

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

**Resources to Initiate Successful Employment (RISE)
Preliminary Report**

Chapter 299, Laws of 2018 (Section 207)

January 1, 2019

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chapter 299, Laws of 2018 (ESSB 6032 Section 207 (14)) requires the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS or the Department) to provide to the Legislature, by January 1, 2019, a preliminary report of its findings of the impact of the Resources to Initiate Successful Employment (RISE) program on increasing employment. This report covers the period of October 2016 through September 2017. A final report is to be submitted by June 30, 2019.

OVERVIEW

The Washington State Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) program, supported by federal match funds, provides job search, job search training, educational services, skills training, and other employment opportunities to Basic Food (also known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) recipients who are not receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or state-funded food assistance. Services are provided through community or technical colleges and community-based organizations (CBOs). Washington's BFET program is regarded as the national model for SNAP employment and training (E&T) services to help recipients reach their full potential.

Resources to Initiate Successful Employment (RISE) is a three year, \$22-million-dollar pilot program funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The grant was awarded to DSHS in March 2015 and is set to end December 2018. RISE fills the gap currently experienced by BFET participants who face multiple barriers and lack the work experience needed to obtain employment leading to self-sufficiency.

There are fundamental differences in these two employment and training programs. Typically, BFET participants are ready to engage in employment. However RISE participants must reduce barriers (often times several) before they are ready to engage in employment. Therefore, the primary focus of the RISE pilot is reducing barriers to employment through a standardized approach of Comprehensive Case Management (CCM), Strategies for Success (SFS), and Work-Based Learning (WBL) activities.

CCM includes coaching, navigation, and referral to other services as needed. Participants are contacted weekly by case managers to keep participants engaged.

SFS are instructor-led discussions which include topics such as work-life balance, stress management, problem solving, and critical thinking to assist individuals in dealing with the demands of everyday life. These additional services will assist participants in barrier resolution and gaining experience needed to become self-sufficient.

WBL can include unsubsidized and subsidized employment, pre-apprenticeships, work-study, internships, exploration and development of a career pathway, and the integration of vocational skills and employability skills with on-the-job training, community jobs, transitional jobs, and employer engagement.

PILOT OUTCOMES

RISE is part of a national study on the effectiveness of SNAP E&T programs. The USDA FNS contracted with an external research company, Mathematica, to conduct a longitudinal evaluation of each E&T pilot project granted across 10 states. Mathematica's pilot study evaluation will be submitted to Congress as a final report by March 31, 2021. State agencies awarded pilot grants are contractually restricted from reporting specific outcomes of the pilot, including the number of participants who secured employment, until Mathematica's final report is published in 2021¹.

USDA has submitted annual reports to Congress evaluating the ten SNAP Employment and Training Pilots, including Washington state DSHS RISE program, since FFY 2015. These reports, including the most recent: "*Third Annual Report to Congress – FY2017*," can be found at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/2014-ET-Pilots>.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (commonly known as the "Farm Bill") authorized \$200 million to fund 10 pilots, testing innovative approaches to:

- Increase the number of SNAP (known in Washington as Basic Food) work registrants accessing E&T programs
- Increase the overall earned income of Basic Food recipients
- Reduce Basic Food recipients' reliance on public assistance

¹ USDA FNS Office of Employment and Training Notice to Grantees, July 18, 2016

- Inform policy makers about the effectiveness of SNAP E&T in determining the future of work programs for upcoming Farm Bill reauthorizations

Washington's RISE pilot is a collaboration between DSHS and external partners (Appendix A), with the focus of enhancing the current BFET program. RISE offers enhanced services using a random assignment methodology, assigning participants to the treatment group (RISE) or the control group (BFET). In the pilot counties: King, Pierce, Spokane and Yakima, RISE participants have an opportunity to receive existing BFET services as well as RISE enhanced services:

- CCM focused on reducing barriers to employment
- Enhanced life skills training through SFS
- WBL opportunities

THE RISE PARTICIPANT

The targeted population for RISE are work registrants who are (Appendix B):

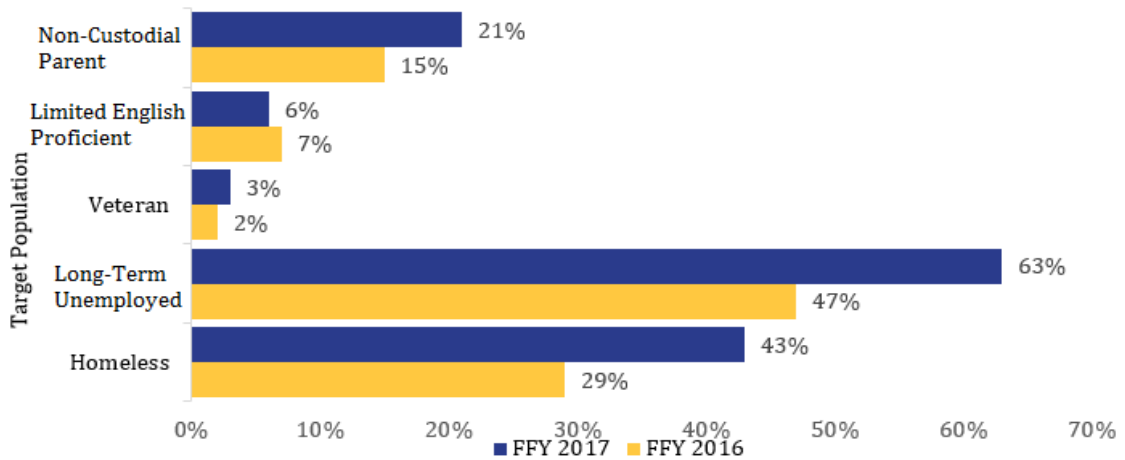
- Homeless;
- Limited English Proficient;
- Long-term unemployed (12 months or longer);
- Non-custodial parents owing child-support arrears; and
- Veterans

Work registrants are individuals who receive Basic Food and are:

- Age sixteen through fifty-nine with dependents;
- Age sixteen or seventeen, not attending secondary school and not the head-of-household
- Age fifty through fifty-nine with no dependents; or
- Age eighteen through forty-nine, able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD)

The following chart reflects a comparison of enrolled participants in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2016 and FFY 2017 by target population.

RISE Population Comparison²



Barrier Reduction

A person is eligible for RISE if they live in one of the pilot counties and are identified with a critical and/or general barriers. Eligible participants report barriers during initial intake, which must include at least one “critical barrier,” or three or more “general barriers,” as defined in the chart below:

Critical Barriers	General Barriers
Chemical Dependency	Special Needs Children
Child Welfare Involvement	No High School Diploma/High School Equivalency
Criminal Records Affecting Employment	Housing
Domestic Violence	Learning Disability
Mental Health Illness	Limited English Proficiency
Physical Health Illness	Shallow or Non-Existent Employment History
	Child Support Obligations
	Employment Verification Requirements
	Resource Deficiency
	Skills Deficiency
	Veterans Discharge Status

² Source, ESA-EMAPS Report using Aces Data Warehouse, September 2017

The average RISE participant is between the ages of 31 and 50 and has three or more barriers to employment. Case managers work with participants on barrier reduction through continued communication and mentoring while facilitating increased access to resources and participant reimbursement supports.

PROJECT TRAINING AND SUPPORT

In collaboration with providers, DSHS facilitated two comprehensive case management trainings to increase successes in working with high-barrier participants: *Neuroscience, Epigenetics, ACEs and Resilience (NEAR) Science* and *Mental/Behavior Health and Domestic Violence*.

Neuroscience, Epigenetics, ACEs and Resilience (NEAR) Science: A three-day case management training was conducted in May 2017, focusing on NEAR Science, developing better understanding of the brain and behaviors of individuals. Kody Russell, MSW, Kitsap Strong Project Director and Michael O'Neil, Healthy Communities Lead, Cowlitz County Health & Human Services conducted the training. Louisa Erickson, DSHS Workforce Innovations and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program Administrator, conducted a NEAR Science Skills-Building session on:

- Capacity Building Across Multiple Domains
- Executive Functioning Skills
- Practical Application for Case Management

Mental/Behavioral Health and Domestic Violence: A second case management training was conducted in August 2017, focused on impacts of mental health and domestic violence on an individual's ability to reduce barriers and successfully engage in activities. Tony O'Leary LMHC, Office Chief of DSHS Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery and Kelli Robinson MBA, Executive Director of Our Sisters House conducted the training.

BUDGET

The RISE Pilot is 100% federally funded by USDA FNS. Expenditures in FFY17 totaled \$5,992,362. The initial grant application projected costs per participant at \$3,111. Upon review of FFY16 expenses, a grant amendment was approved by FNS, increasing the average cost per participant to \$5,500.

Specific line-item expenditures include:

Salaries and Benefits - Monetary and non-monetary value provided as payment for working for RISE providers.

Goods and Services – Goods refer to items that are tangible; services are activities provided by others.

Travel - The RISE project has a yearly conference and a statewide quarterly meeting. Each provider has a travel budget covering travel and per diem to ensure their team members are able to attend these mandatory events.

Indirect costs - Costs that are not directly accountable to the cost of the project and may be fixed or variable.

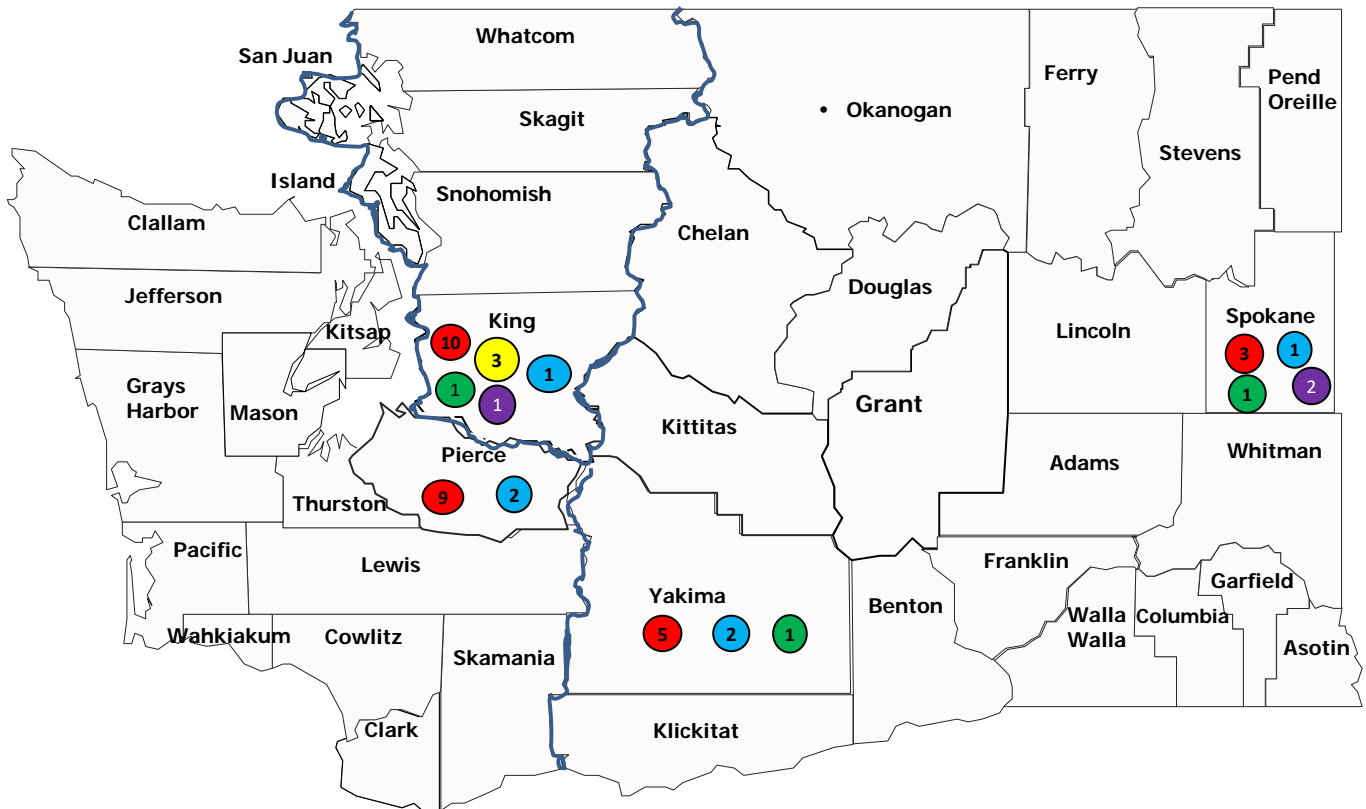
WBL - WBL employer salaries are monetary payments to reimburse providers for wages paid to participants of subsidized or partially-subsidized employment opportunities.

Client Services - Costs relating to serving the participants. Examples of these costs include printing, marketing, supplies, etc.

APPENDIX A

RISE Pilot County Service Map

Resources to Initiate Successful Employment (RISE) in Washington



Community Based Org	Workforce Development Council	Colleges	ESD SFS	CBO SFS
27	3	3	6	3

Providers by County

KING COUNTY

Adonai Counseling and Employment Inc.
Apprenticeship & Non-Traditional Employment for Women (ANEW)
Career Path Services (CPS)
FareStart
Highline College
Multi-Service Center (MSC)
Neighborhood House
North Seattle College
Partner in Employment (PIE)
Puget Sound Training Center (PSTC)
Seattle Goodwill Industries (SGI)
South Seattle College
TRAC Associates
YWCA

PIERCE COUNTY

Adonai Counseling and Employment, Inc.
Career Path Services (CPS)
Metropolitan Development Council (MDC)
Pierce County Human Services
Sound Outreach
TRAC Associates
Tacoma Community House (TCH)
Washington Hospitality Association

SPOKANE COUNTY

Career Path Services (CPS)
Fulcrum Institute Dispute Resolution Clinic (DRC)
World Relief (WR)

YAKIMA COUNTY

Entrust Community Services
Fulcrum Institute Dispute Resolution Clinic
People for People
Rod's House
Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic

APPENDIX B

RISE Participant Demographics³

	# of Clients	% of Total
Total	1,688	100.0%
Gender		
Female	727	43.1%
Male	961	46.9%
Age Category		
Under 18 Years Old	3	0.2%
18 - 30 Years Old	492	29.1%
31 - 50 Years Old	883	52.3%
51+ Years Old	310	18.4%
Target Population		
Homeless	726	43%
At Home or Other Living Arrangement	962	57%
Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	110	6.5%
Long-term Unemployed	1,016	60.2%
Non-Custodial Parent Owing Arrears	352	20.9
Veterans	49	2.9%
Work Registrant Status		
Yes	1,662	98.5%
No	26	1.5%
ABAWD		
Yes	1,010	59.8%
No	678	40.2%

³Source: ESA-EMAPS Report #4482 using the ACES Data Warehouse as of June 2018. This report was produced on June 19, 2018.