

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Economic Security for All

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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.¹

EcSA is a poverty reduction model that coordinates existing programs to increase their collective ability to support low-income Washingtonians in their pursuit of 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, includes the voices of those who have experienced poverty, and is convened and coordinated by Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs). 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, based on recommendations from the Poverty Reduction Work Group to provide a more human centered approach to poverty reduction. Additional WIOA funding was designated in 2020 and 2021 which led to the statewide expansion of the program, bringing services to communities throughout Washington.

In July 2022, EcSA began receiving state funding to continue the program. In response, Employment Security and LWDB partners committed to serving an additional 925 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 1,324 customers, and again, exceeded this goal. From July to March 2024, EcSA's performance has exceeded targets for enrollments, training, people reaching self-sufficiency, and spending.

Highlights for July 2023 through March 2024

- Enrolled and established personalized self-sufficiency wage goals for 1,786 customers.
- Increased outreach to and participation of historically marginalized populations and unhoused individuals. Through March 2024, over half of EcSA participants were people of color and 11% unhoused.
- Placed 486 customers in training that leads to employment at self-sufficiency earnings.
- 442 customers have obtained employment at self-sufficiency earnings.

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

- Median annualized earnings for those exiting the program with employment is \$42,300. This is for a population starting in poverty, 68% of whom had income below \$10,000 at the time of enrollment.
- As this model has matured, partners leverage other funding to grow and expand our network of providers. The Washington State Department of Commerce awarded a \$50 million grant to Employment Security to expand Career Accelerator Incentives to program participants and increase business service activities with a focus on Black, Latino and Indigenous populations.
- The EcSA program became a permanent grant program through legislation passed in March 2024.² The new legislation identifies and removes barriers included in the original provisos and specifies additional mandates and partnerships for FY25 funding and beyond. Employment Security will operationalize the new elements in collaboration with specified partners.
- Employment Security and the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) finalized a partnership that offers EcSA participants automatic income eligibility through Washington College Grant – Connect. This automatic eligibility allows 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.

Background

Economic Security for All (EcSA) is a poverty reduction model that coordinates existing programs to increase their collective ability to support low-income Washingtonians in their pursuit of 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.

² [Substitute House Bill 2230, ch. 92, Laws of 2024](#)

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, and is convened and coordinated by Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs).

Low-income services with an equity focus

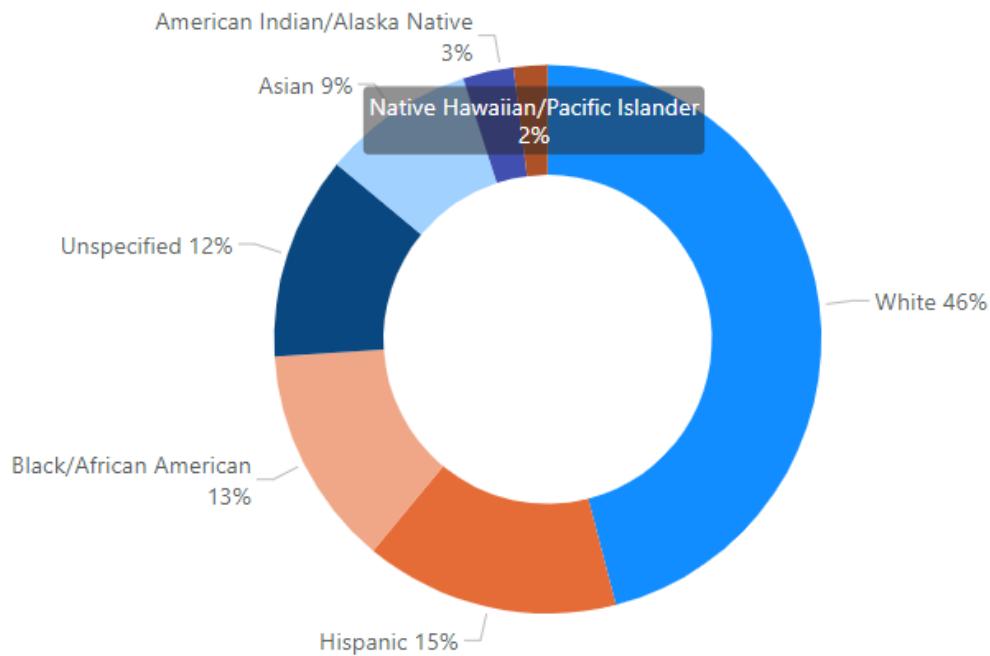
Over 1.8 million Washingtonians, 26% of the state's population, are currently living in households that earn less than 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). Of those, more than 500,000 are children, a number greater than the populations of the cities of Spokane and Tacoma combined.³

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.

- Over half of the people served are people of color — compared to 22% of the statewide population.
- 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.

³ DSHS analysis of 2020 American Community Survey data, using the SNAP threshold of 200% FPL as the poverty line.

Self-Reported Participant Race/Ethnicity



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 & 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

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

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

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.

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

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 the Washington Student Achievement Council (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

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 those every quarter.

Highlights

Employment Security and LWDB partners committed to serving an additional 1,324 customers at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) with EcSA funding for fiscal year 2024. Through the end of the third quarter of performance (March 31, 2024), EcSA has exceeded the third quarter enrollment, training and attaining self-sufficiency commitment and is on track to enroll far more customers than anticipated by the end the fiscal year. Below is a summary of key program indicators for the third quarter of FY24 (July 1, 2023, through March 31, 2024):

- Enrolled and established personalized self-sufficiency wage goals for 1786 customers.
- Focused on historically marginalized populations for customer recruitment.
- Served over 50% people of color and 11% unhoused.
- Placed 486 customers in training that leads to employment at self-sufficiency earnings.
- Helped 442 customers obtain employment at self-sufficiency earnings.
- 88% of participants completing the program attain their self-sufficiency goal.
- The median annualized earnings for those exiting the program with employment is \$42,300. This is for a population starting in poverty, 68% of whom had income below \$10,000 at the time of enrollment.

Program Enrollments

Through March 2024, a total of 1,786 customers have been enrolled into EcSA which is twice the planned target for enrollments through the first three quarters of the program year. 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.

Enrollments over life of the program.

LWDB	Year 1 target	Year 1 actual	Year 2 3rd quarter cumulative target	Year 2 3rd quarter cumulative actual	Total actual July 2022 – March 2024
Olympic	57	95	65	134	229
Pacific Mountain	79	128	74	114	242
Northwest	7	88	115	141	229
Snohomish	72	80	65	81	161
Seattle-King	136	259	193	433	692
Tacoma-Pierce	155	162	95	239	435
Southwest	156	188	66	199	387
North Central	40	42	44	84	126
South Central	64	64	60	93	157
Eastern ⁴	N/A	N/A	15	19	19
Benton-Franklin	59	72	30	102	174
Spokane	106	107	62	147	254
Statewide Total	931	1285	884	1786	3105

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 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity (WIOA) programs. EcSA training funding is used to fill the gap when there is unmet need or when a training does not qualify for other resources.

Through March 2024, a total of 486 customers 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.

⁴ Eastern did not participate in the state EcSA program the first year.

Customers receiving training over life of the program.

LWDB	Year 1 Target	Year 1 Actual	Year 2 3rd Quarter Target	Year 2 3rd Quarter Actual	Total Actual July 2022- March 2024*
Olympic	9	51	15	58	109
Pacific Mountain	41	49	24	36	85
Northwest	3	32	45	45	77
Snohomish	21	21	8	1	22
Seattle-King	51	138	20	72	210
Tacoma-Pierce	117	54	41	61	141
Southwest	96	9	25	45	54
North Central	40	36	44	60	96
South Central	40	45	54	53	98
Eastern			3	0	0
Benton-Franklin	25	32	8	23	55
Spokane	29	26	12	32	58
Statewide Total	472	493	299	486	1005

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

Placements in employment with self-sufficiency earnings

Through March 2024, local EcSA models have helped 442 customers obtain jobs that pay self-sufficient wages. This is 172% of the statewide target of 256. 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 3rd Quarter Target	Year 2 3rd Quarter Actual	Total Actual July 2022- March 2024
Olympic	14	37	52	30	67
Pacific Mountain	34	55	20	21	76
Northwest	3	12	19	42	54
Snohomish	51	19	18	41	60
Seattle-King	34	106	10	86	192
Tacoma-Pierce	69	43	40	57	78
Southwest	86	50	20	73	123
North Central	20	11	12	22	33
South Central	22	21	24	17	38
Eastern			10	1	1

LWDB	Year 1 Target	Year 1 Actual	Year 2 3rd Quarter Target	Year 2 3rd Quarter Actual	Total Actual July 2022-March 2024
Benton-Franklin	36	36	16	9	45
Spokane	8	34	15	43	77
Statewide Total	377	424	256	442	844

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, child care, 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	Support Services Year 1	Career Services Year 2 Q3	Support Services Year 2 Q3	Total Career Services Actual July 2022-Mar 2024	Total Support Services Actual July 2022-Mar 2024
Olympic	156	188	292	127	292	419
Pacific Mountain	136	135	124	9	124	133
Northwest	77	143	58	18	58	76
Snohomish	107	3	320	26	320	346
Seattle-King	704	99	678	93	678	771
Tacoma-Pierce	430	57	282	174	282	456
Southwest	261	19	724	110	724	834
North Central	34	147	51	52	51	103
South Central	316	137	466	93	466	559
Eastern	N/A	N/A	69	33	69	102
Benton-Franklin	336	70	235	51	235	286
Spokane	414	83	486	30	486	516
Statewide Total	2971	1081	3785	816	3785	4601

Expenditures

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

LWDB	Year 1 Total Contract	Year 1 Total Expenditures	Year 2 3rd Quarter Spending Target	Year 2 3rd Quarter Cumulative Spending Actual	Total Actual Spending July 2022- March 2024
Olympic	\$343,207	\$339,601	\$203,683	\$283,333	\$622,934
Pacific Mountain	\$522,444	\$522,430	\$289,866	\$288,074	\$810,505
Northwest	\$69,694	\$69,694	\$142,520	\$170,131	\$239,825
Snohomish	\$591,165	\$570,541	\$430,123	\$334,967	\$905,508
Seattle-King	\$1,039,448	\$1,020,825	\$917,208	\$945,955	\$1,966,780
Tacoma-Pierce	\$745,364	\$745,364	\$545,000	\$428,121	\$1,173,485
Southwest	\$557,764	\$557,764	\$351,038	\$317,047	\$874,811
North Central	\$518,711	\$518,711	\$253,139	\$280,864	\$799,575
South Central	\$552,518	\$542,731	\$326,650	\$394,850	\$937,580
Eastern	N/A	N/A	\$88,656	\$105,397	\$105,397
Benton-Franklin	\$459,166	\$443,123	\$218,625	\$142,727	\$585,850
Spokane	\$613,519	\$613,519	\$339,500	\$320,863	\$934,383
Statewide Total	\$6,013,000	\$5,944,303	\$4,106,008	\$4,012,330	\$9,956,634

Breakdown of direct service expenditures for participants: (Year 2, 3rd quarter – July 2023-
March 2024)

LWDB	Career Services	Training	Incentive	Child Care	Transport- ation	Housing	Auto Repair	Other ⁵
Olympic	\$25,819	\$34,171	\$35,250	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,938
Pac Mtn	\$165,678	\$38,748	\$82,400	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,247
Northwest	\$55,746	\$17,467	\$72,500	\$0	\$0	\$3,953	\$0	\$908
Snohomish	\$239,097	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$17,329
Seattle-King	\$0	\$0	\$110,762	\$0	\$2,467	\$1,318	\$0	\$15,085
Tacoma-Pierce	\$182,897	\$217,735	\$0	\$0	\$3,395	\$54,563	\$0	\$15,251
Southwest	\$189,258	\$13,324	\$0	\$0	\$4,018	\$1,200	\$4,300	\$10,814
North Central	\$130,722	\$19,821	\$139,000	\$0	\$2,907	\$4,216	\$0	\$5,166
South Central	\$998	\$79,677	\$0	\$0	\$2,450	\$2,265	\$1,400	\$6,707
Eastern	\$69,818	\$26,093	\$0	\$0	\$957	\$8,436	\$231	\$1,498
Benton Franklin	\$0	\$49,685	\$0	\$0	\$719	\$3,900	\$249	\$10,670
Spokane	\$277,121	\$39,416	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,000	\$0	\$2,826
Statewide Total	\$1,337,154	\$536,137	\$439,912	\$0	\$16,913	\$94,851	\$6,180	\$95,439

⁵ 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.

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% of the federal poverty level (FPL).⁶ 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 third quarter, momentum accelerated and LWDBs began surpassing their enrollment targets. Below is the performance and spending for the first three quarters of FY24.

Enrollments from July 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024.

LWDB	Year 2 3rd Quarter Target	Year 2 3rd Quarter Actual
Olympic	8	2
Pacific Mountain	10	12
Northwest	1	9
Snohomish	21	21
Seattle-King	25	61
Tacoma-Pierce	20	31
Southwest	20	47
North Central	17	14
South Central	13	6
Eastern	7	1
Benton-Franklin	10	9
Spokane	20	22
Statewide Total	172	235

Trainings from July 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024.

LWDB	Year 2 3rd Quarter Target	Year 2 3rd Quarter Actual
Olympic	8	0
Pacific Mountain	7	5
Northwest	0	9
Snohomish	6	3
Seattle-King	10	14
Tacoma-Pierce	2	11
Southwest	5	7

⁶ [Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5187 \(225\) \(13\) \(a\), ch 475, Laws of 2023](#)

LWDB	Year 2 3rd Quarter Target	Year 2 3rd Quarter Actual
North Central	17	15
South Central	16	2
Eastern	3	0
Benton-Franklin	6	3
Spokane	6	11
Statewide Total	86	80

Reaching self-sufficiency from July 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024.

LWDB	Year 2 3rd Quarter Target	Year 2 3rd Quarter Actual
Olympic	8	0
Pacific Mountain	2	0
Northwest	0	0
Snohomish	3	1
Seattle-King	0	2
Tacoma-Pierce	10	0
Southwest	10	12
North Central	2	0
South Central	2	0
Eastern	6	0
Benton-Franklin	7	3
Spokane	3	1
Statewide Total	53	19

Total expenditures from July 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024.

LWDB	Year 2 3rd Quarter Spending Target	Year 2 3rd Quarter Spending Actual
Olympic	\$46,747	\$22,140
Pacific Mountain	\$90,236	\$58,409
Northwest	\$4,088	\$4,410
Snohomish	\$166,160	\$93,017
Seattle-King	\$302,482	\$194,515
Tacoma-Pierce	\$200,000	\$66,322
Southwest	\$149,558	\$149,281
North Central	\$128,300	\$113,867
South Central	\$99,802	\$95,662

LWDB	Year 2 3rd Quarter Spending Target	Year 2 3rd Quarter Spending Actual
Eastern	\$47,887	\$15,575
Benton-Franklin	\$90,361	\$55,256
Spokane	\$143,000	\$135,681
Statewide Total	\$1,468,621	\$1,004,134

Breakdown of direct service expenditures for participants: (Year 2, 3rd quarter – July 2023-March 2024)

LWDB	Career Services	Training	Incentive	Child Care	Transport- ation	Housing	Auto Repair	Other ⁷
Olympic	\$7,245	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Pac Mtn	\$46,595	\$0	\$11,600	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$214
Northwest	\$0	\$0	\$200	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Snohomish	\$8,225	\$0	\$15,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,532
Seattle-King	\$0	\$4,116	\$27,000	\$0	\$100	\$2,125	\$1,662	\$2,637
Tacoma-Pierce	\$56,403	\$26,045	\$0	\$0	\$103	\$3,280	\$0	\$2,182
Southwest	\$109,125	\$4,870	\$0	\$0	\$575	\$0	\$0	\$1,620
North Central	\$53,986	\$36,234	\$22,500	\$0	\$1,705	\$0	\$0	\$633
South Central	\$88	\$13,966	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Eastern	\$16,047	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$17
Benton Franklin	\$0	\$9,547	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,049
Spokane	\$118,465	\$16,892	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$324
Statewide Total	\$416,179	\$111,670	\$77,300	\$0	\$2,483	\$5,405	\$1,662	\$15,208

⁷ 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.

Participant Stories

Mercedes - Benton-Franklin

When Mercedes entered the EcSA program, she was unemployed and did not have the funds to pay for her basic needs. Mercedes's goal was to become a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) so she could support her family, but she didn't have money for tuition.

Staff worked with Mercedes to enroll her in training, which she began in August at Columbia Safety and successfully completed in May. During her enrollment, Mercedes received tuition assistance, career and vocational counseling, self-sufficiency wage goal assistance, work readiness strategies, mentorship and financial support for fuel, clothing, and hygiene items.

Mercedes is now working full-time at Trios Health as a Nursing Assistant and earning \$17.72 an hour with benefits. She is on track to be self-reliant — for herself and her family — and off public assistance benefits.

Benjamin - South Central

Benjamin is a 37-year-old who was co-enrolled in the WIOA Adult and EcSA programs. Benjamin was justice-involved for 14 years and upon re-entering the community, felt lost and didn't know what his next steps would be. His probation officer informed him of People for People, a community-based organization, and how he could receive help and training to get back on his feet. Benjamin's career coach worked with him on a career plan and a unique self-sufficiency wage goal. Together, they determined the best career pathway for Benjamin would be to acquire a commercial driver's license (CDL). He attended training at Pacific Northwest trucking school and was very focused and motivated, completing his training faster than expected and achieved his CDL-A license along with several special endorsements.

Benjamin immediately began his job search and worked diligently on his resume, going to businesses in person to ask about opportunities. He became employed with Williams Inland Distributors making a self-sufficient wage. Benjamin shared that he was most excited about the opportunity to assist his mother with rent and bills. He has also offered to speak with other justice-involved individuals to discuss his transition back into the community and the mindset he needed to overcome the barriers he was facing.

Stacy - Snohomish

In September 2022, Stacy was laid off from their position as a barista making \$14.50 an hour. They attempted to seek new employment for several months and at one point feeling defeated, Stacy dropped out of their work search entirely. At the time of their EcSA enrollment, Stacy had been unemployed for over six months; as a young single parent they had to rely on public assistance along with friend and family support. Stacy and their career coach dove into creating a plan to look further into their interest in obtaining a CDL.

The career coach set up informational interviews with CDL employers so Stacy could learn about what having a CDL entails, the types of jobs available and to decide if the career would be a good fit. During Stacy's program enrollment, the career coach worked with them to create an employment plan, developing manageable steps on a timeline to achieve their goal. Stacey received a customized self-sufficiency wage goal, career counseling, resource navigation, resume reviews as well as desktide job search assistance and coaching on how to navigate interviews and job offers. Stacy also received the following funded services: fuel for training, clothing for their new job, Hazmat Background Check for Training, CDL-A Occupational Skills Training with a Hazmat Endorsement and CDL testing and licensing cost.

In October 2023, Stacy achieved their goal of being a fully licensed CDL and obtained employment making \$30.38 an hour at 40 hours a week. This is a \$15.88/hour increase from their prior position as a barista. Stacy is proud of their achievements and is excited for their future. Stacy is now earning a wage that can better support themselves and their family.

Julia - Northwest

Julia is the parent of an adult daughter with special needs. Aside from her husband's Social Security benefits, she is the sole source of financial support for her family. Julia had just completed her first year of the Medical Assisting program at Whatcom Community College when it became clear she would have to get more financial aid or drop out. Julia came to WorkSource with hopes of assistance and connected with the Northwest Workforce Council (NWC).

After learning how the EcSA program could help with her training and with financial resiliency classes, Julia saw a path to continue with her Medical Assisting program. She was also happy to find that she and her family would be able to learn the financial skills they lacked. Julia worked with a career coach to define a unique self-sufficiency goal for her family and was approved for training. NWC helped fund her second-year tuition and provided a watch, stethoscope, scrubs and shoes, along with covering the cost of her tests and certification. Julia's car broke down in

February, again causing a financial strain. EcSA provided funds to help repair her car so she could continue with her training program.

Julia began her year-long financial resilience training as part of the cohort that started in October 2023. Motivated to learn from her past financial decisions, Julia completed her Financial Literacy and Renters Education (FLARE) classes taught as part of EcSA. She also has a mentor who she will work with to set her financial goals. Julia is excited to learn financial skills and feels it would be a great benefit for her and her family.

Julia completed her Medical Assisting program in June 2023, passed her certification exams, and is now working full-time at PeaceHealth as a Medical Assistant. She earned \$1,000 in incentives for getting and retaining full-time work. Julia's enthusiastic approach to financial literacy, especially her active and positive participation in FLARE, has helped to make this cohort the most energetic and lively yet.

Recommendations

Based on results from the first year and three quarters 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 waiver 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 us understand the impact of EcSA 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. 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.
- They should continue to pursue data-sharing agreements, federal waiver requests and other remedies as appropriate.