkSource offices in Washington

Office	Location
Central Basin	Moses Lake
Columbia Basin	Kennewick
Columbia Gorge	White Salmon
Okanogan	Omak
Skagit	Mount Vernon
Sunnyside	Sunnyside
Walla Walla	Walla Walla
Wenatchee	Wenatchee
Yakima	Union Gap

Source: Washington ESD

MSFW outreach staff have myriad responsibilities

MSFW staff are responsible for conducting vigorous outreach to MSFWs where they work, live and gather. Outreach staff offer all services available at local WorkSource offices, including referrals to jobs and training, and support services. They also inform MSFWs about:

- Their basic rights
- The rights of farmworkers
- Other organizations serving MSFWs in the area
- How to file a complaint

In addition, MSFW staff observe and report unlawful working and living conditions, and maintain complete records of contacts with MSFWs and possible violations observed.

WorkSource office staff provide significant assistance

All WorkSource staff members are responsible for serving MSFW customers and must be trained in identifying MSFWs, serving MSFWs, and making referrals to community resources regardless of whether they are a significant MSFW office.

- Provide adequate assistance to MSFWs to access job order information easily and efficiently
- Provide assistance to MSFWs in their native language, whenever requested or necessary
- Provide MSFWs a list of available career and supportive services in their native language
- Significant MSFW offices must have bilingual staff available to serve farmworkers

Staff make frequent contact with agricultural employers

MSFW outreach and WorkSource business services staff make frequent contact with agricultural employers to inquire about current labor needs and offer information about creating job orders with WorkSource. MSFW outreach and WorkSource staff refer qualified job seekers to agricultural employers and follow up with both to confirm job placement.

State Monitor Advocate conducts service delivery reviews

Washington state employs a full-time State Monitor Advocate (SMA), who conducts ongoing reviews of ESD's employment services delivery. The SMA also reviews federal regulation protections afforded to MSFWs.

The SMA reports performance data to the USDOL. It also:

- Handles MSFW complaints
- Regularly meets with MSFW customers, agricultural employers and stakeholders
- Advises ESD of problems, deficiencies and improper practices in its service delivery to MSFWs

ESD division coordinates Wagner-Peyser plan

ESD's Employment Connections Division maintains a team of program operators delegated the responsibility for overseeing statewide operation and coordination of key employment programs, services and populations, including services to MSFWs, served within the local one-stop delivery system. It coordinates the development and implementation of the Wagner-Peyser Agricultural Outreach Plan in order to assist MSFW significant offices in setting annual targets for outreach and other MSFW service-related goals. It also provides statewide guidance and training to ensure that we meet Department of Labor requirements.

Agricultural and Seasonal Workforce Services Office (ASWS) oversees H-2A program

The [ASWS Office](#) was created by legislation in 2019 to carry out ESD's oversight and outreach responsibilities as they pertain to the H-2A program. Its role is to provide adequate protection for foreign and domestic workers and provide education and outreach opportunities to help the agricultural industry maintain the stable workforce they need. The legislation also established an advisory committee composed of members representing farmworkers and employers to oversee the office's activities and to provide input and guidance to the office.

Learn more

Visit our website: [Services for Farmworkers & Agricultural Employers](#)

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