

## REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

### Expansion of the Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) Program

As required by RCW 74.04.535

November 1, 2019

Economic Services Administration  
Community Services Division  
PO Box 45470  
Olympia, WA 98504-5470  
(360) 725-4888



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

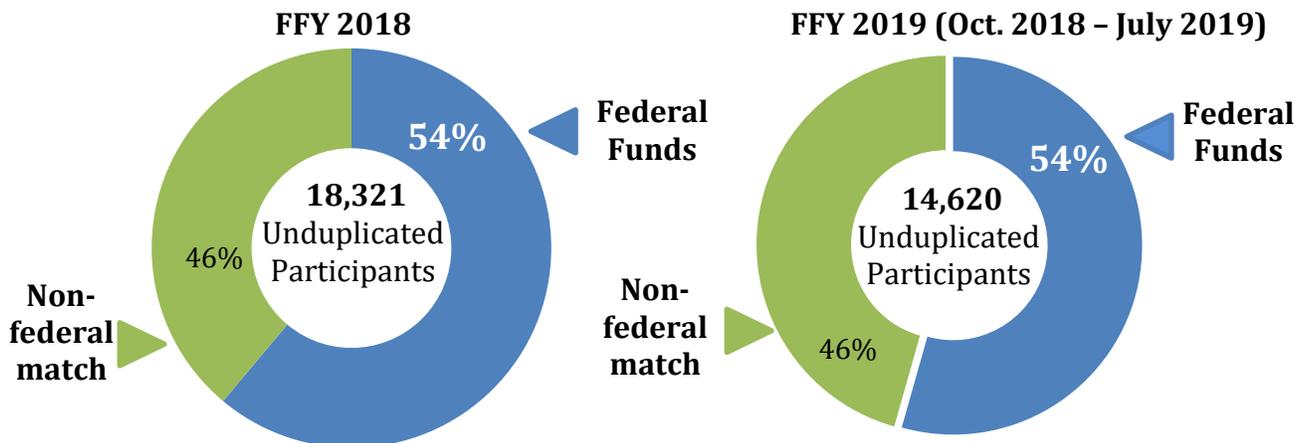
<b>I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>II. PROGRAM OVERVIEW .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Program Background.....	5
Program Funding.....	7
Coordination with Other Employment Programs.....	9
<b>III. PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FOR FFY 2018 - 2019 .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Participants and Services.....	9
Participant Demographics .....	10
Employment Outcomes.....	11
<b>IV. PROGRAM SERVICES .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance.....	11
Community Based Organizations (CBOs).....	12
Community and Technical Colleges .....	12
<b>V. PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FOR FFY 2019 .....</b>	<b>13</b>
New Providers - FFY 2019.....	13
Outreach and Support - FFY 2019 .....	14
Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) .....	14
<b>VI. PROGRAM FUNDING FFY2018 AND FFY2019.....</b>	<b>15</b>

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Washington state Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) program provides job search, job search training, educational services, skills training, and other employment opportunities to Basic Food, (also called Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)) recipients. Basic food recipients cannot be an active recipient of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) WorkFirst work program or Food Assistance Program for Legal Immigrants (FAP - state funded) to receive BFET services. Services are provided through community or technical colleges and/or community based organizations (CBO). Washington's BFET program is the national model for SNAP employment and training (E&T) services to help recipients reach their full potential.

RCW 74.04.535 requires the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS or the Department), Employment Security Department (ESD), and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to work in partnership to expand the BFET (formerly known as food stamp employment and training) program. This statute also requires DSHS to annually track and report outcomes including those achieved through performance-based contracts as follows: federal funding received, the number of participants served, achievement points, the number of participants who enter employment during or after participation in the food stamp employment and training program, and the average wage of jobs attained. This report covers Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2018 and part of FFY 2019 (October 2018 – July 2019).

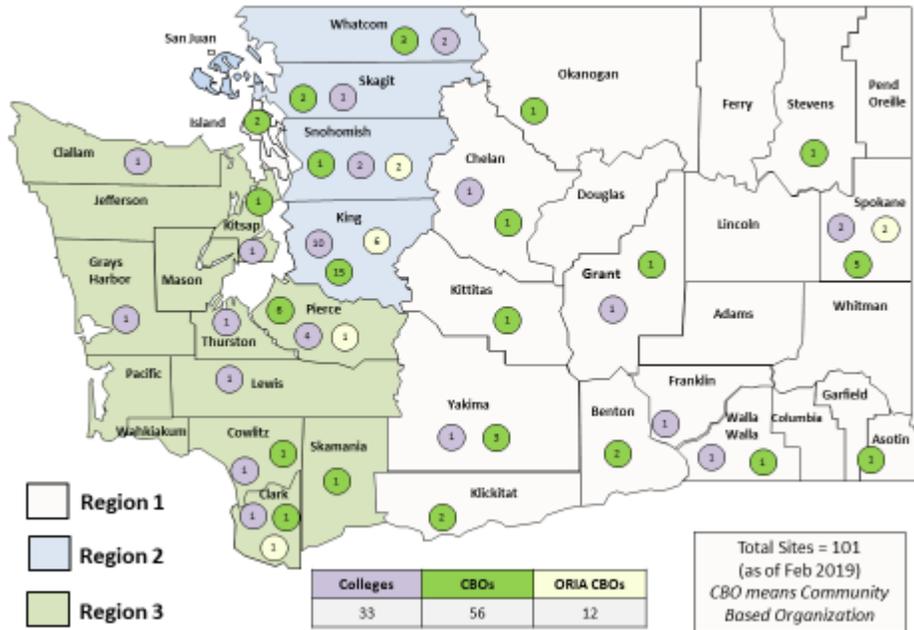
The chart below represents the number of unduplicated clients served in FFY18 and FFY19.<sup>1</sup> Also noted is the percentage of match federal funding.



<sup>1</sup> Data from DSHS eMAPS report 4248. Prior legislative reports included duplicated numbers, although the report stated the numbers were unduplicated. This has been corrected in the FY19 Legislative report.

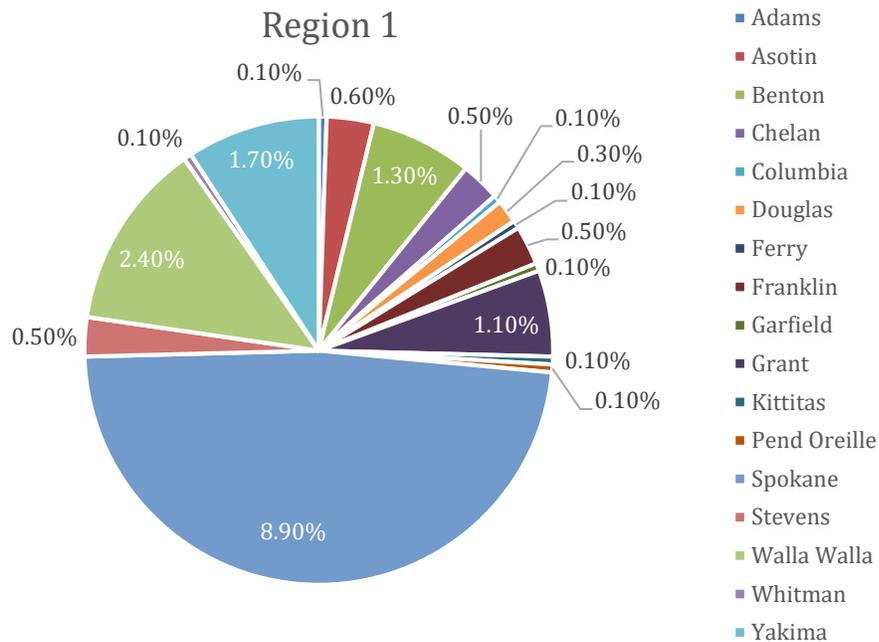
The map below represents BFET sites providing services at colleges, CBOs and ESD offices, as of July 2019.

**Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) Service Locations in Washington State**



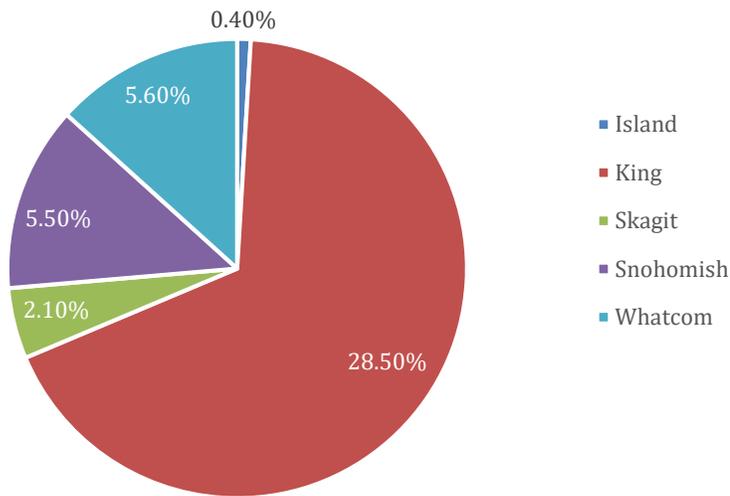
Future BFET service expansion depends on the availability of partners with necessary local funds for third party match to draw down federal funds, program and service needs in an area and the overall BFET strategic plan. The Department continues efforts to recruit CBOs and tribal nations in unserved or underserved parts of the state to provide wraparound services supporting participant success.

**FFY 2018 – FFY 2019**  
**Regional distribution of BFET participants by residential address (monthly average)<sup>2</sup>**

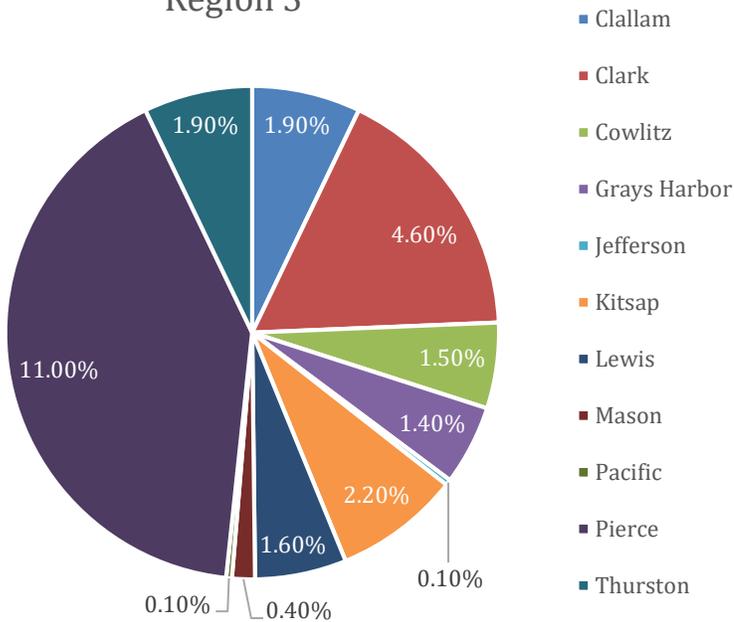


<sup>2</sup> Data from DSHS eMAPS report 4237

### Region 2



### Region 3



## II. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### Program Background

BFET started in Seattle as a pilot in October 2005, with four community-based organizations (CBOs) and one college. It is now a statewide program with over 46 CBOs, 12 ESD locations and all 33 community and technical colleges offering

services. BFET provides E&T services along with critical supports to Basic Food recipients. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has federal authority for the BFET program. The program is a partner in the state's comprehensive workforce development system, which serves low-income individuals, indigent workers, and employers by encouraging skill enhancement and financial independence through gainful employment.

BFET leverages collaborative partnerships using each partner's particular strength: community and technical colleges provide education and training to increase an individual's employability while ESD and CBOs assist job-ready individuals in entering the job market. Many participants are co-enrolled in BFET services through multiple agencies to provide wraparound services and maximize outcomes.

BFET is a nationally recognized model of a successful employment and training program due to several factors. The program emphasizes skill building and post-secondary certificate attainment as the key to long-term self-sufficiency. BFET provides wraparound services that work in tandem with the skill building strategy to prevent or mitigate barriers from derailing a participant's progress. Labor market information determines which local economic areas are in-demand and programs are designed to help establish pathways to fill vacancies.

The BFET program's innovative use of technology to conduct case management communication between DSHS and providers, and facilitate bi-lateral communication amongst providers on shared cases, increases the program's success and has contributed to the program's national recognition as a leader in the E&T field.

FNS regularly invites Washington State to share best practices to assist in the development and strengthening of other state's SNAP E&T programs. State agencies, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions from other states visit Washington state to learn about our BFET program, including our service delivery model, strategic planning group, and technology interface.

BFET provides employability assessments, in addition to a menu of services, through local CBOs including:

- Participant skills and needs assessment
- Case management
- Life skills
- Job readiness training
- Basic skills/English as Second Language (ESL) training (e.g., literacy, math, vocational ESL, High School Equivalency preparation)
- Vocational training
- Job search assistance
- Job placement and
- Support services (e.g., transportation, childcare, hygiene, clothing, etc.)

Typical services a BFET participant could receive at local community and technical colleges include:

- Assessment and career planning
- Tuition assistance applied to a vocational certificate or non-transfer associate degree
- Adult education
- GED preparation
- High school 21+
- Case management
- Job search assistance and
- Support services

## Program Funding

FNS supports the state's SNAP E&T program through several different funding streams:

### **100 Percent Grant Funding:**

The federal government distributes roughly \$90 million annually to states in 100 percent federal funds to assist in the administration of SNAP E&T programs. Washington primarily uses these funds to administer the statewide program. A small portion is reserved to start services in underserved geographic areas and help underserved populations. This funding does not require third party match. It fluctuates annually based on the federal formula related to the number of work registrants<sup>3</sup> in the state. After initial issuance and approval, states may request additional unspent 100 percent federal funds, not spent by other states, through the carryover funds process. Washington state regularly requests carryover funds to provide additional support to the BFET program.

### **100 Percent Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) Pledge Funding:**

The Food and Nutrition Act provides \$20 million each fiscal year for state agencies that pledge to offer a qualifying SNAP E&T component to all at-risk Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWDs). At-risk ABAWDs are those who are in their third countable month and at risk of losing their SNAP eligibility due to the three-month time limit. Washington has committed to offering qualifying education, training, or workfare opportunities to every ABAWD applicant or recipient who is in the last month of the three-month period of eligibility. ABAWD pledge funds allow program staff to collaborate with local employers, colleges, and community partners for job fairs, educational opportunities, drug/mental health counseling, mentorships, and job search activities.

### **50/50 Reimbursement Funding:**

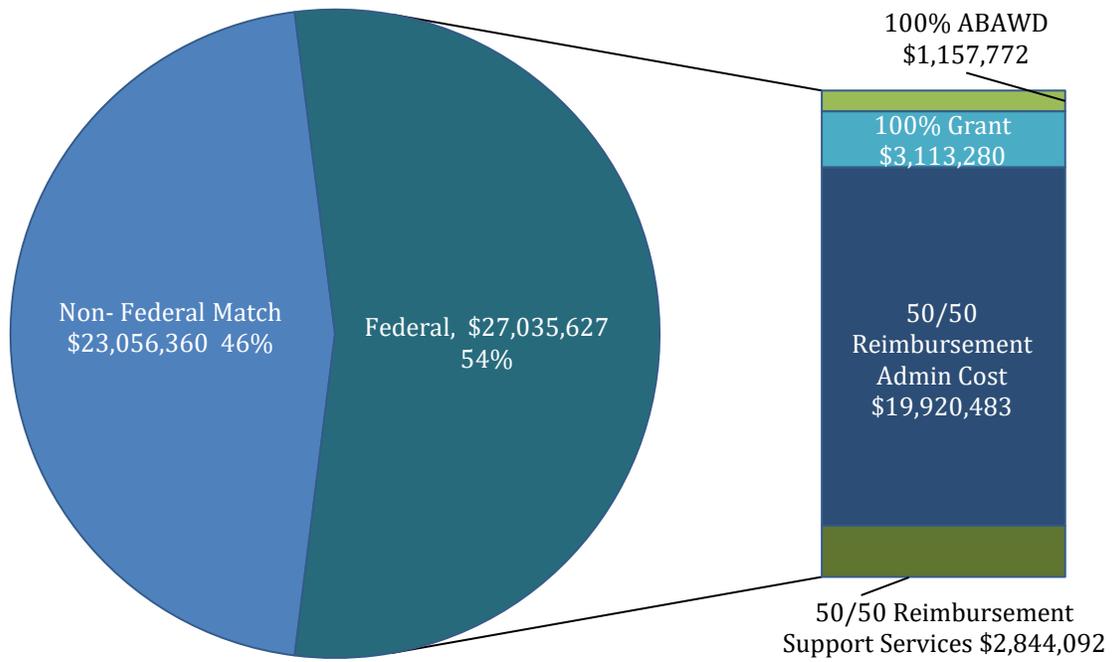
In addition to the 100 percent federal funds allocation, states are offered 50/50 reimbursement funding for SNAP E&T programs to cover administrative costs and support services. This funding is distinguished from 100 percent funds because the federal portion is a reimbursement, not a grant. The BFET providers must initially cover the cost of program operations then receive reimbursement for 50 percent of the cost after providing services and incurring a cost. The Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (ORIA) within DSHS leverages approximately \$400,000 in GF-S each year to provide matching funds to serve refugees and immigrants through the BFET program.

Washington's BFET program uses the 50/50 reimbursement model to fund the majority of BFET services. The 100 percent funds are insufficient to support the program on a statewide scale. The use of the 50/50 reimbursement model supports program growth based on each community's capacity to provide match funding. The BFET program leverages state, local, and private funds to provide services. This funding model creates a new funding stream for colleges and CBOs to provide much needed services, while increasing partnerships to invest in the program.

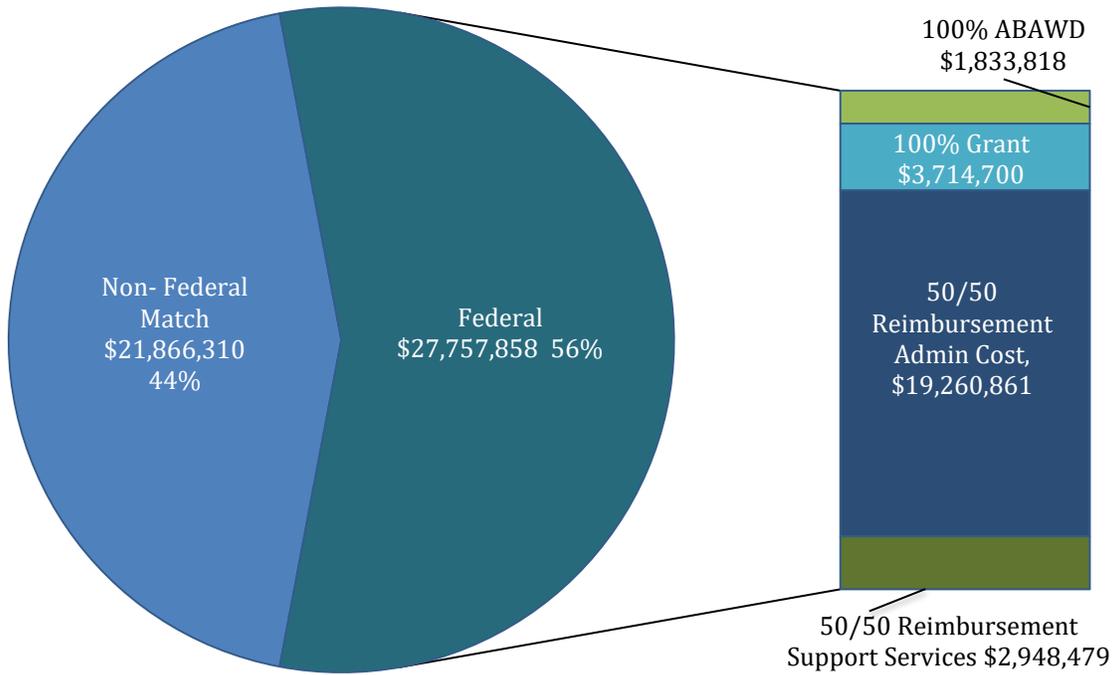
---

<sup>3</sup> [WAC 388-444-0005](#)

### FFY 2019 Funding Breakdown



### FFY 2018 Funding Breakdown



Total budgeted costs are expected to increase by 1.1 percent in FFY 2020, due to an increase in providers and their projected enrollment.

## Coordination with Other Employment Programs

Washington State's BFET program is a partner in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan. Local providers integrate BFET services with other services, such as WIOA, to expand the reach of services available at their sites. BFET collaborates with the Workforce Training Board, ESD, and SBCTC to identify and target emerging industries, develop career pathways and increase opportunities for participants to stack credentials.

The Washington State BFET program also works with numerous other E&T programs:

- **Employment Pipeline** is a DSHS administered program available for individuals looking to find immediate employment. Employment Pipeline assists DSHS clients with navigating employment and training programs and resources, assesses employment needs, completes referrals, and provides retention services. BFET and Employment Pipeline collaborate at community events to provide client access to employment and training resources.
- **Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (ORIA)** focuses on providing culturally and linguistically appropriate employment and training services to refugees and immigrants in Washington State. The BFET program through ORIA offers the same employment and training services statewide as the mainstream BFET program. ORIA's goal is for refugee and immigrant families and individuals to succeed and thrive in Washington State.
- **The Limited English Proficient (LEP) Pathway program** provides employment services and vocationally-focused English language training to: adults who receive TANF or State Family Assistance and are English language learners, people receiving Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), and people who have lived in the United States for less than five years and have an initial U.S. immigration status of refugee. For eligibility purposes, the term "refugee" encompasses people who resettle in the U.S. as refugees as well as people granted asylum, Cuban/Haitian Entrants, Victims of Human Trafficking, and Special Immigrant Visa holders from Iraq and Afghanistan. ORIA administers this program by contracting with CBOs, refugee resettlement agencies, colleges, and other state agencies to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services.
- **Career Ladder for Educated and Vocationally Experienced Refugees (CLEVER)** is a program that assists highly educated and/or vocationally skilled people who meet the federal eligibility as refugees to re-enter their profession in the United States. The CLEVER program provides the following services: career orientation and planning, international transcript evaluation, licensing and recertification assistance, vocational mentoring, targeted job placement and job retention, and support services.

## III. PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FOR FFY 2018 - 2019

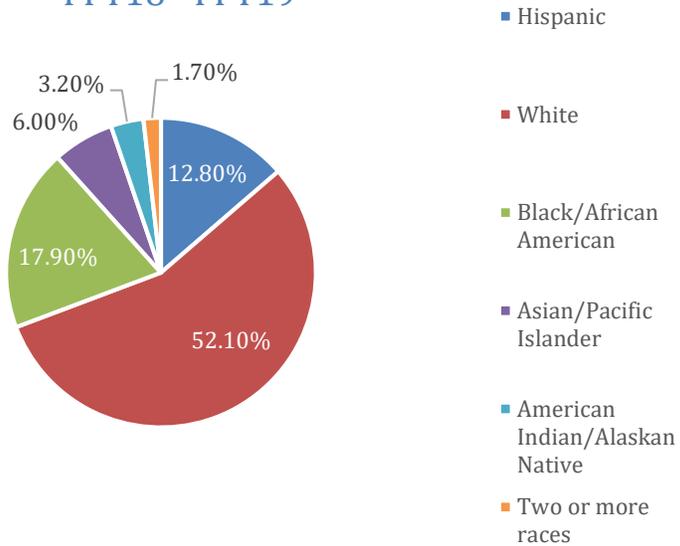
### Participants and Services

BFET offers services in 34 of 39 counties in Washington State. BFET partners include 30 CBOs in FFY18 and 35 CBOs in FFY19 (with multiple service locations) along with 33 Community and Technical Colleges. ORIA contracts with 12 CBOs (overlapping with some non-ORIA contracted CBOs) across the state to administer services to increase access to E&T services for refugees and immigrants.

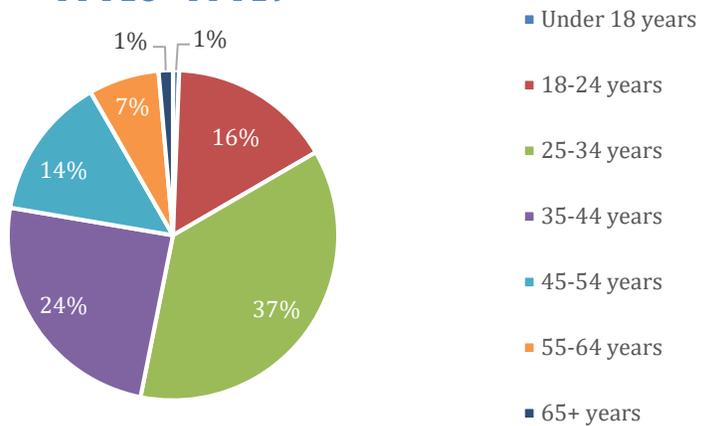
## Participant Demographics<sup>4</sup>

FFY	Average Monthly Participants	Average Women Per Month	Average Men Per Month
2018	6,576	4,139	2,437
2019	6,785	4,360	2,425

### Participant Engagement by Ethnicity FFY18 - FFY19

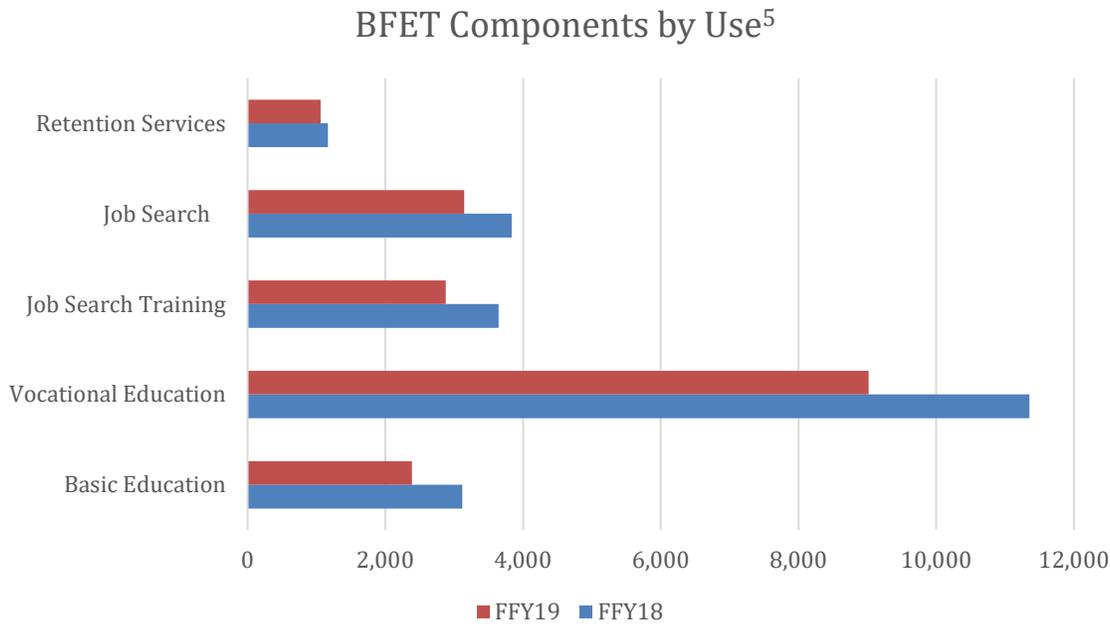


### Age FFY18 - FFY19



<sup>4</sup>Data from DSHS eMAPs report 4237

This graph shows the activity use of components by BFET participants by year:



## Employment Outcomes

A significant number of BFET participants are working while receiving E&T services. These employment opportunities include survival jobs, along with career jobs.

FFY <sup>6</sup>	Avg. # of Women Working per Month	Avg. Age	Avg. Wage/Mo.	Avg. # of Men Working per Month	Avg. Age	Avg. Wage/Mo.
2018	1,640	34	\$1,069	738	35	\$1,184
2019	1,602	34	\$1,139	734	35	\$1,124

## IV. PROGRAM SERVICES

### Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance

The Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (ORIA) operates within DSHS' Economic Services Administration, Community Services Division. The BFET program administered by ORIA offers the same services statewide as the general or mainstream BFET program with a focus on providing culturally and linguistically appropriate employment and training services to refugees and immigrants. Current contractors through ORIA BFET include:

Asian Counseling and Referral (ACRS)	TRAC Associates King
Neighborhood House	TRAC Associates Pierce
Partners In Careers	TRAC Associates Snohomish
Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA)	WorkSource, Spokane
Refugee Federation Service Center (RFSC)	World Relief Seattle
Refugee Immigrant Services Northwest (RISNW)	World Relief Spokane

<sup>5,6</sup>Data from DSHS eMAPs report 4237

## Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

DSSH contracts directly with over 30 CBOs, including some with multiple service locations. A list of current CBOs include:

Apprenticeship & Nontraditional Employment for Women (ANEW)	Northwest Indian College
Asian Counseling and Referral Services (ACRS)	Opportunity Council – Island County
Adonai	Opportunity Council – Whatcom and Island County
Career Path Services – King, Pierce and Spokane County	Partners In Employment
Chelan-Douglas Community Action Council	People for People
Confederated Tribes of Colville	Port Jobs
Community Action of Skagit County	Puget Sound Training Center
Entrust- Benton, Clallam, King, Mason and Pierce County	Refugee Federation Service Center
FareStart	Rod’s House
Goodwill Industries Inland Northwest	Seattle Jobs Initiative
Goodwill of the Olympics and Rainier Region	Spokane Tribe
Goodwill of Seattle	Tacoma Community House
Housing Hope	TRAC Associates - King County
King County Jobs Initiative	WorkSource – Columbian Basin, Colville, Okanogan, Skagit, Spokane, Vancouver, Walla Walla, Whidbey, Whatcom and Yakima counties
Lower Columbia Community Action Program	Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) of Seattle King and Snohomish County
Multi-Service Center	YWCA of Spokane
Neighborhood House of Washington- Seattle and Kent	

Three CBOs subcontract a portion of their BFET services, these include:

1. ANEW
  - Partners in Employment
2. King County Jobs Initiative
  - Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) of Seattle
  - Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) of Greater Seattle
  - Friends of Youth
  - TRAC Associates
3. Seattle Jobs Initiative
  - Neighborhood House
  - YWCA
  - Pacific Associates

## Community and Technical Colleges

The role of the BFET program within the community & technical colleges is to provide educational opportunities and increase the skill level and knowledge helping participants reach their full potential.

All 34 colleges provide BFET services through an umbrella contract managed by the SBCTC. The colleges provide services designed to help students attain skills necessary for employment to include vocational education, Adult Basic Education (ABE), ESL, High School Equivalency and participant support services. Some colleges also offer case management, job search and job readiness training. Colleges providing BFET services are:

Bates Technical College	Bellevue College
Bellingham Technical College	Big Bend Community College
Cascadia Community College	Centralia College
Clark College	Clover Park Technical College
Columbia Basin College	Edmonds Community College
Everett Community College	Grays Harbor College
Green River Community College	Highline Community College
Lake Washington Institute of Technology	Lower Columbia College
North Seattle College	Olympic College
Peninsula College	Pierce College
Renton Technical College	Seattle Central College
Skagit Valley College	Shoreline Community College
South Seattle College	South Puget Sound Community College
Spokane Falls Community College	Spokane Community College
Walla Walla Community College	Tacoma Community College
Whatcom Community College	Wenatchee Valley College
	Yakima Valley Community College

As the lead contractor, SBCTC takes an active role in facilitating program planning and the future growth of the BFET program. SBCTC participates and supports program strategic planning and the annual BFET training forum.

## V. PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FOR FFY 2019

The BFET program had a very exciting year in 2019. We increased program oversight to assist in program success and integrity. The highlights in this section include increasing BFET providers in underserved areas, increasing outreach efforts to support providers and increasing partnership amongst providers.

### New Providers - FFY 2019

1. Adonai: Adonai provides individuals with education, case management, job skills training as well as job placement. Their ultimate goal is to help individuals become self-sufficient. They provide mentorships, life skills classes, vocational training, and confidence building. Services are offered in Benton, Franklin, King, Mason, Pierce and Thurston Counties.
2. Confederated Tribes of Colville: Confederated Tribes of Colville provides employment and training services including life skills, job search, job search training, basic education, vocational education and job retention services. Colville Tribe services Colville tribal members, descendants of Colville tribal members, and other federally recognized tribal members.

3. Partners In Employment (PIE): The goal at Partners in Employment is to provide long-term economic stability of newly arrived refugees and immigrants in King County by providing tailored assistance in language acquisition, housing stabilization, workforce entry, and job training in higher-wage industries.
4. People for People: People for People is a well-established organization in the community offering a multitude of programs and resources to assist individuals with employment and training needs. They offer job search, job search training, job retention services and case management services. The agency is located in Yakima, WA.
5. Rod's House: Rod's House offers youth (ages 15-24) experiencing homelessness or housing instability individualized or small group support for job search and job search training. Individuals enrolled in BFET have support of case managers and receive support services. The agency has a drop-in resource center for basic needs (food, clothing, hygiene, etc.) and housing program assessments. Rod's House offers connections with community partners including education, healthcare, behavioral healthcare, legal and housing support. The agency is located in Yakima, WA.
6. Spokane Tribe: Spokane Tribe offers job search, job search training and support services for qualified BFET participants who are Spokane tribal members, descendants of the Spokane Tribe of Indians, spouses of Spokane tribal members and other federally recognized tribes who reside in Stevens, Spokane and Lincoln Counties. Their services work parallel with the Spokane Tribe of Indians Early Learning Center for day care/wrap around services.

## Outreach and Support - FFY 2019

1. The BFET program transitioned the successful Strategies for Success component (formerly Life Skills) from the Resources to Initiate Successful Employment (RISE) pilot. This allowed sharing of curriculum amongst providers and increased topics included in the traditional life skills activities. As a result, the program was able to separate life skills activities from job search training.
2. The BFET program began a Peer Mentoring Workgroup to support new and current BFET providers. The goal of this workgroup is to embed provider mentoring and create a learning community that strengthens services for the individuals and communities we serve. Anticipated outcomes are to provide a guided process and roadmap for planning, implementation, maintaining program integrity and support amongst providers.
3. Washington received approval from FNS to operate a demonstration project allowing eligible BFET participants to receive up to one year of job retention services. The demonstration project is approved for five years under specific guidelines and requirements. The goal of this demonstration project is to evaluate the impact on participant churn, employment outcomes, process-related variables like the number of participants who access job retention services for an extended period of time, and cost associated with support services.

## Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs)

ABAWDs<sup>5</sup> are individuals receiving Basic Food assistance who are between the ages of 18 and 49, without dependent children living with them and are determined able to work. These individuals are required to participate in work-like activities each month to maintain their Basic Food eligibility. ABAWDs who are unable to meet work participation for three months in a 36-month period (currently Jan. 2018 – Dec. 2020) will not receive more than three months of Basic Food benefits. For the calendar year 2018, King County was the only mandatory ABAWD county, with the exception of those residing on the Muckleshoot Reservation.

---

<sup>7</sup><http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/able-bodied-adults-without-dependents-abawds>

Approximately \$20 million is available nationwide to states that pledge to provide job training supports to ABAWDs in their state. Washington State received \$1.9 million to support ABAWDs.

The BFET program is a preferred option for ABAWDs to meet participation requirements. Other options include employment, volunteering, Workfare and participation in other state E&T programs. While BFET is not mandatory, it offers a variety of services to assist ABAWD individuals in improving marketable skills for in demand industries and securing long-term success.

Workfare is a volunteer work option for ABAWD participation. Workfare helps Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents improve their employment prospects through meaningful volunteer work experience and regain Basic Food program eligibility. The goal of the program is to provide supervised opportunities with a nonprofit, public, or government agency for participants to gain soft skills and work experience.

## VI. PROGRAM FUNDING FFY2018 AND FFY2019

Funding Category	FFY 2019	FFY 2018
1. 100 Percent Federal E&T Grant	\$ 3,113,280	\$ 3,714,700
2. Reimbursement Administrative Cost	\$ 40,229,822	\$ 38,292,774
Federal	\$ 19,920,483	\$ 19,260,861
State	\$ 20,309,339	\$ 19,031,913
3. Reimbursement Support Services		
a. Transportation/Other	\$ 5,525,743	\$ 5,723,397
Federal	\$ 2,809,657	\$ 2,914,666
State	\$ 2,716,086	\$ 2,808,731
b. Dependent Care	\$ 65,370	\$ 59,479
Federal	\$ 34,435	\$ 33,813
State	\$ 30,935	\$ 25,666
Total Reimbursement Support Services (a +b)	\$ 5,591,113	\$ 5,782,876
Federal	\$ 2,844,092	\$ 2,948,479
State	\$ 2,747,021	\$ 2,834,397
4. ABAWD 100% Federal	\$ 1,157,772	\$ 1,833,818
<b>TOTAL FEDERAL (1+2+3+4)</b>	<b>\$ 27,035,627</b>	<b>\$ 27,757,858</b>
<b>TOTAL NON-FEDERAL (2+3)</b>	<b>\$ 23,056,360</b>	<b>\$ 21,866,310</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 50,091,987</b>	<b>\$ 49,624,168</b>