



Washington State Auditor's Office Performance Audit Description

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November 2014

Workforce Development System: Identifying Overlap, Duplication and Fragmentation

Background

Washington promotes its economic vitality and global competitiveness by investing in a highly trained and skilled workforce. Access to skilled workers in Washington is essential to growing our economy as it drives businesses' location and investment decisions. Last year, Washington spent more than \$1 billion in state and federal funds on workforce development activities.

Washington's workforce development system is complex and involves multiple programs that are administered by 12 state agencies. Management of the system is decentralized: the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board plays a key role as it coordinates policy and planning at the state level and develops the state strategic plan for the overall workforce development system.

Worksource is the state's one-stop delivery system; the more-than 60 Worksource Centers and affiliate sites across the state give people access to employment and training services. They are overseen locally by 12 Workforce Development Councils, led by private business and industry in the area, which focus on regional needs.

State programs provide training and support services to both adults and teens who are unemployed or who are employed but want to further develop their skills to improve their opportunities. A number of programs serve specialized populations, such as disabled or disadvantaged people with significant barriers to employment. Community and technical colleges and school districts are a key part of the education and training components of the workforce development system. Although some services are provided directly by the state, many services are provided by local community-based organizations through contracted services.

Scope and objectives

Due to the complexity of the Workforce Development System, this first audit will focus on understanding the programs and their connections within the system. The results of the first audit will inform our decisions on where to focus subsequent audits looking at specific programs in more depth. This audit will seek to answer the following questions:

1. What are Washington's workforce development programs? How are they funded and administered?
2. Is there overlap, duplication or fragmentation within the workforce development system?

Timing

We estimate audit results will be released in spring of 2015.