

RCW 43.330.080 Coordination of community and economic development services—Contracts with county-designated associate development organizations—Scope of services—Business services training.

(1) (a) The department must contract with county-designated associate development organizations to increase the support for and coordination of community and economic development services in communities or regional areas. The contracting organizations in each community or regional area must:

(i) Be broadly representative of community and economic interests;

(ii) Be capable of identifying key economic and community development problems, developing appropriate solutions, and mobilizing broad support for recommended initiatives;

(iii) Work closely with the department to carry out state-identified economic development priorities;

(iv) Work with and include local governments, local chambers of commerce, workforce development councils, port districts, labor groups, institutions of higher education, community action programs, and other appropriate private, public, or nonprofit community and economic development groups; and

(v) Meet and share best practices with other associate development organizations at least two times each year.

(b) The scope of services delivered under the contracts required in (a) of this subsection must include two broad areas of work:

(i) Direct assistance, including business planning, to companies throughout the county who need support to stay in business, expand, or relocate to Washington from out of state or other countries.

Assistance must comply with business recruitment and retention protocols established in RCW 43.330.062, and includes:

(A) Working with the appropriate partners throughout the county including, but not limited to, local governments, workforce development councils, port districts, community and technical colleges and higher education institutions, export assistance providers, impact Washington, the Washington state quality award council, small business assistance programs, innovation partnership zones, and other federal, state, and local programs to facilitate the alignment of planning efforts and the seamless delivery of business support services within the entire county;

(B) Providing information on state and local permitting processes, tax issues, export assistance, and other essential information for operating, expanding, or locating a business in Washington;

(C) Marketing Washington and local areas as excellent locations to expand or relocate a business and positioning Washington as a globally competitive place to grow business, which may include developing and executing regional plans to attract companies from out of state;

(D) Working with businesses on-site location and selection assistance;

(E) Providing business retention and expansion services throughout the county. Such services must include, but are not limited to, business outreach and monitoring efforts to identify and address challenges and opportunities faced by businesses, assistance to trade impacted businesses in applying for grants from the federal trade adjustment assistance for firms program, and the provision of information to businesses on:

(I) Resources available for microenterprise development;

(II) Resources available on the revitalization of commercial districts; and

(III) The opportunity to maintain jobs through shared work programs authorized under chapter 50.60 RCW;

(F) Participating in economic development systemwide discussions regarding gaps in business start-up assistance in Washington;

(G) Providing or facilitating the provision of export assistance through workshops or one-on-one assistance; and

(H) Using a web-based information system to track data on business recruitment, retention, expansion, and trade; and

(ii) Support for regional economic research and regional planning efforts to implement target industry sector strategies and other economic development strategies, including cluster-based strategies. Research and planning efforts should support increased living standards and increased foreign direct investment, and be aligned with the statewide economic development strategy. Regional associate development organizations retain their independence to address local concerns and goals. Activities include:

(A) Participating in regional planning efforts with workforce development councils involving coordinated strategies around workforce development and economic development policies and programs. Coordinated planning efforts must include, but not be limited to, assistance to industry clusters in the region;

(B) Participating with the state board for community and technical colleges as created in RCW 28B.50.050, and any community and technical colleges in the coordination of the job skills training program and the customized training program within its region;

(C) Collecting and reporting data as specified by the contract with the department for statewide systemic analysis. In cooperation with other local, regional, and state planning efforts, contracting organizations may provide insight into the needs of target industry clusters, business expansion plans, early detection of potential relocations or layoffs, training needs, and other appropriate economic information;

(D) In conjunction with other governmental jurisdictions and institutions, participating in the development of a countywide economic development plan.

(2) The department must provide business services training to the contracting organizations, including but not limited to:

(a) Training in the fundamentals of export assistance and the services available from private and public export assistance providers in the state; and

(b) Training in the provision of business retention and expansion services as required by subsection (1)(b)(i)(E) of this section.

[2014 c 112 s 111; 2012 c 195 s 1; 2011 c 286 s 2; 2009 c 151 s 10; 2007 c 249 s 2; 1997 c 60 s 1; 1993 c 280 s 11.]

Findings—Intent—2007 c 249: "The legislature finds that economic development success requires coordinated state and local efforts. The legislature further finds that economic development happens at the local level. County-designated associate development organizations serve as a networking tool and resource hub for business retention, expansion, and relocation in Washington. Economic development success requires an adequately funded and coordinated state effort and an adequately funded and coordinated local effort. The legislature

intends to bolster the partnership between state and local economic development efforts, provide increased funding for local economic development services, and increase local economic development service effectiveness, efficiency, and outcomes." [2007 c 249 s 1.]