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|  | **Employment Security Advisory Council (ESAC)** | | |
| **Meeting** | **Date:** 12 November | **Time:** 10:00 a.m.-12 p.m. | **Location:** John A. Cherberg Bldg, Hearing Rm 4, Washington State Capitol Campus |
| **Attendees** | Pamela Crone, ESAC  Cynthia Forland, ESD Director of LMPA  Ollie Garrett, ESAC  Mike Gempler, ESAC  Janelle Guthrie, ESD Director of Communications  Neil Hartman, ESAC (on behalf of Lee Newgent)  Cathy Hoover, ESD Director of Government Relations  Joe Kendo, ESAC  Kelly Lindseth, ESD  Lisa Marsh, ESD Deputy Commissioner  Dale Peinecke, ESD Commissioner  Tim Probst, ESD Director of Workforce Strategic Initiatives  Guests | | |
| **EAC Members Absent** | Larry Brown  Gary Chandler  Sridhar Sukumaran | | |
| **Scribe** | Hope Hough | | |

**Welcome and Introductions: Dale Peinecke, Commissioner**

The [Employment Security Advisory Committee](https://esd.wa.gov/newsroom/ESAC) (ESAC) was formed in August 2013, in collaboration with Washington Governor Jay Inslee’s office. The goal of the committee is to help the Employment Security Department (ESD) implement our new strategy and goals, and help us stay aligned with Governor Inslee’s [Results Washington](http://www.results.wa.gov/).

Employment Security Strategic Plan Goals:

* ESD employees are valued, empowered and engaged to better serve our customers and develop their skills and careers.
* Employers have the skilled, stable work force they need to thrive.
* Washington’s integrated workforce development system efficiently and effectively connects the unemployment, employment and career needs of employers and job seekers.
* Individuals have the information, competencies and workplace experience they need to be job-ready when they enter, re-enter or progress in the workforce.

The intention in the first quarter 2016 is to revise the strategic plan to reflect goals from 2016 through 2019.

**State of Washington’s Labor Economy: Cynthia Forland, LMPA Director**

* Washington State’s current unemployment rate, which represents job seekers looking for work in the last four weeks, is 5.2 percent. While it continues to decrease, we’re still not at the pre-recession rate of 4.6 percent.
* The underemployment rate represents job seeks who have been looking for work in the last 12 months, and they might also be people who are working part-time but would prefer to be working full-time. During the recession, Washington was in worse shape than the nation as a whole, but we are becoming more even at 12 percent versus the nation’s 11 percent.
* In September 2015, there were 13 counties with an unemployment rate at or below 5 percent, which is good in economic terms; and there were only nine counties with an unemployment rate at or above 7 percent. King County had a 3.9 percent unemployment rate and continues to lead the state in job growth. Ferry and Pend Oreille counties lead the state in unemployment with 9.1 and 8.1 percent, respectively. Counties with higher unemployment rates tend to have an industry base in natural resource sectors like logging and mining.
* The primary measure of state economic conditions is the number of jobs across the state in business and government. Washington is currently up 5.4 percent (162,000 jobs) from the previous employment peak, and has gained back all of the jobs lost during the recession and then some. The pace of the recovery in jobs in Washington has been slightly faster than nationally.
* The retail trade industry added the most jobs over the past year, followed by construction and government services.
* The unemployment rate is limited by those people who are actively interested in being in the labor force whereas the employment rate is employment as a percent of the civilian non-institutional population. While Washington has been doing better than the rest of the nation, employment rates have been flat since January 2009.
* Unemployment benefits are down to a historical low (55,599 in August 2015). At its peak in January 2010, there were 314,473 unemployment insurance (UI) recipients.
* WorkSource customers are slowly returning to pre-recession levels. Currently more customers are accessing WorkSource services via electronic means (website and resource room computers).

**UI Highlights: Lisa Marsh, ESD Deputy Director**

* We’re on track to have the entire UI benefits system replaced by October 2016. The first piece is in place and has the ability for single sign-on through [SecureAccess Washington](https://secureaccess.wa.gov/). It provides information on wages reported by employers, weekly benefit amount, benefit amount paid, account balance, total weeks paid, etc.
* ESD gets over 20,000 requests per quarter for wage data on the systems of Washington, often at the request of citizens who are trying to receive other governmental services; e.g., reduced rate housing, need for TANF, etc. Having this data available for people to log on and view will benefit them so they don’t have to wait a minimum of a week to receive it.

Other things related to unemployment insurance:

* ESD received a grant from the US Department of Labor to study the cost and feasibility of a family leave program.
* Staffing is low as a result historically UI claimant level. This has resulted in the lowest funding level since the 1980s.
* ESD will be taking over full control of ESD’s tax system.
* This year, ESD is not offering any agency-sponsored legislation but continues to work on new things to promote service delivery; e.g., primary ESD site, workforce performance analysis site.
* ESD is updating social media presence and doing more mobile technologies in WorkSource offices, including having Wi-Fi and wireless printing available to customers.
* ESD will have a new job match and case integrated management system available early next year.

**WIOA Implementation Update: Tim Probst, ESD Director of Workforce Development Strategic Initiatives**

The U.S. Senate and House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in 2014. It replaces the outdated Workforce Investment Act (WIA). This nearly $3 billion program funds state and local workforce initiatives and provides a comprehensive menu of job training services for adults and youth.

* The governor put forth three goals:
  + Get more people jobs, with a focus on disadvantaged populations.
  + Close the skills gap for industries with a focus on strategic industry sectors.
  + Get the system working together as a single unified team and continue our evolution toward fully integrated services instead of working out of separate programs and silos.
* The Workforce Board has put together a series of public hearings, task groups and a steering committee. The steering committee is chaired by Business and Labor. All of the decisions from various task groups, subcommittees and public hearings are provided to the steering committee which, in turn, makes its recommendation to the full Workforce Board on each of the potential reforms and issues addressed.
* At ESD, there is also a lot of internal work do to implement WIOA. For example, once the Workforce Board creates policy for Title 1B of WIOA, the policy is populated through our public hearing process. ESD also has a team of all of the divisions working together to make sure that everyone is talking to one another, and that all of the various items get addressed; e.g., fiscal adjustments that are necessary to the policy adjustments for service delivery.

An example of the decisions being made is whether or not expand the partners that are already in the Workforce Development System and create a unified plan through the State Workforce Board or add additional partners.

Some of the largest partners include the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program (SNAP), Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) program; programs at the Department of Commerce like the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG); and programs at the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), like the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) that provides subsidized, part-time, community service work-based training for low-income people age 55 or older who have poor employment prospects. To date, DSHS has requested that TANF and BEFT be included to create a unified planning system so the work is more coordinated and less ad hoc.

Accountability is another big decision. The State of Washington has done something very creative on the federal accountability piece. The federal government asked for what percent of people succeed; e.g., get a job, retention rate, earnings, employer’s success? The State of Washington voluntarily decided to also record volume, or the total number of job seekers and employers using our systems -because it makes sense.

When working with multiple programs in a WorkSource center or Workforce Development System, federal money and state money is distributed separately. This results in the need to develop Research Sharing Agreements (RSA) and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at the local level to determine how to all work together as a single system to serve employers and job seekers. The State of Washington made a decision to create a state level MOU and RSA that hasn’t been done before.

The Workforce Development councils and ESD have also been working on a project called Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) to create an overlap for co-enrollment of the Wagner Peyser population and the WIOA adult program.

* ESD helps approximately 102,000 people per year find work, and there are over 5,000 employers in the WorkSource system. In an effort to reach more people, ESD has:
  + Worked with the Department of Commerce to help businesses grow.
  + Supported the WorkStart program where ten businesses created over 400 jobs over the state of Washington.
  + Created a program with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to increase work-based learning for students in school, and youth who have dropped out of school who are trying to re-engage. The work-based learning that students experience has doubled so ESD is looking to expand the program throughout the state.
* ESD is looking for guidance and advice from the Employment Security Advisory Council to determine how we can make WorkSource more attractive to employers by building a business model to help employers hire more qualified candidates, and help more people secure employment.

**WorkSource.wa.com Demonstration: Kelly Lindseth, Technical Assistance and Training Director, Workforce and Career Development Division**

ESD is working with Monster Government Solutions on a new transformational web-based job-match system for job seekers and employers that will launch in January 2016. WorkSourceWA.com will improve job-match capabilities for employers to help them hire more qualified candidates using Monster’s 6Sense technology.

Job seeker tools include:

* Resume/skills profile builder tool or ability to upload a resume in several formats
* Semantic matching (resumes/skills profiles are match and ranked with job postings)
* Access to Monster’s aggregated job postings
* Dashboard that holds saved jobs and application history
* Access to career resources
* Prevention to fraudulent job postings

Reporting tools include:

* Real-time, On-demand
  + Utilization of real time data via dashboard reporting
* Creating ad-hoc reports by users
  + Workload
  + Program specific information
  + Job seekers demographic information
  + Contracts
  + Service dates
  + Participant status or other specifications, including self-service activity
  + Reporting on pre-determined and routine schedules as well as an on-demand capability to query with industry standard database client software.

We’re still configuring the system, migrating data, preparing staff training, and planning the roll-out. Progress can be tracked following our blog at go2WorkSourceNews.com.

**Discussion – Meeting employers’ and job seekers’ needs through WorkSource, ESAC member Pam Crone, Facilitator**

There are over 3 million people in the workforce in the state of Washington and 1.5 million job changes (or hiring opportunities) per year. Yet the number of jobs being placed in WorkSource is declining even though the number of people in the workforce and the number of jobs that are looking to be filled are going up.

WIOA conspires to build a job-driven/employer-driven system. Presently, ESD is trying to determine how to engage employers in the Workforce Development System to make sure skill gaps are being closed so they get the talent they need for their business to grow and prosper, and continue to build a more effective system so we grow from helping 100,000 job seekers find employment per year to 200,000 or more.

ESAC members provided suggestions for meeting employers’ and job seekers’ needs through WorkSource; e.g., identifying an ideal applicant/candidate for a job and the qualities they possess; determining if WorkSource is capturing them and how the information that WorkSource has can be improved; assisting job seekers for putting themselves in the possible light, and making sure employers are clear about what they are looking for.

* Develop an automatic triggered response to employers after they’ve listed a job to follow-up in a certain amount of time to determine if the job has been filled.
* Correct procedures that cause inefficiencies.
* Strengthen the WorkSource system so people don’t only use it when they’re seasonal employers/ employees or desperate.
* Address ways to reduce or eliminate how many people set up interviews through WorkSource and never show up, or are offered a position but never report to work.
* Perfect candidate has a good attitude, is motivated, and wants an opportunity to elevate their skills.

* Would like to see Workforce Development Councils be more responsive and timely with their use of job training for dislocated workers, and WorkSource use their oversight more effectively.
* Help job seekers understand the commute and child care requirements to determine if a job is a good fit; e.g., valid transportation, amount of time it will take to commute between their residence and job site, child care.
* Connecting job seekers with jobs that they are best suited for.
* On WorkSource, list experience, certifications, licenses and qualifications of job seekers so that the WorkSource employee and employers know the kind of people that are available to secure a more precise match.
* Bring programs into high schools in a more deliberate way so that students have a clear idea of what makes them attractive to employers; e.g., punctuality, attendance, enthusiasm, skills and abilities.
* Although web sites are good, more attention should be given to reducing the wait times for contact via telephone or in-person for people who aren’t tech-savvy, those where English is their second language, and disabled workers who have trouble accessing the systems because of mental disability barriers.