

Economic Security for All

A modern approach to poverty reduction

Economic Security for All (EcSA) is a program for helping people move out of poverty into careers that pay full self-sufficiency wages. It also helps participants achieve post-secondary education credentials and housing security.

EcSA served 3,050 people from July 2022 to June 2024:

- 69% had annual incomes below \$10,000 when they enrolled.
- 11% were unhoused.
- 46% were people of color.
- Participants achieved a median annual income of \$49,296.
- 953 participants were trained in a variety of high-demand fields, such as medical, manufacturing and construction.

Unique design elements

Every EcSA participant receives:

- A customized career plan to reach their own self-sufficiency goal (SSG), using the [University of Washington Self-Sufficiency Calculator](#). Based on the customer's need, this includes education and training, subsidized employment, direct job entry, and other services.
- Coordinated access to a broad array of education, workforce and social services using a bundled services model.

No other poverty program requires every participant to receive these two services.

Local Workforce Development Boards and service providers:

- Conduct outreach and recruit people from marginalized communities.
- Innovate with flexibility, while maintaining accountability for results.
- Track results quarterly and adjust to ensure performance for the customers.

Cross-agency partnerships

Four other state agencies have reached out to be part of EcSA:

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) and the Department of Social & Health Services have data sharing agreements and cooperative cross-program access.

The Department of Labor & Industries is exploring an EcSA partnership for injured workers.

The Department of Commerce has an interagency agreement for EcSA to serve its Community Reinvestment Fund participants.

Through these partnerships, many EcSA participants receive:

- Streamlined financial aid eligibility through WSAC's Washington College Grant-Connect partnership, without completing a federal financial aid form (FAFSA).
- \$1,000 per month incentive payments while working on their career plan.
- A 2-to-1 Matched Investment Savings Account to build savings toward assets, such as a home, education or starting a business.
- Small business grants focused on businesses owned by Black, Latine or tribal members.

Background

EcSA was designed in partnership with people experiencing poverty. They reported that most programs place them in insecure poverty-wage jobs and make it difficult to access services from multiple programs. To reduce those barriers, Washington's Local Workforce Development Boards coordinate services. They focus on higher-wage careers and long-term supportive services.

The EcSA program began in 2019. It became a state law with nearly unanimous votes in the Legislature in 2024. Its performance outcomes consistently exceed its targets, with external and internal evaluations verifying that record of success.

EcSA has been highlighted as a national best practice by the U.S. Department of Labor, awarded an Equity Star Award by the State Office of Equity, and highlighted as a top priority by the Economic Justice Alliance and the state's Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board.

Learn more

- [EcSA 2024 legislative report from the Employment Security Department \(PDF, 504KB\)](#)
- Employment Security Department's EcSA office: ESDGPWorkforceInitiatives@esd.wa.gov