

Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council
 Adult & Employer Linkage Committee
 June 17, 2021, at 8:30 a.m.
 Zoom

<u>Present</u>	<u>Excused</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Staff/Partners</u>
Adolfo de Leon, Co-Chair	Karl Dye	Lori Mattson	Tiffany Scott, BFWDC
Jamie Rasmussen	Michael Lee		David Chavey-Reynaud, BFWDC
Jennie Weber	Melanie Olson		Diana Hamilton, BFWDC
Todd Samuel			Cynthia Garcia, BFWDC
			Jamilet Nerell, BFWDC
			Jessie Cardwell, BFWDC
			Becky Smith, BFWDC
			Kayci Loftus, CPS
			Heather Woodruff, CPS
			Jasmine Smith, CPS
			Rebecca Williamson, ESD
			Rosa Reyna, GW
			Crystal Bright, WSO
			Lindsay Noble, Consistent Care

Call to Order

Adolfo welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. Becky read through the roll call while everyone responded.

Approval of Committee Minutes

The Minutes of May 20, 2021, Adult & Employer Linkage Committee Meeting were provided for members to review.

Todd Samuel moved to approve May 21, 2021, Adult & Employer Linkage Committee Meeting Minutes as presented, seconded by Jennie Weber. Motion carried.

PY20 Monitoring Summary:

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Programs: Diana provided a summary of the quarterly monitoring of the sub-recipients. The monitoring team did a comprehensive review of participant files to ensure compliance with eligibility, service entries, outcomes, support services, training, case notes, and data integrity. There were no findings identified in any program and no disallowed costs except the Dislocated Worker program, which had one disallowed cost. This was due to a rental assistance voucher being issued for \$500 when the rent payment was actually \$428. The service provider paid back the \$72 overpayment out of non-WIOA funds. They also listed program best practices implemented during COVID-19 to streamline access to services for customers and the ongoing training for newly hired and seasoned staff throughout the year. This was an excellent monitoring review and showed the quality of services being provided to participants.

Diana shared that the State Monitors have changed the monitoring schedule, and they will be conducting our PY21 Monitoring during the first week of October 2021.

Jamilet shared the Economic Security for All (EcSA) and Families Forward Washington (FFW) monitoring summary. Both programs did an amazing job. They monitor against federal, state, and local policies. None of the programs had any findings or disallowed costs.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Update – Jamilet

Jamilet shared that we are in the process of securing local funding for the CDBG. This will help our local food distribution sites that have been affected by COVID-19. We are in the last stages of securing this money and fully executing our contract with the Washington Department of Commerce. Once this is secure on our end, she will send a

memo to the committee to request a motion to approve the sub-recipient we have identified for this grant. This will be coming your way soon, and we will be moving forward with an e-vote.

Todd shared that winning this grant goes with our goal of diversifying funding and is a big deal. This will allow us to have more impact in our region. Jamilet shared that this has come with a lot of effort from the Washington Workforce Association. Tiffany has done a great job of making sure that we are exploring different funding sources.

Program Highlights – Diana

Diana shared that as of the end of March, the state as a whole had only expended 24% of the Disaster Recovery and 19% of the Employment Recovery grants. Expenditures are significantly behind, and the state cannot request a contract extension from the Department of Labor (DOL) until they are at least 70% expended. The state has asked areas that were behind by more than 20% in meeting their quarterly planned expenditures to submit strategies to get back on track. She reminded the group that it took us longer than expected to develop disaster relief worksites in our community. During the first two quarters of PY20, our subrecipient focused on identifying the community needs by conducting listening tours and establishing worksites for disaster relief placements. Because of the slow start, we are now below our planned March expenditure target. The Consortium has been working on strategies to continue to provide services that our community needs while increasing expenditures to get back on track.

- The two disaster relief workers at Second Harvest obtained full-time employment in May. Recruitment is on its way to fill those positions.
- The Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker Outreach Coordinator with Employment Security Department (ESD) ended on May 28th. We are recruiting to backfill this position.
- The eight disaster employment opportunities for the Department of Health for vaccine distribution support ended on May 28 because the vaccination site was closed. Recruitment is now happening for three additional workers at Second Harvest.
- They are also recruiting two new screener/cleaner positions to assist at WorkSource when the facility re-opens on July 1st.
- The Community Services of Pasco has reached out and requested eight workers to help with their food bank.

Staff is also working with the sub-recipient to submit a contract modification to the state to better align the Disaster Recovery budget with the services that customers are requesting. With these additional placements, increasing the number of hours worked each week, and shifting funds to provide additional training opportunities and support services, we will increase monthly expenditures and get back on track.

For the Employment Recovery Program, the focus this program year has been to fully expend the PY19 Rapid Response funds first. That program was set to end on June 30th, but the state has extended it to December 31st. The priority has now shifted to spend Employment Recovery funds. BFWDC staff are also working with the sub-recipient to submit a contract modification to the state to shift the On-the-Job Training (OJT)/Work Experience (WEX) dollars to increase the number of Individual Training Accounts (ITA) training opportunities. Employers are currently not interested in OJT and WEX's, and customers are requesting tuition assistance for programs like Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDL) and welding, where they are receiving jobs.

These contracts do not end until March 31 of 2022. We will be able to utilize these funds for the first quarter of PY21 when funding is usually severely limited due to the first quarter cap restriction. Once these strategies are firmly in place, we feel we will be able to increase expenditures while allowing us to serve our customers quickly.

Economic Security for All (EcSA) Update - Jamilet

Jamilet shared that the EcSA program has expended 64% of the sub-recipient funding. They continue to work on spending as much as they can to meet the contractual agreement with ESD. There are six participants in training, and once completed, they will be able to find employment. As the state continues to re-open and we continue to see more local employers provide opportunities, we will increase the number of total employed exits to meet the monthly contractual obligation.

She provided a chart showing the EcSA population served. The majority of participants live in Pasco and continue serving rural North Franklin County. They continue to target single Hispanic mothers.

Families Forward Washington (FFW) Updates – Jamilet

Jamilet reminded everyone that June would be the last month to provide grant services as the grant will be coming to an end on June 30, 2021. The grant started in 2018. During the past month, they have continued to work intensively with participants to ensure that anyone that is in training or has not found a job continues to receive job development services to ensure that they are employed by the program's end. They continue to work with participants to provide support services. They are 99% spent, and as they continue to provide services during this last month, they will be able to meet 100%.

Rosa Reyna of Goodwill provided a success story of an individual in the FFW program. She shared that they have received word from many participants that they would love to see this program extended because of the help this program has given them and could give others.

They had a meeting with the Department of Child Support regarding the extension of this program. There are no promises, but there is a lot of interest from the state level to continue to serve this demographic. We are also interested at the local level to continue this program. It has been used for research and allowed us to be inclusive of marginalized populations (non-custodial parents). From our end, we are interested and will seek opportunities to continue a model like this.

Liaison Report – David

David reviewed the provided May Liaison Report. We are up from this time last year in Total Services to Job Seekers, Business Served, and Staff Provided Business Services. He noted the change in the note section announcing that WorkSource Columbia Basin (WSCB) will be opening on July 1 at 25% capacity by appointment only. A booth will be set up outside to engage customers. An outreach plan regarding re-opening is being developed. There were no industries that decreased this month. One thousand five hundred jobs were recovered in April. We are at 87% recovery from COVID.

WorkSource Update – Crystal

Crystal reviewed the provided WorkSource Operator Report.

Future Fest was co-hosted by TC Futures. They continue to find new and different ways to work with partners to increase engagement for both businesses and job seekers. They are seeing an increase in businesses seeking booths and increased job seekers attending virtual job fairs.

She highlighted that WSCB received a 3-year certification. The partnership is working on an additional matrix that the board has requested.

Things are changing very quickly. The leadership is working together with the team to address these changes. They are excited to return to in-person services by appointment only. With some of the recent changes around the job search waiver, we anticipate that there could be a high number of people come in July seeking services. They are monitoring other changes to come.

They plan to launch customer messaging next week to ensure that customers are well informed. The current guidelines include masking for all and social distancing. They will also be screening all that come into the building.

Staff will be returning in waves. Things are very different today than when they left the building in 2020. They have a number of new team members that have never worked in the building. The leadership team has worked to create schedules, including orientations and training to return to work. We want our staff to feel safe, equipped, and ready for customers. They are getting a statewide scheduler to allow customers to make appointments.

There will be a check-in station and a place for customers to get information on what is available and connect with us. We anticipate a potential capacity issue. Criteria has been set to ensure access for those that would otherwise not be able to access services.

She is working to determine where and how we set up a waiting area. They are working to have a covered area outside and water for customers that are waiting.

Todd asked what needs to happen to increase capacity. Crystal shared that they are operating under the guidance coming from the Governor and the Office of Financial Management (OFM). They are basing their capacity on the 6-feet of social distancing. The state plans continue to change. There should be more guidance before June 30.

Todd asked if there was a hesitancy from staff to return. Crystal shared that they have kept an open dialogue with the team. For those that are returning, they have been able to address concerns and make changes where needed. She is not hearing or sensing a significant concern for return based on the fact that safety and health protocols are in place. They are anticipating a jovial group upon return. The team has missed each other.

Other Business: None

Next Meeting: The next Adult & Employer Linkage Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 15, 2021, at 8:30 a.m. on Zoom.

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

DocuSigned by:
Melanie Olson 7/15/2021
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Meeting Co-Chair Date

DocuSigned by:
Becky Smith 7/16/2021
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Becky Smith, Office Manager Date