



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
WASHINGTON WORKFIRST

- *Office of Financial Management*
- *Department of Social and Health Services*
- *Employment Security Department*
- *Department of Community, Trade & Economic Development*
- *State Board for Community and Technical Colleges*
- *Department of Early Learning*

August 26, 2008

**TO:** WorkFirst Partners

**FROM:** Carole Holland, Office of Financial Management  
Troy Hutson, Department of Social and Health Services  
Jim Crabbe, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges  
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Carol Felton, Dept. of Community, Trade and Economic Development  
Paul Trause, Employment Security Department

**SUBJECT:** Helping Achieve the WorkFirst Participation Improvement Target of 10%

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WorkFirst is a partnership, and its primary mission is to get parents to work. The challenges the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) placed upon the program are here to stay and should be viewed as opportunities for us to better serve families. We know that participation is a good thing and that the more parents participate, the greater chance they have of going to work and becoming self-sufficient.

Recently, DSHS Community Service Office (CSO) Administrators were asked to develop Participation Improvement Proposals outlining the strategies their LPAs will implement to achieve the WorkFirst participation improvement target of 10 percentage points. Local Planning Areas (LPAs) hold the expertise, resources and ideas we need, therefore, we are asking LPAs to work closely with your local CSO to find ways to increase participation. We encourage all partners to take a thorough look at your local caseload, your programs and your service delivery systems to identify where improvements can be made. This is just a **first step** in an overall strategy to increase participation. Local Participation Improvement Proposals are due September 15, 2008 to your DSHS Regional Administrator.

If you have ideas for increased participation, we invite you to share them with us via email to [WorkFirst@ofm.wa.gov](mailto:WorkFirst@ofm.wa.gov). We are particularly interested in your ideas on how we could improve our policy and practice to improve federal participation.

We appreciate all you are doing for families and look forward to celebrating your success!