

WorkFirst Re-Examination One Table Meeting July 21, 2010 Meeting Notes

1. Creating a Framework for WorkFirst Re-Examination and Redesign

DSHS Secretary Susan Dreyfus welcomed the participants and reviewed key points from the WorkFirst Re-examination Issue Brief and Core Assumptions for the WorkFirst Program.



WF Re-examine Brief TANF Redesign Core
June 2010 FD.doc Assumptions FD June

Secretary Dreyfus asked the group if there are additional re-examination questions to be addressed. These questions were provided:

- How can we improve linkages to early learning opportunities for TANF children?
- What do participants see as barriers to success?

Additional Data/Information Requested:

- Add affiliation and contact information (including phone numbers) to the list of One Table participants
- Gather and share data regarding intergenerational poverty

2. Planning Approach

Babs Roberts gave a description of the approach being used to complete the WorkFirst Re-examination. Data and input will be gathered and used to develop the Redesign plan and report that will be presented to the Governor in December 2010. This includes:

a. Focus Groups

- Focus groups have begun to gather input from participants and staff. Work is being done with non-profit groups to conduct participant focus groups.
- One Table participants should let Dori Shoji know if they have suggested questions for the focus groups.
- Focus groups need to ask participants what they see as barriers to success

Additional Data/Information Requested:

- DSHS will contact Laurie Lippold and Lonnie Johns-Brown to assist with participant focus groups; they would like the WorkFirst partner agencies to work with non-profits to establish participant focus groups.
- Provide list of who is heading the groups and what questions are being asked in each focus group
- Karen Lee/ESD will follow up with a request to look at job development and to conduct employer focus groups to engage the business community in this process

b. Research and Data Analysis Study

DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division will be conducting two studies to provide information for the WorkFirst Re-examination:

- *Risk, Cycling and Cost among TANF Adults on WorkFirst (Leavers/Stayers/Cyclers)*
This study would evaluate characteristics and program costs and patterns over time for those who remain on TANF, those who leave TANF and those who move on and off the program.
- *Safety and Health Risks for Children on TANF*
This study would examine differences between child-only cases and TANF/WorkFirst cases in general.

c. Best Practices Research

A group has been formed to gather best and promising practices used in other states.

d. One Table Meetings

Today was the first in this series of meetings designed to engage legislators and stakeholders in planning the Redesign. Three more meetings will be held:

Wednesday, August 18, 2010
Wednesday, September 15, 2010
Wednesday, October 20, 2010

Additional Data or Information Requested:

It was suggested that we include parent(s) or former participant(s) in the One Table group

3. WorkFirst—Who We Serve

Babs Roberts provided an overview of the current WorkFirst program structure, services and client population.

Additional Data or Information Requested:

- Do changes in the Title IV-E law impact increases in the WorkFirst caseload?
- How does the race/ethnicity breakdown in the WorkFirst population compare to the state population breakdown?
- How do men engage in the program differently from women?
- How many children in WorkFirst households have incarcerated parents? How many children in child-only WorkFirst households have incarcerated parents?
- Who are the children in child-only households and in the child welfare system?
- What are the ages of children on WorkFirst?
- How many parents are in the LEP pathway due to low literacy levels rather than limitations on English proficiency?

4. Working Connections Child Care

Bob McLellan from the Department of Early Learning presented Working Connections Childcare program and funding information.

Additional Data or Information Requested:

- What is the average income level of WCCC parents?
- There is such a low percentage of TANF parents using WCCC; what care arrangements do they have? Include a question about this when conducting focus groups.
- Provide a breakdown of WCCC funding.
- Can we identify how many parents are not on TANF because they are able to get WCCC? (WCCC as a diversion)
- What number and percentage of WCCC families are former TANF recipients?
- Can we get a chart showing what a family's co-payment rate is at different income levels, based on family size?
- What is the percentage of WCCC at each of the following income levels: 100% FPL or below; between 125% FPL and 150% FPL; between 150% FPL and 175% FPL; and between 175% FPL and 200% FPL.

5. WorkFirst Participation Requirements—Federal and State

- Steve Ebben provided an overview of participation requirements.
- State requirements differ from federal requirements, especially for parents with children under 6 years old. It was suggested that we need to evaluate whether the more stringent state participation requirements are prudent given the participation rates we need to meet and the resources available to support the program.
- Secretary Dreyfus shared that one of the opportunities available is the upcoming TANF reauthorization. Re-authorization is likely to be moved back a year, however. With one of the nation's most senior and respected Governors and a powerful Congressional delegation, Washington State is expected to have a strong, proactive voice in the national re-authorization debate.
- We will need to work together to evaluate the federal requirements and where we have flexibility. This will include identifying what success looks like for WorkFirst.

6. WorkFirst Parent Flow –DSHS

A team of DSHS field workers (including a WorkFirst Program Specialist, WorkFirst Social Worker, WorkFirst Trainer, WorkFirst Supervisor, and a Community Service Office Administrator/Local Planning Area Lead) provided an overview of the client flow through entry of the program to engagement in program activities. This included discussion of:

- Diversion from WorkFirst
- Comprehensive Evaluation
- Individual Responsibility Plans and Case Management
- Social Services Assessment
- Deferrals and Exemptions
- Pregnancy to Employment, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Pathway, and Tribal TANF

Secretary Dreyfus indicated that this process should include a look at Tribal TANF programs—best practices and lessons learned that can be applied to the WorkFirst program.

Additional Data/Information Requested:

- What percent of applicants are diverted?
- Does the CE include Financial Literacy? This could be a valuable goal setting tool
- Provide a sample IRP
- Research why the age is set at 55 for the relative caregiver exemption
- How are services leveraged and coordinated to support families working with the child welfare system? How are WorkFirst Case Managers/Social Workers engaged with Children’s Administration workers?
- Are we engaging parents of infants in home visitation programs? Do we make a referral for a parent to self-seek home visitation services or do we take actions to engage parents in home visitation services?
- Provide Pregnancy to Employment data to include: number of parents with infants who volunteer for college programs; number of parents with infants in sanction
- Can we breakdown the caseload (single parent, two parent, child-only) into geographical areas?
- Provide an example of an IRP
- Add to focus groups a question on how stacking activities impact clients

7. Employment Security

Kelly Lindseth from Employment Security Department presented information about Employment Services and performance for WorkFirst parents.

Additional Data/Information Requested:

- What services are provided for WorkFirst clients differently than for non-WorkFirst clients?
- Can we get information on TANF participants placed in jobs by Employment Security office for the following years: 2010 (to date), 2009, 2008, 2007 and 2006?

8. Commerce Programs

Diane Klontz from Commerce presented program, enrollment and performance outcome information about Community Jobs and the Supported Works programs (Community Work Experience, Community Service, and Community Works).

Additional Data/Information Requested:

- List of Community Jobs placements
- How is success measured for Supported Works programs

9. College Programs

Marie Bruin from the State Board for Community and Technical College presented information about education and training for WorkFirst families.

Additional Data/Information Requested:

- There was a suggestion to evaluate which state laws have underlying policies/assumptions that pose barriers to licensing, financial aid, etc.

10. TANF Box Funding

Babs Roberts provided an overview of TANF Box revenues, Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements, projected expenditures and estimated shortfalls.

Additional Data/Information Requested:

- Add dollar amounts to the fiscal pie charts

11. Next Meeting

Discussion regarding WorkFirst non-compliance sanction processes and numbers was moved to the next meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 18, 9:00 a.m. – noon.