

**WORKFIRST
EDUCATION AND
TRAINING
OPPORTUNITIES**



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INTRODUCTION

Are you interested in training or education? You can ask your WorkFirst worker to add the options in this booklet to your IRP as WorkFirst activities. Most of these activities are not required. However, studies show that the best way to get and keep a good job is to improve your education and training. These options are often your best ticket out of the welfare system.

Terms and Acronyms from this booklet:

- **DSHS** = Department of Social and Health Services
- **ESD** = Employment Security Department (Job Services Center)
- **E&T plan** = Document you sign with ESD about your employment goals and plan.
- **IRP** = Individual Responsibility Plan – Document you signed with DSHS
- **Seasonal Worker** means your normal way of life is a recurring cycle of seasonal employment (such as fishing, field labor, harvesting, etc.). In the off-season, you can get full-time education and training, with no work requirement.
- **Success Plan** = Plan you sign with your school's WorkFirst coordinator about your education goals and plan.
- **WAC = Washington Administrative Code – some of the rules DSHS must follow. You can find the WAC online at <http://www.leg.wa.gov/wac/> , or ask at your library.**
- **WCCC** = Working Connections Child Care
- **Meeting the work requirement** = Can include more than just paid jobs. It can mean subsidized employment, like Work Study of 16-19 hr/week, Community Jobs or paid Work Experience, and certain internships or practicum if approved on your IRP.

BASIC EDUCATION

Basic description	GED or high school diploma, English as a Second Language “ESL”, Families that Work, Workplace Basics, Adult Basic Ed.
Example	Listed above.
Who must participate?	Parents 16 or 17, whose child lives with them (must be in high school or a GED program).
Who may participate?	People 18 or older who need it to get a job + <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meet the work requirement (see p.1) or • do job search for at least 20 hrs/week or • did job search without getting a job or • Seasonal workers
Can I get help with child care?	Working Connections Child Care “WCCC” will pay for child care for work activity and class time with no limit.
Do I have to work at the same time?	People 20 or older must meet the work requirement except seasonal workers.
Are there time limits?	No.
Where is it offered?	High schools, community and technical colleges.
Who approves my plan?	Your DSHS WorkFirst worker.
What papers do I need?	Your basic ed. plan must be in your Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP). It can also be in success or E&T plan.
Where can I get more info?	Your WorkFirst worker should have more information and a list of local programs. You can also go directly to local schools or colleges that offer basic education.
Legal Information	WAC 388-310-0900 RCW 74.08A.250(9)(10).

JOB SKILLS TRAINING

Basic description	Training in specific skills directly related to getting a job, but not tied to a specific occupation.
Example	Word Processing, data entry
Who may participate?	People meeting the work requirement, OR With no job skills for local entry level jobs & this is the only way to get the skills, OR Seasonal workers
Can I get help with child care?	Working Connections Child Care “WCCC” will pay for child care for work, work activity and class time with no limit.

Do I have to work at the same time?	Yes, unless you are a seasonal worker or you show this is the only way to get job skills for local, entry level jobs (+ do Job Search).
Are there time limits?	No.
Where is it offered?	Community based organizations, businesses, tribal governments, or community and technical colleges.
Who approves my plan?	Your DSHS WorkFirst worker.
What papers do I need?	Job skills training must be in your Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP). It can also be in success or E&T plan.
Where can I get more info?	Your WorkFirst worker should have more information and a list of local programs, or go directly to places where job skills training is offered.
Legal Information	WAC 388-310-1050 RCW 74.08A.250(8)

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Basic description	Training leading to a degree or certificate in a specific occupation.
Example	Massage Therapy, Computer Technician, Medical Transcription, etc.
Who may participate?	People meeting the work requirement, Seasonal Workers, or people with limited English proficiency who have no job skills for local entry level jobs & this is the only way to get the skills.
Can I get help with child care?	Working Connections Child Care “WCCC” will pay for child care while you work and while you’re in school for up to 12 months. If you leave TANF, you can receive an additional 24 months of child care for school hours.
Do I have to work at the same time?	At least 20 hrs/week, (or 16+ work study) unless you are a seasonal worker or limited English proficiency and show that this is the only way you can get job skills for local, entry level jobs.
Are there time limits?	Vocational Education can be approved as a WorkFirst activity for up to 12 months.
Where is it offered?	Community, technical, or tribal colleges.
Who approves my plan?	Your DSHS WorkFirst worker.
What papers do I need?	Vocational Ed. must be in your IRP. It can also be in success or E&T plan.
Where can I get more info?	Your WorkFirst worker should have more information and a list of local programs. Go to http://www.wtb.wa.gov/etp/WDA.asp to see a list of approved schools, businesses and programs or go directly to

	schools.
Legal Information	WAC 388-310-1000 RCW 74.08A.250 (7)

PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

Basic description	Training in skills needed for a particular entry level job that pays more than average entry level wages.
Example	Depends upon the employers who provide training in your area.
Who may participate?	Anyone in WorkFirst,, but positions are limited by how many employers participate.
Can I get help with child care?	Working Connections Child Care “WCCC” pays for child care for training, and up to 30 days before training starts.
Do I have to work at the same time?	No.
Are there time limits?	12 – 22 weeks.
Where is it offered?	Community, technical, or tribal colleges.
Who approves my plan?	WorkFirst Worker, ESD/JSC Worker, and College WF Coordinator.
What papers do I need?	IRP with DSHS and success plan with ESD/JSC and E&T Plan with college (should work together to develop your plan).
Other	Local employers or industries must commit to hiring or giving hiring preference to participants who successfully complete the training.
Where can I get more info?	Your WorkFirst worker should have more information and a list of local programs.
Legal Information	WAC 388-310-0600 (2)

HIGH WAGE/HIGH DEMAND:
 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/HEALTH CARE
 OTHER PROFESSIONAL TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

Basic description	Start and finish a one-year training program in approved information technology “IT”, health care fields, or other professional technical programs.
Example	Dental assistant, computer tech, etc.
Who may participate?	Anyone in WorkFirst interested in certain approved jobs.
Can I get help with child care?	Working Connections Child Care “WCCC” pays for child care for class time, transportation time up to 10 hrs/week and study time up to 3 hrs/day.
Do I have to work at the same time?	No, but you must do job placement with ESD during your last school quarter and after you finish school if you don’t have a job yet.
Are there time limits?	12 months
Where is it offered?	Community and technical colleges – acceptable courses vary from school to school.
Who approves my plan?	WorkFirst Worker, ESD/JSC Worker, AND College WF Coordinator
What papers do I need?	IRP with DSHS and Success Plan with ESD/JSC and E&T Plan with college
Other	One-time only unless you get an exception. Options are limited to a list of selected fields.
Where can I get more info?	Your WorkFirst worker has more info. ESD has a list of approved programs. Go to http://www.wtb.wa.gov/etp/default.asp to see a list of approved schools, businesses and programs.
Legal Information	WAC 388-310-0600 (3) WAC 388-290-0040

HIGH WAGE/HIGH DEMAND:

CERTIFICATE/DEGREE COMPLETION

Basic description	Finish the last year of a 2- or 4-year degree or certificate for a high wage, high demand field.
Example	High wage high demand jobs are defined by ESD.
Who may participate?	Anyone in WorkFirst with one year left to complete certain degree or certificate programs.
Can I get help with child care?	WCCC pays for child care for work activity and class time.
Do I have to work at the same time?	No, but you must do job placement with ESD in your last school quarter and after you finish school if you don't have a job yet.
Are there time limits?	12 months
Where is it offered?	Community, technical, 4-year or tribal colleges.
Who approves my plan?	WorkFirst Worker, ESD/JSC Worker, AND College WF Coordinator.
What papers do I need?	IRP with DSHS and Success Plan with ESD/JSC and E&T Plan with college.
Other	One-time only unless you get an exception. Must be high wage, high demand job as determined by ESD. See more info. at http://www.workforceexplorer.com/ .
Where can I get more info?	Your WorkFirst worker has more info. ESD has a list of approved high wage high demand training. Career counselors at colleges can help you get information to support the high wage/high demand requirements.
Legal Information	WAC 388-310-0600 (3)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Two-adult households: Each person in the household is entitled to these opportunities (for example, both parents in a two-parent household or a parent and teenaged child could be in training or education at the same time). The two adults are required to participate for a combined total of 55 hrs/week.

Combining Education and Training: Unless otherwise noted, there is no restriction on combining two or more of these opportunities. For example, you could get your 1st year of education under the vocational education track, then get a 2nd year by completing a degree in an approved field under the certificate or degree completion track. Some restrictions apply when combining these for more than one year, contact resources below for more information.

Three other options include Community Jobs (CJ), Work experience (WEX) and on-the-job training (OJT). **CJ** allows you to work at selected job sites for up to 9 months. DSHS pays part of your wages. WAC 388-310-1300. **WEX** teaches basic job skills by assigning you to unpaid work at selected locations. WAC 388-310-1100. **OJT** is skills training provided by an employer at their place of business. You are paid both to work and to get training at your job or in a classroom. Your employer may be reimbursed for up to ½ your wages for regular work hours & approved training time. WAC 388-310-1200.

Help with tuition and books: Ask your school or training program for help first. Check with the school's WorkFirst Coordinator if they have one. If they cannot help, WorkFirst should help pay for tuition/books.

PROBLEMS WITH DSHS?

You can request a fair hearing at DSHS and call 1-888-201-1014 for free legal advice from CLEAR. Information is also available from WROC by calling 1-877-330-3063 (the Seattle area) or 1-866-343-9716 (the Olympia area).

WorkFirst Education and Training Opportunities
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